

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 318  
A BILL RELATING TO VOG

PRESENTATION TO THE  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

MAJOR GENERAL DARRYLL WONG  
INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CIVIL DEFENSE

February 3, 2011

Chair Aquino and Committee members:

I am Major General Darryll Wong, Interim Director of Civil Defense, State Department of Defense. I am providing written testimony on House Bill 318.

While we appreciate the Legislature's concern over the effects and impact of vog on health, school-aged children, agriculture, livestock, and the visitor industry, we believe House Bill 318 is not necessary. House Bill 318 establishes a new inter-agency volcanic activity task force that duplicates the Interagency Task Force on Sulfur Dioxide Hazards established in June 2008.

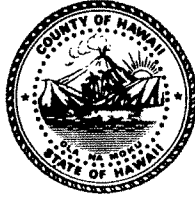
The development of plans, programs, and initiatives to mitigate the effects of sulfur dioxide, fluoride, and vog on the island of Hawaii and throughout the State requires the cooperation and collaboration of many organizations, public and private, including the input of affected residents. In June 2008, we established an interagency task force to address the effects of the sulfur dioxide hazard on various communities and counties. This interagency task force is under the coordinating leadership of the State Civil Defense and co-chaired by the Mayor of Hawaii County.

Rather than introducing a bill that duplicates the work of the Interagency Task Force on Sulfur Dioxide Hazards, we recommend that the legislature defer House Bill 318. We would recommend that the Interagency Task Force on Sulfur Dioxide Hazards be renamed to the Interagency Task Force on Volcanic Hazards and invite memberships to the Representatives of House Districts 4 and 5, Hawaii County Council Members, the Senator from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Senatorial District, and other agency representatives.

Finally, as we have in the previous Legislative Session, we urge the Legislature to consider other measures that would benefit affected communities. These may include: special tax relief initiatives for residents who can purchase air monitors, air conditioning systems, and safe rooms; and, the designation of lands or agricultural lots for the relocation of farmers economically impacted by the effects of vog.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony that opposes this bill.

**William P. Kenoi**  
*Mayor*



**William T. Takaba**  
*Managing Director*

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February 3, 2011

Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair  
And Members of the House Committee on  
Public Safety & Military Affairs  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 309  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Aloha Chair Aquino and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments in favor of House Bill 318, which would establish an inter-agency volcanic activity task force within the office of Hawai'i State Civil Defense.

Sulfur dioxide emissions at the summit of Kilauea volcano have created significant problems for residents of Puna and Ka'u since emissions began climbing in December 2007. This has caused particular hardship in communities such as Wood Valley, Hawaiian Ocean View Estates, Na'alehu and Pahala. Ranchers, farmers and homeowners who have lived for generations and built businesses in rural Ka'u, South Kona and Volcano have suddenly had to cope with unexpected economic losses and health problems.

We respectfully suggest your committee may wish to amend this bill to include representation for North and South Kona, which are also affected. You may also wish to include the state Department of Health (DOH), which is the agency that provides technical and public health related guidance relative to dealing with vog. We believe the Hawai'i County Fire Department (HFD) should also be included, since HFD is tasked with monitoring SO2 levels when the need arises.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

**William P. Kenoi**  
**MAYOR**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

**Date:** 02/03/2011

**Committee:** House Public Safety & Military  
Affairs

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Mary A. Correa, Complex Area Superintendent

**Title of Bill:** HB 0318 RELATING TO VOG

**Purpose of Bill:** Establishes a volcanic activity task force to discuss the impact of Vog on the people of Hawaii and find ways to address these issues.

**Department's Position:** The Department of Education (DOE) supports HB 318 to establish within the Office of Hawaii State Civil Defense an interagency volcanic activity task force. We are concerned about the effects and impact of vog on the health of our school children and staff. As the bar has been raised (rigor) regarding Hawaii's curriculum and instruction, student and staff attendance and productivity levels in school becomes critical in improving academic outcomes to ensure students are career and college ready at graduation. The DOE will fully participate in this task force. Representing the DOE will be Mary A. Correa, Complex Area Superintendent for the Kau, Keaau and Pahoa district.