

LATE TESTIMONY

To: PSM Testimony
Subject: SB2365

New Years Eve fireworks were spectacular. We did not have to go anywhere. It was all there, the aerials, firecrackers, etc., really beautiful displays (although illegal).

We don't have a problem with celebrating New Years Eve on "New Years Eve." However in Makakilo the "big bombs" and fireworks started in mid-October and continued pretty much on a nightly basis right up through the holiday season. In fact this past weekend (Jan 30, 31) firecrackers were still being popped.

We have 2 silky terriers. In October while we were on vacation, one of our terriers chewed through 9 gauge chain link fence trying to get away from the fireworks. He ran away twice. Amazingly, he wasn't run over on Makakilo Drive. Once we got back from vacation, every evening we would go though his hyperventilating, getting hot, and just going crazy trying to get away from the fireworks.

In December on more than several occasions while driving home from work at about 8 or 9 at night the bombs were going off on the freeway. Quite frightening when you don't expect it.

We called 911 so many times, we finally gave up. It does not appear that the police department can really enforce the current law as it is written.

We're not talking about culture, traditions or customs here! We're talking about people that have no respect for others or their privacy or property!

It seems that perhaps these illegal aerials need to be stopped at the docks

I know this email is reaching you a little late but PLEASE TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDERATION.

Aloha,

The Wisenberg Family
tnwise@hawaii.rr.com
talktotim@hawaii.rr.com

LATE TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Robert Bunda, Vice Chair

Evan Rapoport

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

Support for SB 2365, RELATING TO CONSUMER FIREWORKS

I am outraged by the abundance of fireworks and the lack of enforcement of existing laws this past New Year's Eve (and in the past on New Year's and July 4th). I support a total ban on fireworks (except for limited use in cultural and religious ceremonies).

I sat in my home in Kailua on New Year's Eve listening to the sounds of the neighborhood and feeling like I lived in a war zone. It began at sundown and lasted through the night (actually, it began weeks before New Year's). The use of fireworks in Kailua, and the rest of the island, is simply out of control. Over the past few years, both on July 4th and New Year's Eve, I've been dumbfounded as to how our state allows this to continue. Whatever benefit that a minority of people are deriving from setting off explosives cannot even begin to justify the negative consequences of these fireworks. It has gotten to the point where I hope for torrential rains to thwart the craziness.

At the end of my letter I have included a list of relevant statistics that were compiled by a friend of mine who is an industrial safety expert here on Oahu. I hope these hard facts he has provided will complement my own thoughts.

First and foremost, I believe it is the duty of elected officials to use their powers to protect the public welfare. Fireworks present a clear and present danger to everyone, not just those who use them. I've witnessed fires in the middle of the streets from people who leave the smoking remains of their ten second explosive pleasures; cars must swerve to avoid them or wait for them to finish burning. I've watched irresponsible parents sit on their lawns as they allow small children to stand by the street and play with fire. Twice, I've seen four foot flames rise from busy streets while explosions shot off in all directions as little kids stood next to them. I've listened to enormous explosions that cause houses to shake, my neighbors' babies to cry, our dogs to bark, and car alarms to sound. I've had to close the windows to my house to prevent noxious smoke and ash from stinking up my home and hurting my eyes, but usually to no avail.

I ask you this: Will it take an unprecedented disaster before we act to ban fireworks? How many children must lose their fingers or their lives, how many homes must burn before we do something to stop this? I am not being melodramatic; these things happen every year and yet nothing changes. And when the economy gets better and people can afford more fireworks, it's only going to get worse.

