

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

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January 30, 2012

The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Committee on Housing
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 442
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Cabanilla:

Subject: H.B. 1795 Relating to Fire Sprinklers

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 strongly oppose H.B. 1795.

During its Regular Session of 2011, the Twenty-Sixth Legislature enacted House Resolution No. 47, H.D. 1, which requested that the State Building Code Council (SBCC) submit a report no later than 20 days before the Regular Session of 2015 convenes of its findings, recommendations, and actions taken to adopt the requirement that automatic fire sprinklers be installed in new one- and two-family dwellings.

The SBCC is reviewing the 2009 editions of the International Building and Residential Codes, which require residential fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family dwellings as minimum requirements. The SBCC formed an investigative committee of stakeholders from public/private sectors, industry, and code regulators to explore issues relating to automatic fire sprinkler installations. The investigative committee's work is ongoing, and most infrastructure issues have been addressed.

However, issues relating to in-house systems must still be addressed. It would be a disservice to the community to enact an antisprinkler law based on one viewpoint without considering the research done by this committee, which represents all interests. The investigative committee's final report will be forwarded to the SBCC, who will decide what to adopt for the entire state.

The building codes are a comprehensive compilation of codes that address all aspects of the built environment. The resulting national codes reflect a consensus that balances safety, cost/benefit, and the most technologically advanced products, materials, and processes. Code revisions are enacted slowly, and many are a result of a fatality or serious injury. When building codes are adopted at the state and county levels, they must undergo the administrative rules

The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair

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January 30, 2012

process, including being discussed at public hearings to allow the public an opportunity to participate and provide input. This process should not be circumvented.

There is no requirement in the state or county building codes that mandates the installation of fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family residential dwellings. When homes undergoing the county building permit process do not meet fire department access road or fire fighting water supply requirements, the fire code allows sprinklers to be installed as an alternative to meeting the intent of the fire code. This bill may eliminate that alternative and would require the homeowner to meet road and water supply requirements, which is usually at a much greater cost, before a permit is issued.

The contention that new home prices will dramatically rise is inaccurate. On a national average, home fire sprinkler systems add 1% to 1.5% of the total building cost to new construction. In Hawaii, estimates were approximately \$1.50 per square foot. For example, a system, including permitting, installation, and materials, for a 2,500-square-foot home would cost \$6,000 to \$7,000. At \$200 per square foot, the home would cost \$500,000. The residential sprinkler system would be 1.3% of the total price. The most economical time to install sprinklers is during new construction.

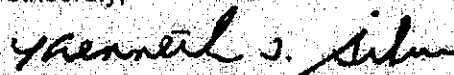
Smoke alarms and other building safety requirements have progressively reduced fire losses and deaths. However, they are only effective if the occupants are cognitively and physically capable of responding during a limited timeframe of rapid fire growth. National statistics have shown disproportionate fire deaths for the young and the elderly for decades, which is an example of the types of individuals unable or incapable of exiting a home fire in a timely manner. Fire resistive construction does not reduce the fuel load of today's modern furnishings, which have drastically reduced occupant escape time from three to four minutes once a fire starts.

Automatic fire sprinklers are a proven fire, life safety, and property protection measure with an outstanding performance record in reducing fire fatalities, injuries, and property losses.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's deferral of H.B. 1795.

Should you have any questions, please contact SFC Administrator Socrates Bratakos at 723-7151 or sbratakos@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,



KENNETH G. SILVA
Chair

KGS/LR:cn

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, Lihu'e, Hawai'i 96766
TEL (808) 241-4980 FAX (808) 241-6508

January 30, 2012

The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Committee on Housing
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 442
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Cabanilla:

Subject: H.B. 1795 Relating to Fire Sprinklers

I am Robert F. Westerman, Fire Chief of the Kaua'i Fire Department (KFD) and a member of the State Fire Council (SFC). The KFD and the SFC strongly oppose H.B. No. 1795 and offer the following comments:

1. Home fire sprinkler systems 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 a 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. The creation of a blanket mode of preventing the requirement of fire sprinkler systems for one- or two- family dwelling units will affect the current requirements regarding "Additional Dwelling Units" here in Kaua'i County. When an application for an additional dwelling unit is processed, the fire department determines if a fire hydrant with adequate fire flow is within a predetermined distance to the subject property dependent on the zoning type. If a hydrant exceeds the distance or does not provide sufficient flow, the applicant has an option to either, upgrade the water line, install a fire hydrant, or to install an automatic fire sprinkler system.

