

William P. Kenoi  
Mayor



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## County of Hawai'i

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February 7, 2009

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Health Committee  
The Honorable Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Higher Education Committee  
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Labor & Public Employment Committee  
The Honorable Joseph M. Souki, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Transportation Committee  
The Honorable Faye Hanohano, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Public Safety Committee  
The Honorable Clift Tsuji, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Committee on Agriculture  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: House Bills 313, 318, 316, 312, 317, 314 and 315

Aloha, Chairpersons and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments in favor of these seven House Bills designed to cope with the health and economic effects from vog. We will provide more specific testimony on the individual bills, but please let me express my appreciation to members of the Legislature for addressing this serious problem that is affecting our people's lives and livelihoods.

As you know, sulfur dioxide emissions at the summit of Kilauea volcano began climbing in December 2007, and on March 12, 2008 increased sharply from the new vent at Halema'uma'u Crater. The trade winds have generally swept the gasses and acid rain southwest, causing major agricultural damage and particular hardship in communities such as Wood Valley, Hawaiian Ocean View Estates, Na'alehu and Pahala.

As you will hear today, crops have been damaged, agricultural infrastructure has deteriorated from the fumes, and people have become ill.

Ranchers, farmers and homeowners who have spent their lives building businesses and raising families in rural Ka'u, South Kona and Volcano have suddenly had to cope with completely unexpected economic losses and illnesses.

We deeply appreciate the efforts of Representative Herkes and all of the committee chairpersons and members in taking this time to search for the best methods of safeguarding the health of our Hawai'i Island residents, and the best ways to provide relief to businesses that are threatened by the increased emissions.

We particularly thank you for your willingness to address the problem in these difficult economic times, and welcome any assistance you can provide for our residents and for the many Hawai'i County agricultural operations that are trying to cope with this new threat.

Aloha,

Billy Kenoi

# LATE TESTIMONY

AGR-HED-HLT-LAB-PBS-TRN Hearing  
Saturday, February 7, 2009  
9:00 am  
State Capitol  
CR 325

Testimony in support of:

HB 312  
HB 313  
HB 314  
HB 315  
HB 316  
HB 317  
HB 318

We are 100% on Bills 312,313,314,315,316,317 and 318.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Don and Martie Nitsche  
Ocean View Residents