

SB 2016

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



OPPOSE

CHIYOME LEINAALA FUKINO, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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In reply, please refer to:
File:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

S.B. 2016, RELATING TO GLOBAL WARMING

Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.
Director of Health

February 12, 2008
2:45 p.m.

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health appreciates the intent of this bill to assess global
2 warming's impact on Hawaii, but has concerns and respectfully opposes this bill.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** The bill provides for an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal years 2008
4 and 2009 to support the activities of the new global warming task force. It is unknown at this time on
5 the number of personnel that will be needed, the personnel costs, or the costs for consultant assistance.

6 **Purpose and Justification:** This bill creates a global warming task force established administratively
7 within the Department of Health. The purpose of the task force is to assess the potential impacts of
8 global warming and rising ocean levels on Hawaii including the people, natural resources, economy,
9 visitor industry, air and sea transportation, buildings, public utilities infrastructure, shoreline erosion,
10 and public health. In addition, the task force is to provide recommendations for addressing or mitigating
11 the near and long term effects from global warming. The task force is to be dissolved on June 30, 2010.

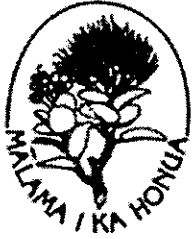
12 We are concerned about the increase in task forces, given that there is already a Greenhouse Gas
13 Emission Reduction Task Force under Act 234, 2007 Session Laws of Hawaii.

14 We also think that a 29-member task force, as proposed, will be unwieldy and lead to quorum
15 problems.

1 The bill does not provide the resources (position counts and sufficient general funds) to cover the
2 inevitable personnel, operational, and consultant costs, whether the work is to be done by a new task
3 force or the existing Greenhouse Gas Task Force, or a department. The work will be considerable
4 because the bill covers many subjects. However, we ask that no appropriations displace the priorities in
5 the executive supplemental budget proposal.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

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Sierra Club

Hawai'i Chapter

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT SENATE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

February 12th, 2008, 2:45 P.M.

(Testimony is 2 pages long)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2016

Chairs Menor and Nishihara and members of the committees:

The Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, with 5500 dues paying members statewide, supports the intent of SB 2016, establishing a global warming task force to assess the impacts of climate change on Hawai'i. We believe it would be wise preventative measure for the State to establish a task force that is focused solely on examining the potential impacts of global climate change and Hawaii's adaptation needs. Clear deliverables from the task force—in terms of proposed legislation, rule changes, resource needs, etc—are needed for the work of the task force to be effective. Establishment of a climate change adaptation task force would be a welcome complement to the existing Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Task Force (GHGERTF) that was established last year through Act 234. The GHGERTF is focused on mitigating Hawaii's contribution to global climate change.

Global climate change is perhaps the greatest threat to Hawaii's prosperity. The ongoing increase in global greenhouse gas emissions—primarily from fossil fuel combustion—has systematically increased the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This increase in greenhouse gases is causing a warming of the Earth, leading to dramatic changes in climate, sea level, and weather.

Global climate change threatens Hawai'i with stronger hurricanes, prolonged drought, shifting weather patterns, warmer temperatures, shifting micro-climates, increased spread of invasive species, and saltwater intrusion into Hawaii's aquifers. University of Hawaii experts have demonstrated that a one meter rise in sea level—a change that is possible within the next 50 years—would inundate much of Hawaii's coastline, including its beaches, the world renown Waikiki resort area, the Honolulu International Airport's reef runway, the majority of Hawaii's wastewater treatment facilities, many historic sites, and many populated areas, including lands up to a mile away from the existing shoreline in parts of Honolulu. The image on page 2 of this testimony demonstrates the extent of flooding through the Waikiki-Moiliili-McCully areas that would likely be caused by a one-meter rise in sea level.

Independent of the warming, the increase in carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere fosters greater carbon dioxide uptake by the world's oceans, leading to ocean acidification and the resultant decrease in reef health and decrease in survival of ocean life that rely on calcium carbonate shells. The Task Force contemplated in SB 2016 should examine this phenomenon and its effects as well. The Sierra Club believes that that SB 2016 should be amended to address global climate change and its effects as opposed to global warming alone. The composition of the Task Force could also be reexamined.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



testimony

From: Windward Ahupua`a Alliance [info@waa-hawaii.org]
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2008 5:46 PM
To: testimony
Subject: SB 2016 - RELATING TO GLOBAL WARMING

Shannon Wood, *Interim President*
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COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
Sen. Ron Menor, Chair
Sen. Gary Hooser, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

PUBLIC HEARING
2:45 pm
Tuesday, February 13, 2008
Conference Room 414

SB 2016 - RELATING TO GLOBAL WARMING
Comments

My name is Shannon Wood, speaking on behalf of the *Windward Ahupua`a Alliance*, a 501c3 Hawai`i non-profit corporation, which was established in July, 2002, to create the Ko`olau Greenbelt & Heritage Trails System in order to restore, protect & provide public access to the *mauka* (mountain) lands on the Windward side of O`ahu along the base of *Na Ko`olau* up to the North Shore and Kawela Bay as well as to support locally-owned sustainable economic activities in the more developed areas.

Over time, however, its mandate has expanded well beyond these vitally important regional issues.

For the past three years, *WAA*'s second principal focus has been on renewable energy issues and the impacts of global warming, climate change and sea level rise. I was one of ten people here in Hawai`i selected to go through an intensive training program in January, 2007, with The Climate Project, founded by former *Vice President* Al Gore who, along with the *International Panel on Climate Change*, was awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize** for their global warming/climate change work. All totaled, there are about 1,000 of us from around the world carrying the message to ordinary folks about climate change and global warming.

Growing out of that training, I also now work with a national organization which addressing these issues in *Congress* and with the *Bush Administration* - although I am sorry to say that we were unable to persuade the *Department of the Interior* to place the polar bear on the Endangered Species Act list before opening up its habitat to the sale of oil-drilling leases.

As someone who helped craft the ACT 234 last year and who is now tracking the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Task Force's work closely, I know that its mandate and mission to focus primarily on energy-related matters here in Hawai'i will restrict its ability to work on other inter-related issues even though they will impact its work product.

What makes this so frustrating to deal with is that the complex nature of global warming/sea level rise covers a whole host of topics which are outside its purview but which will have an enormous impact on the Task Force's work product.

For example, it is highly unlikely that the current Task Force will even take up **loss of habitat** issues from other areas of the world - perhaps not even looking at the negative impacts of bringing in "renewable" feedstocks to wean Hawai'i off fossil fuel usage.

However, I can certainly understand the arguments against proposing a separate task force - especially one with so many members on it of whom none come from an **NGO** working in these fields. Still, a separate entity may be the only way to address these issues.

If you decide to move this bill forward, I urge that you reduce the number of people on the **Task Force** by assuming that people can wear multiple hats and that you make sure that at least two of the seats are given to people representing environmental organizations working on these critical issues here in Hawai'i. Perhaps the legislative seats could be given over to them.

Mahalo for the opportunity to present these thoughts.