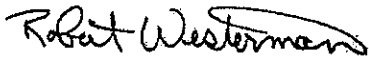
The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair
January 30, 2012
Page 2

The majority of the time, the fire sprinkler system is the more cost efficient option.

The KFD and the SFC urge your committees' deferral on the passage of H.B. No. 1795 preventing the requirement of automatic fire sprinklers in this resolution.

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

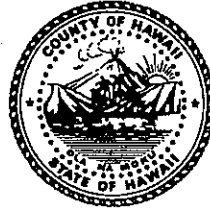
Sincerely,



Robert Westerman
Fire Chief, County of Kaua'i

RFW/eld

William P. Kenoi
Mayor



Darren J. Rosario
Fire Chief

Renwick J. Victorino
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

January 30, 2012

The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Committee on Housing
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 442
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Cabanilla:

Subject: H.B. 1795 Relating to Fire Sprinklers

I am Darren J. Rosario, member of the State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Hawaii Fire Department of the County of Hawaii. **The SFC and the Hawaii Fire Department strongly oppose H.B. 1795.**

During its Regular Session of 2011, the Twenty-Sixth Legislature enacted House Resolution No. 47, H.D. 1, which requested that the State Building Code Council (SBCC) submit a report no later than 20 days before the Regular Session of 2015 convenes of its findings, recommendations, and actions taken to adopt the requirement that automatic fire sprinklers be installed in new one- and two-family dwellings.

Currently the SBCC is reviewing the 2009 editions of the International Building and Residential Codes, which require residential fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family dwellings as minimum requirements. An investigative committee of stakeholders from public/private sectors, industry, and code regulators was convened by the SBCC to explore issues relating to automatic fire sprinkler installations. The investigative committee's work is ongoing.

It would be a disservice to the community to enact an anti-sprinkler law based on one viewpoint without considering the research done by this committee, which represents all interests. The investigative committee's final report will be forwarded to the SBCC, who will decide what to adopt for the entire state.



There is no requirement in the state or county building codes that mandates the installation of fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family residential dwellings. When homes undergoing the county building permit process do not meet fire department access road or fire fighting water supply requirements, the fire code allows sprinklers to be installed as an alternative to meeting the intent of the fire code. This bill may eliminate that alternative and would require the homeowner to meet road and water supply requirements, which is usually at a much greater cost, before a permit is issued.

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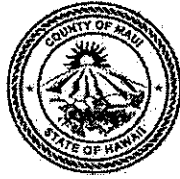
The SFC and the Hawaii Fire Department urge your committee's deferral of H.B. 1795.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at 932-2900.

Sincerely,

Darren J. Rosario
Fire Chief

ALAN M. ARAKAWA
MAYOR



JEFFREY A. MURRAY
CHIEF

ROBERT M. SHIMADA
DEPUTY CHIEF

COUNTY OF MAUI
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

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KAHULUI, MAUI, HAWAII 96732
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EMAIL: fire.dept@mauicounty.gov

January 30, 2012

The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Committee on Housing
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 442
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Cabanilla:

Subject: H.B. 1795 Relating to Fire Sprinklers

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 strongly oppose H.B. 1795.

During its Regular Session of 2011, the Twenty-Sixth Legislature enacted House Resolution No. 47, H.D. 1, which requested that the State Building Code Council (SBCC) submit a report no later than 20 days before the Regular Session of 2015 convenes of its findings, recommendations, and actions taken to adopt the requirement that automatic fire sprinklers be installed in new one- and two-family dwellings.

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The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Page 2
January 30, 2012

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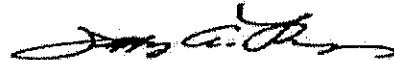
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The MFD and the SFC urge your committee's deferral of H.B. 1795.

Should you have any questions, please contact SFC Administrator Socrates Bratakos at 723-7151 or sbratakos@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,



JEFFREY A. MURRAY
Fire Chief

BIA-HAWAII

BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

"Building Better Communities"

2012 Officers

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Universal Construction, Inc.

