

# SCR58/SR32

**Measure Title:**

REQUESTING THE STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL TO ADOPT THE REQUIREMENT THAT AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLERS BE INSTALLED IN NEW ONE-AND TWO-FAMILY DWELLINGS.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



BRUCE A. COPPA  
Comptroller

RYAN OKAHARA  
Deputy Comptroller

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING  
AND GENERAL SERVICES  
P.O. BOX 119  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
OF  
BRUCE A. COPPA, COMPTROLLER  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES  
TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEES  
ON  
PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
AND  
WATER, LAND, AND HOUSING  
ON  
March 22, 2011

S.C.R. NO. 58, S.R. 32

REQUESTING THE STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL TO ADOPT THE  
REQUIREMENT THAT AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLERS BE INSTALLED IN NEW ONE-  
AND TWO- FAMILY DWELLINGS

Chair Espero, Chair Dela Cruz, and members of the Committees, thank you for the  
opportunity to submit written testimony on S.C.R. 58, S.R. 32.

The State Building Council currently has an investigative committee for residential fire  
sprinklers in new one and two family dwellings whose purpose is to determine whether fire  
sprinklers should be included in the building and residential codes. The recommendations from  
this investigative committee are forwarded to the State Building Code Council for a decision on  
adoption. This investigative committee is co-chaired by a representative from the Honolulu Fire  
Department and one from the City and County of Honolulu's Planning and Permitting  
Department. Members on this investigative committee include representatives from the building

industry and representatives from the county building departments. Representatives from national building code associations also participates in the discussions by providing information to this investigative committee. Areas this investigative committee explores includes infrastructure requirements (availability of water), economic impacts on home constructions, and education of the public and industry.

In summary, the State Building Code Council is currently evaluating the building codes to require fire sprinklers in one and two family dwellings which mirrors the substance of S.C.R, 58, S.R. 32. We would ask that this investigative committee be given an opportunity to complete their work and provide their recommendations to the State Building Code Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on this matter.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

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March 17, 2011

The Honorable Will Espero, Chair  
Committee on Public Safety, Government  
Operations, and Military Affairs  
The State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 231  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Committee on Water, Land, and Housing  
The State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 202  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Espero and Dela Cruz:

Subject: S.R. 32/S.C.R. 58 Requesting the State Building Code Council to Adopt the Requirement That Automatic Fire Sprinklers be Installed in New One- and Two-Family Dwellings

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 S.R. 32/S.C.R. 58 and offer the following comments:

1. Home fire sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce heat, flames, and smoke from a fire, thus giving residents valuable time to escape. The risk of dying decreases by 80% when sprinklers are present. Installing home fire sprinklers significantly reduces property loss in the event of fire and homeowner insurance premiums and supports local fire service efforts. By requiring these life-saving devices in new homes, residents can enjoy the same level of safety found in offices, schools, apartments, and public buildings.
2. Beyond the life safety benefits of home sprinklers, there are other incentives for jurisdictions that mandate sprinklers in new homes. By

The Honorable Will Espero, Chair  
The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
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mandating sprinkler requirements, cities can reduce the strain on fire service personnel, limit property damage, and help conserve municipal water resources (fire fighting hoses use more than eight times the amount of water used by automatic fire sprinklers).

The most economical time to install fire sprinklers is during new construction. The Fire Protection Research Foundation recently issued a Home Fire Sprinkler Cost Assessment report, which revealed that the cost of installing home fire sprinklers averages \$1.61 per square foot for new construction. The Hawaii State Building Code Council is researching the sprinkler installation cost for Hawaii homes.

3. Home fire sprinkler systems are much like home plumbing systems. When installed and maintained properly, there is a low risk of leaks. Over the last 50 years, records indicate that the likelihood of leaks from automatic sprinkler systems is remote. Each sprinkler is designed and calibrated to activate only when it senses a significant heat change. In the event of a fire, only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate and spray water directly on the fire, thereby leaving the rest of the house dry and secure. Ninety percent of the time, just one sprinkler operates to control the fire.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committees' support on the passage of S.R. 32/ S.C.R. 58.

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

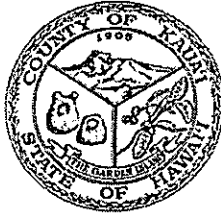
Sincerely,



KENNETH G. SILVA  
Chair

KGS/LR:cn

BASILIO FUERTES, JR.  
Chair



WAYNE MUKAI  
Vice-Chair

MEMBERS:  
George Simpson  
Linda Kaauwai-Iwamoto  
Darnney Proudfoot  
Jan Rudinoff  
Guy Croydon

COUNTY OF KAUA'I  
FIRE COMMISSION

March 17, 2011

Subject: SR 32 and SCR 58

Requesting the State Building Code Council to Adopt the Requirement  
that Automatic Fire Sprinklers Be Installed in New One- and Two-  
Family Dwellings

The County of Kaua'i Fire Commission is in support of the general intent of SR 32 and SCR 58. It is the mission of our fire department to save lives. To this end, the Kaua'i Fire Commission supports public policies or laws that will reduce the dangers and loss resulting from home fires.

We firmly believe that residential fire sprinklers will significantly reduce the loss of property and life caused by fires.

On the other hand, as residents, we realize that the costs of construction in Hawai'i are significantly higher than those in most states. We understand and are concerned that a requirement for mandating the installation of residential fire sprinklers in new one- and two- family dwellings will further increase the cost of building a home.

Nonetheless, as responsible members of the Kaua'i Fire Commission we believe that it is our duty to act responsibly in promoting the importance of fire prevention and safety by supporting the general intent of SR 32 and SCR 58.

Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,

*s/ Basilio Fuertes, Jr.*

Basilio Fuertes, Jr.  
Chair, Kaua'i Fire Commission