

SB892,SD1

Testimony



P.O. Box 976
Honolulu, Hawaii 96808

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Labor

RE: BILL: SB892, SD1
DATE: February 23, 2011
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 016

Dear Senator Hee and Members of the Committee:

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Hawai'i Legislative Action Committee of the Community Associations Institute ("CAI"). CAI is a non-profit national and statewide organization whose members include condominium associations, planned community associations, residential cooperatives, homeowners, managing agents, and others involved in creating, managing, servicing, and living in common interest communities. The Hawai'i LAC is committed to protecting the rights of genuinely handicapped and disabled persons and is pleased that the Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs has deleted references to "comfort animals" in SB892 SD1.

However, Section 1 needs to be further amended at page 2, line 6 and lines 14-15 to reflect the revisions made in SD1 by deleting the phrases "or comfort animal" and "include 'comfort animal'" from the text in order to remove any implication that "comfort animals" are to be recognized as a separate or special class of service animal.

CAI-LAC supports the deletion of all references to comfort animals because even a cursory search of the internet discloses a plethora of sites stating things such as:

Yes, You Can Take Your Dog With You! ... A large number of our clients register their dogs as Certified Service Animals or Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) ... to successfully qualify for housing where pets aren't allowed. ...
Complete Service Animal Certification Kit - ONLY \$64.95!

See <http://www.nsarco.com/>.

Sad to say, it is evident that many non-disabled "scam artists" are perfectly willing to hijack the fair housing laws and to bully housing providers with threats of complaints to civil rights enforcement agencies in order to bring ordinary pets into projects where they are otherwise prohibited. The deletion of comfort animals from SB892 protects the truly handicapped and disabled by preventing scammers from hijacking legislation enacted for their benefit.

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. If you have any questions, I can be reached at 697-6004 or by email at plahne@alf-hawaii.com.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE
HAWAII LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE

/s/ Philip L. Lahne

PHILIP L. LAHNE, Member