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Complete Construction Services Corp.

Vice President

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Scotty Anderson

Pacific Rim Partners

Sunny Walsh

Hunt Building Company, Ltd.

W. Bruce Barrett

Castle & Cooke Homes Hawaii, Inc.

Testimony to the House Committee on Housing

Wednesday, February 1, 2012

8:45a.m.

State Capitol, Room 325

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: H.B. 1795, Relating to Fire Sprinklers

Dear Chair Cabanilla, Vice-Chair Ito, and members of the Committee:

I am Karen Nakamura, Chief Executive Officer of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for holding a hearing on HB 1795, which prohibits counties from requiring installation or retrofitting of automatic fire sprinklers in new or existing one- or two-family dwelling units used only for residential purposes. **BIA-Hawaii strongly supports H.B. 1795, with an amendment.** We propose that H.B. 1795 instead read: "No code adopted by a county may include a requirement that fire sprinklers be installed in a single family dwelling or a residential building that contains no more than two dwelling units."

The home building industry is committed to the safety of the communities in which they build, but BIA-Hawaii opposes mandating fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes because: 1) new homes are built with better fire safety measures and other fire safety measures are required that are proven to save lives; 2) fire sprinklers are not cost-effective; 2) targeted fire safety education programs work; 3) fire sprinklers have not been proven to enhance the safety of occupants; and 4) if a homeowner wants to install a fire sprinkler, that option should be theirs.

New homes are built better and safer.

There have been significant improvements to the fire safety of homes over the past few decades leading to a dramatic and continued decrease in fire incidents, injury, death, and property loss. There is no data to suggest that sprinklers will significantly improve this decline.

Several examples of the fire safety improvements to residential construction that have led to these reductions in fire incident, injury and death include:

- . Interconnected, hardwired smoke alarm systems
- . Carbon monoxide detectors
- . Improved electrical systems
- . Improved framing and fire blocking techniques, and

. Improved fire ratings on interior furnishings and building material
Additional information can be found in Attachment A.

Furthermore, the majority of residential fires that occur today are in older homes that generally do not have many of the improved fire safety features required in today's construction. Based on our research (see attached), residential fires on Oahu since 2005 all involved older homes. Most were built prior to 1970, and as far back as 1912. Sprinkler proponents argue that "new homes become old." However, that argument lacks substance because it does not acknowledge that the fire safety features required in today's construction are permanent, as is the protection they provide.

Fire sprinklers are not cost-effective.

Costs for residential fire sprinklers can vary, but proponents have only presented costs estimates based on mainland figures and the County of Maui, about \$7,000 to \$9,000. As we have seen recently in Kailua, homeowners were quoted upwards of \$16,000 for a sprinkler system, and it was unclear whether that cost included connecting the system to the City's water source. Depending on where the new home will be built, issues such as whether water pressure is, or whether trenching is required, all add to the cost of the system. Proponents will argue that improved technology will lower the cost of sprinklers. However, it is still a significant expense, especially since the cost does not include shipping, labor, and maintenance.

Fire education programs work.

BIA-Hawaii supports fire safety education programs for consumers as one the most effective and reasonable means to preventing residential fires and reducing death, injury, and property loss well as cost-effective residential fire protection technologies that are required by current codes.

Other fire prevention efforts, such as targeted fire safety/prevention education programs, have also been successful. Programs of this nature should be considered first since they will ultimately prevent more fires and property loss and, more importantly, injury and death. For example: The State of South Carolina successfully implemented a fire safety program entitled "Get Alarmed South Carolina." As a result their fire death rate dropped 41% from 1996 to 1998. The program included a smoke alarm distribution component. Fire prevention education programs work, especially for those homes and home environments at greatest risk.

Fire sprinklers have not been proven to enhance the safety of occupants

Sprinkler mandates apply only to those homes at least risk. Furthermore, based on National Fire Protection Data, the risk of death in a home with sprinklers is still close to 30% and property loss is still substantial and would still be far less overall than the overall cost of sprinklers under mandatory requirements.

Homeowners should decide.

