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LATE
04/03/08

April 3, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senate Committee on Tourism and Government Operations

FROM: Lillian B. Koller, Director

SUBJECT: S.C.R. 93, S.D. 1/S.R. 53, S.D.1 - URGING THE STATE
BUILDING CODE COUNCIL TO EXPEDITIOUSLY ADOPT PROVISIONS
IN THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE, 2006 EDITION,
RELATING TO PHYSICAL ASSISTANCE IN EVACUATION FOR
RESIDENTS IN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES OR SIMILAR
FACILITIES.

Hearing: Thursday, April 3, 2008, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of these Senate resolutions are to urge the State Building Code Council to expeditiously adopt provisions in the International Building Code (IBC), 2006 Edition, relating to physical assistance in evacuation for residents in assisted living facilities or similar facilities.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) strongly supports both of these resolutions. We also appreciate the Legislature's inclusion of language in the resolutions for the State Building Code Council to insert into the IBC, recommendations made in the Department's Report to the Legislature as required by Senate Concurrent Resolution 144, Senate Draft 1.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AGENCY

The State of Hawaii has a major need to expand its capacity for providing long-term care. The citizens of Hawaii prefer to receive that long-term care in their home or their community whenever possible. Apartments in assisted living facilities allow residents to preserve their independence while receiving necessary support services in the community.

The recommendations proposed in these resolutions would be a major step forward in increasing long-term care capacity in the community by allowing more residents of assisted living facilities the opportunity to remain in the community, "aging in place," rather than having to move to a more restrictive placement as their health diminishes.

Additionally, these recommendations would also provide clarity to potential developers of assisted living facilities in this State and will provide a clear road map to current facilities who wish to modify their buildings to meet these new standards.

We urge the Legislature to convey the recommendations identified in the SCR 144 Task Force report and that of S.C.R. 93, S.D.1 and S.R. 53, S.D.1 to the State Building Code Council and strongly recommend the Council's adoption of these amendments to the IBC. These recommended amendments would allow us the flexibility that 46 other States have found important to their long-term care strategies.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.