



COUNTY OF KAUAI  
Fire Department  
Mo'ikeha Building  
4444 Rice Street, Suite 295  
Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii 96766

March 28, 2008

The Honorable Russell S. Kokubun, Chair  
Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Affordable Housing  
The State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 407  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Kokubun:

Subject: Senate Concurrent Resolution (S.C.R.) 85, S.D. 1/Senate Resolution (S.R.) 47, S.D. 1 - Relating to Developing Emergency Evacuation Plans for Condominium Associations

I am Robert F. Westerman, Fire Chief of the Kauai Fire Department (KFD). The KFD supports S.C.R. 85, S.D. 1/S.R. 47, S.D. 1, which would urge the association of apartment owners throughout the state to develop emergency and evacuation plans that include the special needs of senior and medically fragile residents.

Knowing what to do in an emergency can minimize panic and prevent tragic consequences for natural and manmade disasters, including fire. Critical minutes elapse from the onset of an emergency until emergency responders arrive and commence operations. Building occupants can provide the immediate actions necessary to evacuate and assist residents in a safe, orderly manner, which has proven to save lives and minimize property damage.

The KFD is available to provide guidance and assist the condominium association of apartment owners in developing their emergency and evacuation plans and requests your committee's support on the passage of S.C.R. 85, S.D. 1/S.R. 47, S.D. 1.

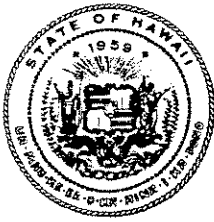
Should you have any questions, please call me at (808) 241-6500.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Westerman".

Robert Westerman  
Fire Chief, County of Kauai

RFW/eld



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

March 31, 2008

### TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Senate Concurrent Resolution 85, SD1/Senate Resolution 47, SD1 – Urging the Associations of Apartment Owners and Condominium Unit Owners' Associations in the State to Develop Emergency and Evacuation Plans for Residents, Including Provisions for Seniors and Residents with Special Health Needs

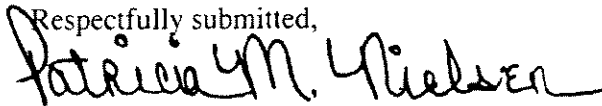
The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports Senate Concurrent Resolution 85, SD1/Senate Resolution 47, SD1 which urges the Association of Apartment Owners and Condominium Unit Owners Association in Hawaii to develop emergency evacuation plans for residents, including provisions for seniors and residents with special health needs.

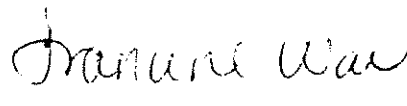
DCAB is one of three co-conveners of an Interagency Working Group that has developed an Interagency Action Plan for the Emergency Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities and Special Health Needs. One of the basic premises of the "2008 Interagency Action Plan for the Emergency Preparedness of Persons with Disabilities and Special Health Needs" is that "Emergency readiness is foremost an individual's personal responsibility, or, if the person is in the care of another person, the caregiver's responsibility. Increased personal readiness for a person with a disability or special health need is even more important to ensure that the person's unique challenges or needs are met."

Urging the Associations of Apartment Owners and Condominium Unit Owners to develop emergency and evacuation plans for residents, including persons with disabilities and special health needs is consistent with the 2008 Interagency Action Plan. We urge the Associations to include residents with disabilities in discussions to develop emergency and evacuation plans, beyond just the voluntary survey mentioned in the resolution. Including residents with disabilities also offers an avenue for direct contact with other residents with disabilities to ensure all residents are aware of emergency readiness, as well as procedures and evacuation routes to use during an emergency. Therefore, we feel including residents with disabilities will provide an invaluable resource in the development of the plans.

We urge your favorable consideration of these resolutions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,  
  
PATRICIA M. NIELSEN  
Chairperson  
Legislative Committee

  
FRANCINE WAI  
Executive Director

**Personal Testimony of  
Jim Shon  
Before**

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Senator Russell S. Kokubun, Chair  
Senator David Y. Ige, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Monday, March 31, 2008  
TIME: 9:30 am  
PLACE: Conference Room 229  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

SR47 SD1

URGING ASSOCIATIONS OF APARTMENT OWNERS AND CONDOMINIUM UNIT OWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS IN THE STATE TO DEVELOP EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PLANS FOR RESIDENTS, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR SENIORS AND RESIDENTS WITH SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS.

