

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



LATE

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In reply, please refer to:  
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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

**HB2394, RELATING TO TAXATION**

**Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.  
Director of Health**

**February 9, 2010, 9:30 AM**

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health opposes HB2394.

2 **Fiscal Implications:** The re-allocation of the funding for tax refunds would negatively impact obesity  
3 prevention, tobacco prevention and control, physical activity, nutrition and chronic disease programs in  
4 the Department of Health that rely on the Tobacco Settlement Special Fund (TSSF).

5 **Purpose and Justification:** The Department of Health is very concerned about the proposed use of the  
6 TSSF for tax refunds for vog-related respiratory assistance equipment. The TSSF is now the only state  
7 fund in the Department to address obesity prevention, tobacco prevention and control, physical activity  
8 and nutrition as primary prevention programs, and chronic disease programs which include cancer,  
9 asthma, diabetes, and heart disease and stroke. Beginning in this fiscal year, the funding to the  
10 Department was also reduced to 15% of the TSSF from a previous 25% portion.

11 The Department does monitor and issue updates on air quality. However, this proposed measure  
12 would be difficult to enforce since there are currently no standard specifications for setting up residential  
13 safe rooms, including equipment requirements, and health conditions that necessitate safe rooms.

14 Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

**LATE**

**From:** brian tokuuke [briantokuub@yahoo.com]  
**nt:** Monday, February 08, 2010 6:57 PM  
**:** HLTtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB2394

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow Up  
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Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Committee Members,

I am testifying in support of House Bill 2394 that provides a refundable tax credit for the purchase of respiratory equipment to protect against the effects of VOG for people whose primary care physician recommends that they create a "safe room" in their homes.

The increasing complexity of VOG's impact on the health of people in Hawaii has warranted people to seek relief by purchasing respiratory assistance equipment such as air conditioners and air purifiers to create a "safe room" in their residence. While the "safe room" concept is more prevalent on the Big Island, particularly in public schools in the affected areas, this would extend this opportunity to others across the state by providing that if a letter from a primary care physician on the diagnosis of a VOG-related condition is attached with the receipt for the purchase of such equipment, a refundable tax credit would be available to that taxpayer.

While this provides only some relief to a person experiencing a VOG-related health disorder, it is an important contribution to help provide a safe physical environment in their home.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Brian Tokuuke