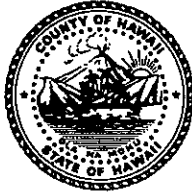


**BRITTANY SMART**  
Councilmember  
Hawai'i County Council



Phone: (808) 961-8263  
Fax: (808) 961-8912  
bsmart@co.hawaii.hi.us

*Hawai'i County Council*  
*County of Hawai'i*  
25 Aupuni Street  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

# LATE TESTIMONY

February 2, 2011

Hawaii State Capitol  
Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Honorable Committee Members:

As the Hawaii County Councilmember representing District 6, I am in full support of House Bill number 318, Relating to Vog, introduced by Representatives Mr. Herkes and Mrs. Hanohano. Council District 6 covers the areas of Upper Puna (including Volcano), Ka'u, and South Kona, all of which suffer from vog exposure on a daily basis, albeit at varying degrees due to weather and wind patterns affecting the exposure rates.

According to the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park website ([www.nps.gov/havo](http://www.nps.gov/havo)), the morning of March 12, 2008, Halema'uma'u Crater showed the formation of a fumarole (vent emitting gases), accompanied with three explosions. The vent has been emitting fumes and ash ever since.

It is due time that there is a comprehensive study to fully understand the effects of vog on public health, the environment, and other aspects of daily life. To achieve this, I believe it is imperative that this task force be formed. I am pleased to see that this task force provides for testimony at its meetings to aid in information gathering from members of the public. The numerous agencies involved in forming this task force are vital to ensuring that the preliminary report and strategy plan is as comprehensive as possible.

I encourage your support for House Bill Number 318.

Mahalo,

Brittany Smart  
Councilmember, District 6  
Upper Puna, Ka'u, South Kona



**Hawaii Farm Bureau**  
F E D E R A T I O N

2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819

Phone: (808) 848-2074; Neighbor Islands: 1-800-482-1272

Fax: (808) 848-1921; e-mail: [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org)

# LATE TESTIMONY

February 2, 2011

## TESTIMONY

### RE: HB318 RELATING TO VOG

Chair Herkes and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Farm Bureau on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families and organizations is in **strong support with comment of HB318**, creating an interagency task force to recommend action relating to vog.

Since 1984, vog has been an ongoing concern on the Big Island and periodically on other islands. Farmers and ranchers have experienced various levels of losses, including death of plants, especially leafy vegetables and flowers, livestock and degradation of fences. There has been a USDA secretarial emergency designation for areas of the Big Island that authorized low interest loans but there have been few takers because people don't want to invest due to the uncertainty of the duration of the activity.

There are other disaster programs through insurance for flower and livestock (death and fencing), but many have not signed up for programs and so do not qualify for insurance payment.

Opportunities exist but assistance may be needed to get the information out to farmers and ranchers and assist them in understanding the risk/benefits of the various USDA programs. To this end, we recommend the addition of a representative from USDA, Farm Service Agency to be a part of this group. They could provide services available and the interagency group could identify mechanisms to get the assistance out to affected parties.

In addition, it would be valuable to obtain first hand information about impacts as well as pragmatic opinions of delivery of assistance. We recommend adding a representative of the Big Island Farm Bureau and Big Island Cattlemen's Association.

We appreciate this opportunity to testify and respectfully request passage of this measure, adding representatives mentioned above to the list. If there are any questions, please contact Chris Manfredi at 9299550. Thank you.