Second, the negative effects of fireworks hardly end when the festivities are over. Fireworks are composed of toxic chemical that pollute our air, contaminate our drinking water, leave trash all over our streets (there is still residue on my street over a month after New Year's), leave residue in our watershed thus harming plants and animals, and contribute to marine debris that threatens the health, safety, and aesthetics of our beaches and coasts. This results in violations of the Clean Air Act and a number of other environmental laws. Please see the link below for more information. This is a very bad thing for our State, particularly when we claim to be stewards of the environment or position our state as eco-friendly. <http://environment.about.com/od/healthenvironment/a/toxicfireworks.htm>

Third, there seems to be almost no enforcement of fireworks laws. I suspect this is a very difficult thing to do as someone must be caught in the act, which is why I am in support of a ban. People who were launching loud aerials evaded arrest all night long even though they were clearly coming from the same locations, over and over, hour after hour. I made several calls providing locations of these violations, but nothing changed. As a relevant aside, on New Year's the Secret Service needed to intervene on a fireworks situation to ensure President Obama's safety; this is an embarrassment to Honolulu, to Hawaii, to our police force, and to me as a citizen.

There are a number of incredible public fireworks displays that people all over the island can attend. There is no reason that people should be allowed to launch these stupid, selfish, dangerous fireworks in residential neighborhoods that put everyone else at risk and deprive us from the right to peaceful enjoyment of our holidays. Whatever traditions or religious beliefs that people claim to be celebrating do not justify the risk to public safety that results. I highly doubt that any religion or culture condones the use of explosives, particularly illegal ones, by people (including children) with no expertise in how to use them safely. I also suspect that very few of the people who are launching fireworks are doing so because of their cultural and/or religious beliefs.

I used to look forward to New Year's and July 4th, but now I just worry about the health and safety of our families, our neighbors, our pets, our oceans, and our `aina. We need to give much more support to our hardworking policemen and firemen so they can prevent the proliferation of illegal fireworks and catch people who use legal ones irresponsibly. More importantly, we need to enact legislation that stops the use and sale of fireworks altogether.

Please, please, please, do something about this so that good, respectful, responsible citizens can enjoy themselves on holidays and not have their safety jeopardized by a loud, reckless minority. Please, take a stand against fireworks!!!

Some Scary Fireworks Statics:

Fireworks...

-Cause significant fires and related loss of life. Each year HFD responds from 20-100 fires over New Years

Eve. A 2000 house fire in Palolo valley caused a fatality.

-Cause serious burns and injuries. The CPSC estimates that in 2008 about 7,000 people were treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with fireworks. More than half the injuries were burns and most of the injuries involved the hands, eyes, and legs. People ranging in age from 15 to 19 years old had the highest per capita injury rate among all age groups.

-Cause significant health conditions. Studies have found a dramatic increase in emergency room visits due to asthma and other chronic obstructive pulmonary disorders (COPD) during firework activities.

-Cause environmental degradation. The many colors in fireworks are due to burning metals. Specifically, green colors are caused by burning Barium. Barium is a characteristic EPA and DOH hazardous waste and can accumulate in water and soil. Additionally, particulate matter and sulfur dioxide frequently build up in the air in significant concentrations.

-Cause increased risk to air, water and land travel and shipping. Illegal fireworks are improperly brought to Hawaii , increasing the risk to all those that travel and ship goods. The FAA has noted that the majority of illegal fireworks brought on planes are bound for Hawaii .

-Cause significant disturbances to the peace. Aerial fireworks produce noise levels around 150 decibels, disrupting neighborhoods, causing stress to both residents and pets.

Thank you for your time. I hope you will do the right thing and ban the use of amateur explosives in our state.

LATE TESTIMONY

From: Dennis Naganuma
Sent: Sunday, February 07, 2010 9:33 PM
To: PSM Testimony
Cc: takai2-Desiree
Subject: S.B. 2365, Total Ban on Consumer Fireworks Except for Permitted Religious or Cultural Purposes

Dear Honorable Members of the Public Safety and Military Committee,

My name is Dennis Naganuma and I am one of a growing number of Oahu residents who feel that the time has come for a total ban on fireworks. I was born and raised on Oahu and fireworks has been a part of my life for the past fifty some odd years. A few short years ago I would not have even considered this ban, but this past New Year's Eve really changed my mind. I was quite alarmed in the number of residents in the Mililani Town area that were setting off not only illegal aerial fireworks, but what appears to be a tremendous increase in the use of commercial grade pyrotechnics. In addition, there were quite a few residents setting off what seemed like either grenade simulators or concussion grenades, but whatever they were they actually shook my house and I could feel the shockwave. The dramatic increase in the number of people setting these commercial grade fireworks really made for an unpleasant New Year's Eve. My family and I spent the evening comforting our pets as they were terrified by the much louder noise created by these commercial grade fireworks. I've spoken with friends who live in neighborhoods across Oahu and they all experienced the same thing, a dramatic increase in the use of commercial grade fireworks.