Fire sprinkler proponents say that if a developer were building new homes with sprinklers, the costs would be less since it would be spread out to more people. However, it is the homeowner who will bear the cost and not the government, who is responsible for the public's health and safety. Homeowners should be able to decide whether a sprinkler system is what they want. Proponents also discuss a possible tax credit as an incentive to install fire sprinklers. However, if sprinklers are mandated, tax credits as incentives don't work.

Additional important information.

I-Codes: Proponents argue that this requirement will be required in the 2009 International Building Code (IBC) and International Residential Code (IRC), which is why they are working on adopting those codes. However, according to the International Code Council (ICC), these I-Codes are only *model* codes, and not the minimum standard requirements, so State and Counties may amend the model code to fit their communities. Fire sprinklers goes far beyond the minimum requirement for public health and safety. Furthermore, there are other existing and new fire safety requirements (see Attachment A) that cost far less than fire sprinklers and are proven to save more lives.

Legislation: Hawaii would not be the first state to do what H.B. 1795 proposes to do. To date, at least 33 states across the nation have either amended the mandate out at the state level, or have passed legislation requiring that no model code be adopted by a municipality mandating residential sprinklers. (National Association of Home Builders; Attachment B.)

Decreased fire deaths: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there were 377,000 home fires in the United States in 2009 which killed 2,565 people and injured another 13,050, not including firefighters. In 2009, there were 305,000,000 people living in the United States. The CDC goes on to say that the number of fatalities and injuries caused by residential fires has declined gradually over the past several decades, and many residential fire-related deaths remain preventable through education.

Finally, the State Building Code Council (SBCC) has formed an investigative committee that is preparing a report addressing infrastructure and access relating to fire sprinklers. That report is due to the Legislature in 2015. However, discussions at the SBCC on the upcoming 2009 IRC, which includes the sprinkler requirement, will likely begin in mid-2012 and can be adopted before the committee report is due.

BIA-Hawaii strongly supports HB 1795, with an amendment.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views with you.



EVP/CEO
BIA-Hawaii

ATTACHMENT A

Additional Fire Safety Measures International Residential and Building Codes

There have been many improvements to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities in the built environment. Below are a few examples:

- **Smoke alarms-** The new 2012 International Residential Code now requires that smoke alarms are installed and maintained in accordance with the National Fire Alarm Code (NFPA 72). This code calls for smoke alarms to be installed inside every bedroom, on every level of the dwellings and an additional smoke alarm in the immediate vicinity outside the bedrooms. The smoke alarms are required to receive power from a primary power source with a battery back-up in case of power outages. The smoke alarms are also required to be interconnected so that if one smoke alarm detects a fire, all of the smoke alarms throughout the house will go into alarm. National Fire Alarm Code 72 also requires that the smoke alarms are tested annually and that they are replaced after ten years of service.
- **Carbon monoxide-** The 2009 and the 2012 International Residential Codes both require carbon monoxide detectors to be installed in dwellings that have fuel-fired appliances or have an interconnected garage. While carbon monoxide detectors do not detect fires, they do prevent fires that are the result of occupants misusing heating equipment or cooking appliance that are not intended to be used indoors that can lead to a potential fire.
- **Under floor protection and fire separation between the house and the garage-** While the code has required type-x wallboard between the habitable space of the home and the garage for many years, the 2012 International Residential Code now has a requirement that protect fire firefighters from early collapse of floor systems. Since the introduction of lightweight engineered floor products (such as open web trusses, wood I-beams, cold form steel joists etc.) the fire service has been concerned with the faster burn rate of these products due to the products not containing the same mass as dimensional lumber. The 2012 International Residential Code now requires that floor systems that use these products in location, such as over basements or crawlspaces that contain fuel fired appliances, that they must be protected by a layer of drywall.
- **Emergency escape and rescue openings-** Both the 2009 and 2012 International Residential Codes require that all bedrooms, basements, and habitable attics must have an emergency escape and rescue opening. These openings can be in the form of a door or window, as long as they meet a minimum opening dimension of 5.7 square feet. These openings are intended to be used as a secondary means of egress in the event that the occupant is unable to escape through the primary means of escape, the front door. These openings are also used by the fire service to gain entry into the house to fight basements fires, where entering through the main level could be hazardous.
- **Fire resistant construction-** Based on the proximity of the dwelling to the property line or adjacent buildings on other lots, the exterior of the dwelling is required to be constructed with a fire resistant rating of one hour. Based on the fire separation distance overhangs and projections, [exterior walls] are required to meet certain fire resistance ratings, while openings such as doors and windows are limited in their number based on the distance. Townhouse and two-family

dwelling are required to have a continuous fire rated wall assembly that separates the dwelling and extends from the foundation up to the underside of the roof.

