



LATE

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING
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TESTIMONY
OF
RUSS K. SAITO, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE
ON
TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
ON
February 9, 2009

S.B. 1645

RELATING TO STATE BUILDING CODE

Chair English and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on S.B. 1645.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) opposes this bill for several reasons.

First, this bill, if implemented, would undermine the purpose and operation of the State Building Code Council, which was established by Act 82 of the 2007 Legislature.

HRS 107, Part II, State Building Code and Design

Standards, provides a comprehensive process for adopting State building codes from the national and international codes that national and international organizations review and update on an ongoing and rigorous basis.

The process for adopting these national and international codes for Hawai'i involve extensive review by expert committees of architects, engineers, and industry experts, unanimous approval by a subcommittee of county building officials, and approval by the full Council, followed by public hearings and the rulemaking process by which the building codes are put into effect. This process should not be circumvented by directing the State Building Code Council to simply adopt a construction material under the State Building Code.

Further, the State Building Code Council recently approved the International Building Code for adoption as a State Building Code. The International Building Code

includes a procedure in Section 104.11 for experts in such matters to technically evaluate and approve construction materials. The International Code Council (ICC) also enables proponents of new or alternative construction materials to document the structural properties of the material for which consideration is desired based on testing.

We understand that a Maui company has gone through the process and has gained ICC-Certification for one species of bamboo that has been approved for use.

Following a process such as laid out by the ICC ensures that all construction materials are technically substantiated in accordance with national standards. This process protects the interest of public safety much more effectively than mandating the use of certain materials by law.

DAGS recommends that this bill be held.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

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Legislative Testimony
SB 1645 SD 2, RELATING TO STATE BUILDING CODE
Committee on Transportation, International and Intergovernmental Affairs

Monday, February 9, 2009

1:35 p.m.

Room: 224

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS with AMENDMENTS** the intent of SB 1645, which seeks to adopt standards and criteria to allow the use of bamboo as an accepted construction material under the state building code.

It remains unclear why bamboo was specifically chosen. `Ohe, or bamboo, is not known to be a traditional material to Native Hawaiian architecture yet has specific relation to pre-contact Native Hawaiian spirituality and practice. However, OHA would be encouraged by the intent of this bill should `ohe be considered as improving the quality of life for Native Hawaiians through shelter or spiritual practice. It would be discouraging if the use of `ohe serves to portray any further inaccurate depiction or idea of what Native Hawaiian architecture is or has evolved to become. Furthermore, like any other la`au or plant species, it is strongly recommended that `ohe be responsibly utilized as a finite natural resource.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.