I realize and I'll be the first one to say that a total ban on all fireworks may not be the answer, but it seems that laws must be enacted to protect people from themselves. Case in point is those very young children that were injured I believe on Maui when they were playing with fireworks in the back of a truck and set off other fireworks which caused them injuries. I personally feel that illegal fireworks and more importantly the use of commercial grade fireworks in residential areas is a serious public safety issue not only for the injuries and property damage they may cause but for the health hazard related to the thick smoke created by these fireworks.

I urge this committee to seriously consider these bills this year as I dread to think how much worse it will be next year. Also Committee Members please find a way to find out how so much illegal fireworks made it to Honolulu's docks in the first place. I know others have said this but it seems that terrorists would have no problem getting materials they need to make explosive devices through our docks. Why is it so easy to bring these illegal fireworks into Honolulu?

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Dennis Naganuma

LATE TESTIMONY

From: Jody Waltz
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2010 7:21 AM
To: PSM Testimony
Subject: Fireworks Ban

DATE: Tuesday, February 9, 2010
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 229

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Bill S.B.2365 - RELATING TO CONSUMER FIREWORKS

“The purpose of this act is to Impose a total ban on consumer fireworks except for permitted religious or cultural purposes.”

E-mail testimony by Jo Waltz, Kailua, Oahu

February 8, 2010

We have lived in Kailua, Oahu for over 35 years and have never experienced

the noise that we had this past New Year's eve. The noises were not just firecrackers; they were like

bomb blasts; we felt as though we were in a war zone.

Today, Feb. 7, 2010, these same types of blasts are occurring. Superbowl celebrations????

There is no way that the our police department can enforce the existing regulations.

There needs to be a **total ban** on consumer fireworks!

Jo Waltz

LATE TESTIMONY

FROM: MAILINGLIST@CAPITOL.HAWAII.GOV
SENT: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 08, 2010 10:19 AM
TO: PSM TESTIMONY
CC: RONJ@HAWAII.RR.COM
SUBJECT: TESTIMONY FOR SB2365 ON 2/9/2010 1:25:00 PM

TESTIMONY FOR PSM 2/9/2010 1:25:00 PM SB2365

CONFERENCE ROOM: 229
TESTIFIER POSITION: SUPPORT
TESTIFIER WILL BE PRESENT: NO
SUBMITTED BY: RONALD SIMPSON
ORGANIZATION: PEARL CITY NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD
ADDRESS: PEARL CITY
PHONE: 808-398-5177
E-MAIL: RONJ@HAWAII.RR.COM
SUBMITTED ON: 2/8/2010

COMMENTS:

THE HONORABLE WILL ESPERO, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY RELATIONS
THE STATE SENATE
STATE CAPITOL RM 229
HONOLULU HI 96813

PEARL CITY NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 08, 2010

DATE OF HEARING: TUESDAY, 09 FEB, 2010 1:25PM, RM 229

SUPPORT SB 2365 FIREWORKS BAN

GOOD MORNING:

MY NAME IS RONALD SIMPSON, A MEMBER OF THE PEARL CITY NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD. I AM TESTIFYING IN SUPPORT OF SB2365, FIREWORKS BAN.

I SUPPORT A COMPLETE FIREWORKS BAN, EXCEPT FOR ORGANIZED PUBLIC DISPLAYS, AND RELIGIOUS PURPOSES.

THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS COMPLAINTS IN PEARL CITY AND BEYOND REGARDING THE USE OF ILLEGAL AERIAL FIREWORKS, AND ESPECIALLY THE BOMB LIKE TYPES OF LOUD BOOMING NOISES - FAR WORSE THAN LAST YEAR.

