



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

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February 2, 2011

The Honorable Henry Aquino, Chair
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 419
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Aquino:

Subject: H.B. 604 Relating to Fire Protection

I am Kenneth G. Silva, Chair of the State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The SFC and the HFD support H.B. 604, which proposes to ban retail sales and the distribution of novelty lighters in the state.

Novelty lighters have features which are attractive to children, including visual effects, flashing lights, musical sounds, or toy-like designs. Since 1996, the Consumer Product Safety Commission recalled thousands of novelty lighters due to their danger to public safety. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), children playing with lighters or matches from 2004 to 2008 accounted for 57,700 fires, 113 civilian deaths, 916 injuries, and \$286 million in property loss. In addition, 47 percent of individuals who started fires using lighters or matches and 65% of the fatal victims were five years old or younger. In the City and County of Honolulu during the period 2003-2010, 48 fires were started by children playing with lighters. This resulted in property and content damage estimated at \$3,915,900.

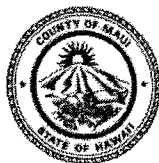
Many local and national public safety agencies, including the NFPA, the Western Fire Chiefs Association, and the National Association of State Fire Marshals, support the prohibition and distribution of novelty lighters. The function of a lighter can be achieved without the novelty attraction, which only serves to invite dangerous behavior that results in tragedy and destruction. To date, 14 states have banned the sale and distribution of novelty lighters.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 604. Should you have any questions, please call SFC Administrator Socrates Bratakos at 723-7151.

Sincerely,

KENNETH G. SILVA
Chair

ALAN M. ARAKAWA
MAYOR



JEFFREY A. MURRAY
CHIEF

ROBERT M. SHIMADA
DEPUTY CHIEF

COUNTY OF MAUI
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & PUBLIC SAFETY

200 DAIRY ROAD
KAHULUI, HI 96732
(808) 270-7561
Fax (808) 270-7919
Email: fire.dept@mauicounty.gov

February 2, 2011

The Honorable Henry Aquino
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 419
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Aquino:

Subject: H.B. 604 Relating to Fire Protection

I am Jeffrey A. Murray, Fire Chief of the County of Maui, Department of Fire & Public Safety (MFD) and a member of the State Fire Council (SFC). The MFD and the SFC support H.B. 966, which proposes to revise Chapter 132-9, Hawaii Revised Statutes. The MFD and the SFC support H.B. 604, which proposes to ban retail sales and the distribution of novelty lighters in the state.

Novelty lighters have features which are attractive to children, including visual effects, flashing lights, musical sounds, or toy-like designs. Since 1996, the Consumer Product Safety Commission recalled thousands of novelty lighters due to their danger to public safety. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), children playing with lighters or matches from 2004 to 2008 accounted for 57,700 fires, 113 civilian deaths, 916 injuries, and \$286 million in property loss. In addition, 47 percent of individuals who started fires using lighters or matches and 65% of the fatal victims were five years old or younger.

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The Honorable Henry Aquino, Chair
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February 2, 2011

The MFD and the SFC urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 604.

Should you have any questions, please call SFC Administrator Socrates Bratakos at 723-7151.

Sincerely,



JEFFREY A. MURRAY
Fire Chief

William P. Kenoi
Mayor



Darryl J. Oliveira
Fire Chief

Glen P. I. Honda
Deputy Fire Chief

County of Hawai'i

FIRE DEPARTMENT

25 Aupuni Street • Suite 2501 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
(808) 932-2900 • Fax (808) 932-2928

February 1, 2011

TO : REPRESENTATIVE HENRY J. C. AQUINO, CHAIR, COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

FROM : FIRE CHIEF DARRYL OLIVEIRA, HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: HB 604 RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION
DATE/TIME OF HEARING: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2011, 8:30 A.M.

I would like to submit this letter as written testimony in support of House Bill 604, which proposes to prohibit the sale and/or distribution of Novelty Lighters.

As described in the proposed legislation, novelty lighters are designed and constructed in a manner that appeals to the interest and curiosity of children and resembles toys. This attraction and the ease of use pose a significant risk for injury and fires. Considering that lighters can and are manufactured to support their intended use and purpose without creating a dangerous attraction to children, the sale and distribution of novelty lighters is irresponsible and presents with significant risk for potential harm.

Therefore, I humbly request your consideration and support of House Bill 604.

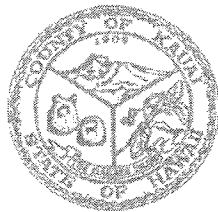
Sincerely,


DARRYL OLIVEIRA
Fire Chief

DO:lk



Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Mayor



Robert F. Westerman
Fire Chief

Gary K. Heu
Managing Director

John T. Blalock
Deputy Fire Chief

KAUA'I FIRE DEPARTMENT
County of Kaua'i, State of Hawai'i

3083 Akahi Street, Suite 101, Līhu'e, Hawai'i 96766
TEL (808) 241-4980 FAX (808) 241-6508

February 1, 2011

The Honorable Henry Aquino
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 419
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Aquino:

Subject: H.B. 604 Relating to Fire Protection

I am Robert F. Westerman, Fire Chief of the Kauai Fire Department (KFD) and a member of the State Fire Council (SFC). The SFC and the KFD support H.B. 604, which proposes to ban retail sales and the distribution of novelty lighters in the state.

Novelty lighters have features which are attractive to children, including visual effects, flashing lights, musical sounds, or toy-like designs. Since 1996, the Consumer Product Safety Commission recalled thousands of novelty lighters due to their danger to public safety. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), children playing with lighters or matches from 2004 to 2008 accounted for 57,700 fires, 113 civilian deaths, 916 injuries, and \$286 million in property loss. In addition, 47 percent of individuals who started fires using lighters or matches and 65% of the fatal victims were five years old or younger. In the City and County of Honolulu during the period 2003-2010, 48 fires were started by children playing with lighters. This resulted in property and content damage estimated at \$3,915,900.

Many local and national public safety agencies, including the NFPA, the Western Fire Chiefs Association, and the National Association of State Fire Marshals, support the prohibition and distribution of novelty lighters. The function of a lighter can be achieved without the novelty attraction, which only serves to invite dangerous behavior that results in tragedy and destruction. To date, 14 states have banned the sale and distribution of novelty lighters.

The SFC and the KFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 604.

Please call me at (808) 241-4980 should you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Westerman".

Robert Westerman
Fire Chief, County of Kaua'i

RFW/eld