

LATE TESTIMONY

Action the Drug Policy Group

A sister organization of the Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i
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Dedicated to safe, responsible, and effective drug policies since 1993

TO: House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

FROM: Pamela Lichty, MPH
President

DATE: February 3, 2011, 8:30 a.m., room 309

RE: H.B. 1217 RELATING TO BATH SALTS – **IN OPPOSITION**

Aloha Representative Aquino and members of the Committee. My name is Pam Lichty and I'm testifying on behalf of the Drug Policy Action Group.

We are opposed to this measure. It's very simple: we can't keep up. There is no point in passing a law to criminalize every single new substance of abuse that comes down the pike. Law enforcement cannot keep up with the purveyors of purportedly pleasurable substances. It is an easy matter to change a molecule here and there and come up with a new "designer drug."

It is simply a waste of this body's time to keep up with the inventiveness of people who are out to profit from young people and others searching for the latest high.

We ask the Committee to hold this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



the **Drug Policy** **LATE**
Forum **TESTIMONY**
of hawaii

February 3, 2011

To: Rep. Henry Aquino, Chair
Rep. Ty Cullen, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta, Executive Director

Re: HB 1217 Relating to Bath Salts

Position: Opposed

Good morning Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the Committee, I am Jeanne Ohta, Executive Director of the Drug Policy Forum of Hawaii testifying in opposition to HB 1217 Relating to Bath Salts.

Adding another designer drug to penal code does not solve any problem. It just adds more people into our criminal justice system and into our prisons. Can we really afford to imprison more people than we have now?

If this drug is so dangerous that we do not want people using it, doesn't it make more sense to spend taxpayer money on prevention programs than incarceration? It currently costs approximately \$38,000 per year to incarcerate one person.

It makes more sense to regulate this drug by restricting sales to minors; like we restrict sales of cigarettes and alcohol. My understanding is that retail stores are selling these products off their shelves. Regulation makes drugs more difficult for our youth to purchase.

This type of policy, which continuously adds designer drugs to our penal code will become limitless and impossible to keep up with. New drugs will be developed. The drug problem is best addressed using public health solutions and prevention programs.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today.

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