IN MY AREA ALONE PEOPLE WERE STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET FIRING OFF SKY ROCKETS REPEATEDLY THROUGHOUT NEW YEARS EVE AND BEYOND -

EASY TO DETECT BY LAW ENFORCEMENT. HOWEVER, THEY WERE NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.

MY ROOF WAS LITTERED WITH NUMEROUS SPENT FIREWORKS PARAPHERNALIA, A STRONG POTENTIAL FOR HOUSE FIRE.

AS YOU KNOW, THE ILLEGAL AERIALS AND BOOMING WERE BEING IGNITED BEFORE THANKSGIVING - THE LATEST WAS JUST YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WHEN LOUD BOOMS WERE HEARD IN THE LOWER PACIFIC PALISADES AREA.

I RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT THE ILLEGAL FIREWORKS WERE COMING INTO OAHU BEFORE THANKSGIVING, BY CONTAINER SHIP FROM HONG KONG OR TAIWAN. I ALSO RECEIVED DISTURBING INFORMATION THAT EVEN SOME LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WERE PURCHASING AND SELLING THE ILLEGAL FIREWORKS. THIS MAY ACCOUNT FOR THE APPARENT LACK OF DILIGENCE IN ENFORCING THE ILLEGAL FIREWORKS BAN.

MY DOG BARKS AND SHIVERS EVERY TIME HE HEARS THE AERIALS AND BOOMING NOISES. I HAD TO SPEND SEVERAL HOURS WITH HIM ON NEW YEARS EVE AND BEYOND TO TRY TO CONSOLE AND COMFORT HIM. NOW HE BARKS AT ANY NOISE, FIREWORKS OR NOT.

PLEASE TAKE POSITIVE ACTION NOW AS IT CAN ONLY GET WORSE, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT IS REALIZED THAT LITTLE SINCERE EFFORT IS BEING EXERTED TO ENFORCE THE EXISTING FIREWORKS LAWS, AS EVIDENCED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT'S LACK OF VISIBILITY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

THIS MADNESS HAS TO STOP! PLEASE DO THE RIGHT THING AND BAN FIREWORKS; THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE DO NOT WANT IT.

THANKS FOR YOUR THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION.

From: Gordon Fujioka [mailto:fuj46@msn.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 06, 2010 1:07 PM
To: PSM Testimony
Subject: Fireworks Ban

LATE TESTIMONY

Once again, the subject of a "total ban" on fireworks is on the table. Each year if you notice, there seems to be an abundance of illegal fireworks being set off before, during & after the New Year. You can see & hear them (gets louder and seemingly more dangerous each passing year) during this period. I reside in Mililani Town and can see & hear these illegal fireworks from all directions (during MMA matches, football games, & prior to the holidays) , leading one to believe that these illegal fireworks are readily available & easy to obtain. How do these come in undetected? Is some agency not doing their job?

Before someone dies or gets seriously injured, how about seriously considering a total ban on fireworks? At the rate these things come in undetected, also the explosive power of these devices could do a lot of harm & damage in the hands of some of these people with the "ainokea" attitude. Imagine what an errant aerial explosive would do to a group of people. Lets do something this year-not put it off till next year or the next. A total ban would be the only solution. This would allow the Police to do their job.

In closing, you legislators should really consider this over populated island & changing attitudes of the people when you are deciding this issue. Enough, already!

Mahalo for any consideration,

Gordon Fujioka
Mililani Town

LATE TESTIMONY

From: John Heatherman [mailto:Heathr@hawaii.rr.com]

Sent: Friday, February 05, 2010 8:39 PM

To: PSM Testimony

Subject: Fireworks

On the evening of December 31st 2009 my wife and I experienced the most horrendous noise from these Rocket like fireworks. They were much larger and louder than years past and started sometime before Thanksgiving of 2009. They scared our animals and us and we kept wondering if our roof was going to catch on fire. Assisted in this senseless noisy display of fireworks was the light winds on New Years eve. It would be highly appreciated if our Legislature could do something about this very serious problem which affects our health and the safety of our homes.

Thank You

John Heatherman heathr@hawaii.rr.com

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Kailua, Hi 96734