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TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

TWENTY-FOURTH STATE LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2008

Thursday, March 27, 2008
2:25 p.m.

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 3092, SD1 - RELATING TO SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER.

TO THE HONORABLE TOMMY WATERS, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department") appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 3092, SD1, Relating to Social Security Number. My name is Stephen Levins, and I am the Executive Director of the Office of Consumer Protection (OCP), representing the Department.

Senate Bill No. 3092, SD1, seeks to decrease the unnecessary disclosure of social security numbers by amending section 501-151 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes

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so that only the last four digits of an individual's social security number would be listed on judgments, orders, or decrees recorded in the Bureau of Conveyances or Land Court. Current law mandates that the entire number be listed.

Identity theft is a serious crime, with lasting negative repercussions on the finances and life of the person whose identity is stolen. One of the tools most frequently used to steal a person's identity is the person's social security number, the key to a consumer's financial identity. Its current widespread use as an identifier has made it relatively easy for thieves to assume false identities and gain access to financial accounts and other sensitive information of innocent victims. Minimizing its use and display is important. Since repealing the unnecessary listing of social security numbers from the records of the Bureau of Conveyances and Land Court would promote the privacy interests of individuals and eliminate a potential source of information for identity thieves, the Department is in strong support of this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 3092, SD1. I will be happy to answer any questions that the Committee members may have.