**I strongly support this resolution.**

**Hawaii likes to congratulate itself on its planning to cope with disasters. Everything is relative, but for the most vulnerable who often live in isolated and forgotten circumstances during disasters, namely in condos, we have done very little. Please consider the following issues yet to be comprehensively addressed with the power goes off, the earth shakes, and the winds blow out the glass.**

The United States Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging included on its 2001 web page an excellent summary of the responses of elders to disaster situations. They represent an excellent list of needs that elder service programs typically must address. (<http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/aoa/disaster/manual/espec.html>) These included:

**“SENSORY DEPRIVATION** - Older persons' sense of smell, touch, vision and hearing may be less acute than that of the general population. A hearing loss may cause an older person not to hear what is said in a noisy environment or a diminished sense of smell may mean that he or she is more apt to eat spoiled food.

**DELAYED RESPONSE SYNDROME** - Older persons may not react to a situation as fast as younger persons. In disasters, this means that Disaster

Application Centers may need to be kept open longer if older persons have not appeared. It also means they may not apply for benefits within specified time limits.

**GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES** - Depending on when individuals were born, they share differing values and expectations. This becomes important in service delivery since what is acceptable to an 80-year-old person may not be acceptable to a person 65 years of age.

**CHRONIC ILLNESS AND MEDICATION USE** - Higher percentages of older persons have arthritis. This may prevent an older person from standing in line. Medications may cause confusion in an older person or a greater susceptibility to problems such as dehydration. These and other similar problems may increase the difficulties in obtaining assistance.

**MEMORY DISORDERS** - Environmental factors or chronic diseases may affect the ability of older persons to remember information or to act appropriately.

**TRANSFER TRAUMA** - Frail older persons who are dislocated without use of proper procedures may suffer illness and even death.

**MULTIPLE LOSS EFFECT** - Many older persons have lost spouse, income, home, and/or physical capabilities. For some persons, these losses compound each other. Disasters sometimes provide a final blow making recovery particularly difficult for older persons. This may also be reflected in an inappropriate attachment to specific items of property.

**HYPER/HYPOTHERMIA VULNERABILITY** - Older persons are often much more susceptible to the effects of heat or cold. This becomes more critical in disasters when furnaces and air conditioners may be unavailable or unserviceable.

**CRIME VICTIMIZATION** - Con artists target older persons, particularly after a disaster. Other targeting by criminals may also develop. These issues need to be addressed in shelters and in housing arrangements.

**UNFAMILIARITY WITH BUREAUCRACY** - Older persons often have not had any experience working through a bureaucratic system. This is especially true for older women who had a spouse who dealt with these areas.

**LITERACY** - Many older persons have lower educational levels than the general population. This may present difficulties in completion of applications or understanding directions.

**LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL BARRIERS** - Older persons may be limited in their command of the English language or may find their ability to understand instructions diminished by the stressful situation. The resulting failure in communication could easily be further confused by the presence of authoritarian figures, such as police officers, who may increase the apprehension and confusion in the mind of the older person. A number of seniors speak languages other than English, and there is a critical need to be sensitive to language and cultural differences. This could mean older persons in this category will need special assistance in applying for disaster benefits.

**MOBILITY IMPAIRMENT OR LIMITATION** - Older persons may not have the ability to use automobiles or have access to private or public transportation. This may limit the opportunity to go to the Disaster Application Center, obtain goods or water, or relocate when necessary. Older persons may have physical impairments that limit mobility.

**WELFARE STIGMA** - Many older persons will not use services that have the connotation of being "welfare." Older persons often have to be convinced that disaster services are available as a government service that their taxes have purchased. Older persons need to know that their receipt of assistance will not keep another, more impacted, person from receiving help.

**MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA** - Similar to welfare stigma, older persons often feel ashamed that they may experience mental health problems. These attitudes must be addressed individually if older persons are to receive mental health care.

**LOSS OF INDEPENDENCE** - Older persons may fear that they will lose their independence if they ask for assistance. The fear of being placed in a nursing home may be a barrier to accessing services."

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON SENATE RESOLUTION 47 SD 1  
URGING ASSOCIATIONS OF APARTMENT OWNERS AND  
CONDOMINIUM UNIT OWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS IN THE STATE  
TO DEVELOP EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PLANS FOR  
RESIDENTS, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR SENIORS AND  
RESIDENTS WITH SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS

PRESENTATION TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING

BY

MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT G. F. LEE  
DIRECTOR OF CIVIL DEFENSE

MARCH 31, 2008

Chair Kokubun and Committee Members:

I am Major General Bob Lee, Director of Civil Defense, State Department of Defense. I am providing written testimony on Senate Resolution 47 SD1.

We are in support of Senate Resolution 47 SD1; however, we recommend amending paragraph 7, to read "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, those associations of apartment owners and condominium unit owners' associations throughout the state are urged to develop emergency plans that include evacuation and shelter-in-place plans that address the special needs of senior and medically fragile residents.

The plans should include provisions for emergency supplies such as water and non-perishable food. These plans should be distributed to all residents and posted publicly where they can be viewed by residents and visitors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on this measure.