



LATE TESTIMONY

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TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION
AND ENVIRONMENT

THE TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2008

Monday, March 24, 2008
2:30 p.m.

TESTIMONY OF CATHERINE P. AWAKUNI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
DIVISION OF CONSUMER ADVOCACY, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND
CONSUMER AFFAIRS TO THE HONORABLE REPRESENTATIVE HERKES,
CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 256 AND HOUSE RESOLUTION
NO. 217 – URGING HAWAII UTILITY COMPANIES THAT PROVIDE UTILITY
SERVICES TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A PROCEDURE FOR THE
TIMELY REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGED OR UNSIGHTLY UTILITY POLES.**

DESCRIPTION:

These resolutions urge Hawaiian Telcom, Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc. and its subsidiaries, and Oceanic Time Warner Cable to develop and establish a restoration plan for the removal of unnecessary wooden utility poles, or the replacement of damaged or unsightly wooden utility poles in a timely manner statewide.

POSITION:

The Division of Consumer Advocacy (“Consumer Advocate”) understands the intent of these resolutions and offers the following comments for this Committee’s consideration.

H.C.R. No. 256 and H.R. 217
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Monday, March 24, 2008, 2:30 p.m.

COMMENTS:

These resolutions may be unnecessary at this time as a Joint Pole Agreement between Hawaiian Electric Company and its subsidiaries, Hawaiian Telcom, the City and County of Honolulu, and the State has been established, which provides the processes with which the joint pole owners must comply. Among other things, the Joint Pole Agreement details requirements relating to the installation, replacement, and maintenance of utility poles. Hawaiian Telcom and Hawaiian Electric and its subsidiaries conduct regular inspections of poles on a cyclical basis, and replace or repair poles based on a number of factors including: condition of the poles, public safety, customer impact, traffic impact, and critical customers' locations. As the replacement or repair of such poles may sometimes require community input, regulatory review, engineering analysis, or materials from off-island, the 90-day limit for pole replacement included in the resolutions may not be applicable to all pole repair or replacement circumstances.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.