

Personal Testimony presented before the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Affordable Housing
9:00 a.m., February 22, 2008

by
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SB2933, RELATING TO HOUSEHOLD ENERGY DEMAND

Chair Kokubun, Vice Chair Ige, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Maria Plottier, I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I am pleased to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 2933, which would allow the use of clotheslines, taking advantage of the local climate and reducing electricity consumption.

While waiting for widely available renewable energy, some simple changes in habits can lead to considerable household energy savings. The laundry line is one of the oldest and most practical ways to use solar energy; electric clothes dryers require fossil fuel electricity and they pour heat into living spaces, straining cooling systems. As an architectural designer I am aware of existing social pressures/expectations on aesthetics; however, these are slowly changing, and measures like this bill allow this crucial change. Hopefully it will come a time when we will say, as the daughter of New York Times writer Kathleen Hughes said when helping her mother with the clothesline: *"It looks beautiful," (she said when we stepped back.) "It looks like we care about the earth."* Relatively small daily/habitual changes can be seen as part of a learning process where what is seen as beautiful is what will allow the planet, including humans, to survive.

The bill refers to single family residences and town homes, however it is also possible to use light and air to dry clothes in apartment buildings. As here in the past, presently, in many other countries, the design of residences, including apartment buildings, takes into account this activity. Compact self powered clothes dryers are being designed for apartments (Australian International Design Awards 2008 entry), however they are not being produced yet.

Regarding the role of associations, it is not clear what type of regulations they will be allowed to enforce. What is a "reasonable regulation" (of the location of clotheslines) for the purpose of "screening drying clothes and clotheslines from view from neighboring streets"? A more specific definition of "view from neighboring streets" and "screening" could be provided, to allow for the protection of households' choices.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill,

Sincerely,



Maria M. Plottier