



LATE TESTIMONY

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

RE: SB 2809 SD1 – Relating to Utilities Regulation
February 22, 2010, 10AM, Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Hawaii Water Service Company, Inc. (HWSC”), which owns five water and wastewater utilities on the Islands of Maui and Hawaii, I appreciate the opportunity to share our views on this matter. I am Jim Smith, General Manager of HWSC.

As a utility company that is regulated by Public Utilities Commission (PUC), we support the sufficient funding and staffing for the PUC and the Division of Consumer Advocacy (DCA). While we know the State is currently faced with financial challenges, we believe that the recent budget and staffing cuts not only fail to protect the interests of both the utility companies and the respective consumers they serve, but do not translate into cost savings for the State.

The PUC and the DCA need to have the necessary staffing and resources for them to oversee all utility and related matters to ensure that the services utilities provide are reliable, safe and in the public interest. Although all utilities (and our ratepayers) contribute 100 percent of the funds required to operate the PUC and the DCA via the public utility fee, we understand that the PUC and DCA are currently working with limited staffing and resources, fully utilizing all available personnel to conduct the complex review and analysis required effectively regulating and overseeing Hawaii’s utility companies.

We respectfully request your support of this bill.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jim Smith
General Manager
Hawaii Water Service Company, Inc.
Office: 808-883-2065
Email: jsmith@hawaiiwaterservice.com