



COALITION FOR A **LATE TESTIMONY**
TOBACCO-FREE HAWAII

Email to: Committee on Health, testimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

RE: Senate Committee on Health, hearing schedule, February 4, 2008, 1:15 P.M., Conference Rm. 016

Senator David Ige, Chair & Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

RE: Testimony in Strong Support of SB2105, Prohibiting the sale and distribution of flavored tobacco products.

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and members of the Committee on Health.

Thank you for the opportunity to once again submit testimony in strong support of SB2105, which prohibits the sale and distribution of flavored tobacco products by those tobacco manufacturers which were not part of the October 2006, settlement agreement with the 38 states including Hawaii. My name is George Massengale, I am the Policy Director, for the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Hawaii, a statewide association of nonprofit organizations, large and small businesses, and more that 2,000 individuals committed to working together to reduce the negative impact of tobacco on the health of Hawaii's children, adults, and visitors.

As this committee is aware, the Coalition continues to be unyielding supporter of efforts that reduce the number of youth who use tobacco products. The introduction of "candy flavored tobacco products" by the tobacco industry is clearly aimed at our youth. Research (November 2005), from the Harvard School of Public Health found that cigarette makers are still targeting young smokers with candy and liqueur-flavored new brands that mask the harsh and toxic properties found in tobacco smoke.

In May 2005, researchers at the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in buffalo, NY, released the results of several surveys that showed that 20% of smokers ages 17 to 19 smoked flavored cigarettes vs. only 6% of smokers over the age of 25. Clearly this shows that flavored cigarettes are much more popular among younger smokers than older smokers.

In October 2006, R.J Reynolds reached a settlement agreement with the Attorney General's of 39 States, including Hawaii, not to sell "candy, fruit and alcohol flavored cigarettes that appeal to youth. In addition the agreement imposes significant marketing restriction that will make virtually impossible for Reynolds to market flavored cigarettes to youth. This agreement is a significant step forward, however it only pertains to one tobacco company, and only to cigarettes.



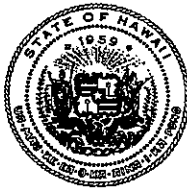
In our testimony last year on a similar flavored tobacco bill, we noted that in Hawaii, our youth smoking rates are dropping. In 2000, Hawaii's youth smoking rate was 24.5% for public high school students and 12.9% for public middle school students. In, 2006, the rate was 12.6% for public high school students, and 7.9% for middle school students. Tobacco sales to minors, is declining because of public education, counter marketing, and prevention efforts. Clearly these efforts are working. SB2105 would further impact these rates and strengthen protections for our youth by prohibiting the sale and distribution of not only flavored cigarettes, but smokeless tobacco products as well.

Prohibiting the sale and distribution of "seductive" flavored tobacco products and cigarettes is clearly sound public health policy and would prevent many of our young people from suffering a lifetime of tobacco addiction.

Sincerely yours,

George S. Massengale, JD
Policy Director

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



LATE TESTIMONY
CHIYOME LEINAALA FUKINO, M.D.
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In reply, please refer to:
File:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

SB 2105, RELATING TO TOBACCO

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

February 4, 2008, 1:15PM

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health supports this measure which would prohibit the sale
2 and distribution of flavored tobacco products in Hawaii.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** none

4 **Purpose and Justification:** This bill amends the Hawaii Revised Statutes by adding a new chapter. The
5 bill acknowledges that there has been a proliferation of flavored cigarettes in recent years. Many of
6 these products have fruit, chocolate, mint, honey, candy, mint, dessert, herb or spice flavors that are
7 particularly attractive to children. In addition, product names for flavored tobacco products are similar
8 to product names for candy, drinks, and other products directly marketed to children.

9 According to survey evidence and public health reports, children are significantly more likely than
10 adults to choose flavored cigarettes when they start smoking and the existence of these products
11 increases the incidence of tobacco use among children. The earlier that an individual begins smoking,
12 the more likely he or she will become addicted to tobacco products and will continue to smoke
13 throughout their lifetime. As a result, flavored cigarettes and other flavored tobacco products result in
14 increased tobacco use, increased addiction, greater incidence of smoking-related illnesses, increased
15 healthcare costs, and more smoking-related deaths.

1 The Department of Health views the sale and distribution of flavored tobacco products as a
2 serious public health issue in that they have been shown to increase tobacco use among children.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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