

testimony

From: Pat Gee [geewiz2@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Friday, March 28, 2008 1:13 PM
To: testimony
Cc: Allison Schaefer
Subject: Sharkey's Law: Senate Concurrent Resolution, SCR161

L A T E

Dear Senators:

In lieu of testifying at the March 28, 2008 hearing, I offer the following testimony in support of SCR 161:

I urge you to support SCR 161, which relates to retention, detention and catchment pond safety. Written in memory of a five-year-old girl who drowned in a Pearl City naval housing complex detention pond while trying to save the life of her childhood friend, the resolution seeks to improve the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of this state.

Hawaii has the highest drowning rate in the nation and must take action immediately to improve safety for citizens as well as to improve the state's image as a safe as well as pleasurable visitor destination and place to live. Unregulated and poorly maintained rainwater detention and retention ponds pose a serious health and safety risk, particularly to Hawaii's children. Passing a resolution that encourages and assists developers or persons responsible for construction or maintaining a retention pond, detention pond, or catchment area to adopt maintenance and inspection plan to ensure adequate safety is necessary to ensure the safety of Hawaii's citizens and to reduce the drowning rate. Similarly, I believe that installation of a chain-link or see through fencing and appropriate warning signs should also be encouraged. I also support the provision that retention/detention pond and catchment safety should be incorporated into the Hawaii Department of Health's water safety curriculum.

The death of Sharkey Schaefer could have been prevented. Those responsible for the construction of the pond were well aware of the hazardous conditions that this particular rain catchment basin presented. If regulations had existed to ensure responsible parties had built and maintained a safe system, the Schaefer's family would not have lost their precious child.

Hawaii has many proactive laws that protect the environment, now it seems we need to advocate for laws that afford our citizens the same rights and privileges. I would appreciate your support for SRC161, and I look forward to hearing a response from your office.

Sincerely,

Pat Gee
4754 Farmers Rd.

testimony

From: t kogler [uilani2626@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2008 12:39 PM
To: testimony

Dear Sen. David Ige and Sen. Carol Fukunaga of the Senate Committee on Health:

I urge you to support proposed SCR 161, the Charlotte "Sharkey" Schaefer's law, relating to retention, detention and catchment pond safety.

The law, which was written in memory of a five-year-old girl who drowned in a Pearl City naval housing complex detention pond while trying to save the life of her childhood friend, seeks to improve the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of this state.

An average of 30 Hawaii residents or 2.4 victims for every one hundred thousand people drown each year in the State's oceans, lakes, dams, reservoirs, rainwater retention and detention ponds, flood waters, swimming pools, spas and private homes. Hawaii's keiki are the most vulnerable to drowning, which in this state and nine others is the leading cause of death among children aged fourteen and younger. The Hawaii Department of Health has recommended action to reduce Hawaii's drowning rate, which detracts from the state's image as a safe as well as pleasurable visitor destination and place to live.

Detention and retention ponds are meant to hold storm water. Similarly, rainwater catchments are used to harvest runoff rainwater. While many catchment systems collect runoff in enclosed tanks, some utilize artificial ponds to catch the water. Unregulated and poorly maintained rainwater detention and retention ponds pose a serious health and safety risk, particularly to Hawaii's children. Passing a law that regulates these systems and monitors them for safety is necessary to ensure the safety of Hawaii's citizens and to reduce the drowning rate.

Sharkey's death could have been prevented. Those responsible for the construction of the pond were well aware of the hazardous conditions that this particular rain catchment basin presented. If state regulations had existed to ensure responsible parties had built and maintained a safe system, the Schaefer's family would not have lost their precious child.

Hawaii has many proactive laws that protect the environment, now it seems we need to advocate for laws that afford our citizens the same rights and privileges. I would appreciate your support for SCR 161, and I look forward to hearing a response from your office.

Sincerely,

Tanya A. Kogler

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