

## LATE TESTIMONY

**SB 2440** Testimony for January 28, 2008 @ 1:15 PM for Committee on IGM.

I Bernard Garcia, VVMC member, agree with the testimony just given by Michael Covich, VVMC Vice President.

My reasons for supporting this bill is that the current workload in the Maui Veterans' Office has tripled in the last 10 years and still there is only one Counselor and one Clerk Typist.

The first time the Counselor went out on work-comp stress leave was 09/25/05. He was able to return to work on 12/5/05 on a modified work schedule. In January 2006 he went to on an accommodated work schedule. This continued until March 2007 when he again went out on stress leave. This time his doctors have said that because of his condition he will not be able to return to work. This happened because of the work load that the Counselor and Clerk Typist have. With even more Veterans coming into the office from Afghanistan and Iraq the work loan is increasing NOT decreasing.

Since the Counselor has been out from March 2007 there has not been anyone to take his place. Once a week a Counselor from the Honolulu office comes to Maui and sees Veterans who have made appointments. The rest of the time the Clerk Typist has to carry the office doing both the work of the Counselor and Clerk Typist as well as office manager. Due to the work load the health of the Clerk Typist is declining. Her doctor has put her on a modified work schedule of 3 days a week. Since the Clerk Typist is my wife, I am very concerned about her health and don't want what happened to the Counselor to happen to my wife. I request that this bill be passed and implemented as soon as possible.