- **Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI)**- AFCI's are required by both the International Residential Code and the National Electrical Code. These devices are intended to reduce the number of fires that are caused by arcs between wires that have either been damaged or worn protective sheathing.

- **Fuel gas appliances**- The 2012 International Residential Code has added several provisions to increase the safety of fuel fired appliances such as water heaters, boilers and heating equipment.

Sprinkler provisions already exist in Appendix P of the International Residential Code:

- Available for jurisdictions to adopt case by case
- Based on community specific need or want
- Does not force other jurisdictions to amend the IRC
- Current approach overwhelmingly endorsed by ICC membership

Based on these provisions and several other requirements within the 2012 International Residential Code, the National Association of Home Builders and the Building Industry Association of Hawaii continue to oppose the mandatory requirement of residential fire sprinklers.

Honolulu House Fires

Source: Honolulu Advertiser/Star-Bulletin

2005

1. April 8, 2005. 815 Lopez Lane, Palama. No injuries. Smoke from bedroom windows; allegedly originated in a middle room. Estimated damage at \$275,000. (TMK 16001057; built 1912.) <http://archives.starbulletin.com/2005/04/08/news/story7.html>
2. June 17, 2005. 2441 Yvonne Place, Palolo. Older, wooden home. One dead, in his 70's; lived alone. (TMK: 34029001, built 1952.) <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Jun/17/br/br14p.html>
3. September 30, 2005. Ho'opi'o Street in 'Ewa Villages. Suspected arson. Two-story, single-wall home. No one home during fire. Damage estimated at \$450,000. <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Sep/30/ln/FP509300368.html>

2006

1. December 20, 2006. 684 Iana Street, Kailua. No one home during fire. Electrical problem blamed for fire. Damages estimated at \$250,000 to structure, \$50,000 to contents. (TMK: 4-2-046:029, built 1960.) <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2006/Dec/20/br/br9371206485.html>
2. November 16, 2006. 'Ewa Beach. Determined as arson by stepson of victim. <http://www.kitv.com/news/10349286/detail.html>

2007

1. April 5, 2007. 1222 Honokahua Place. Family of four was home. Home was 35 years old. Damages estimated at \$320,000 for structure and \$70,000 for contents. <http://archives.starbulletin.com/2007/04/05/news/story12.html>
2. April 10, 2007. Lalawai Drive in Halawa Heights. Suspected arson. <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2007/Apr/11/br/br0625174389.html>
3. May 6, 2007. Pohaku Street, Kalihi. 93-year old man died in a back room. Caused by a space heater in victim's room that was positioned too close to the bedding. Damages estimated at \$200,000 to structure and contents. <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2007/May/06/ln/FP705060358.html>
4. May 8, 2007. Waialae Iki. Caused by an electrical short. Damages estimated at \$350,000. No injuries. Smoke detectors present, but not sure if triggered. <http://www.firehouse.com/news/news/family-escapes-honolulu-house-fire>

2008

1. April 1, 2008. Niu Valley, end of Puamamane Street. Home of Nainoa Thompson and Kathy Muneno. Caused by a malfunction of an electric tankless water heater. Damage estimated at \$300,000 to structure and \$50,000 to contents. No injuries.
<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2008/Apr/01/ln/hawaii804010334.html>
2. April 27, 2008. 1218 Ala Pili Loop, Salt Lake. Damages estimated at \$450,000 to structure and \$30,000 to contents. One man living alone escaped. (TMK: 11068054; built 1971.)
<http://archives.starbulletin.com/2008/04/28/news/briefs.html>
3. June 6, 2008. 91-984 Waimomona Place, 'Ewa's Soda Creek subdivision. Damage estimated at \$410,000 to structure and contents. Man escaped. (TMK: 9-1-051:033; built 1989.)
<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2008/Jun/07/br/hawaii80607048.html>
4. June 6, 2008. 91-992 Waimomona Place, 'Ewa's Soda Creek subdivision. Damages estimated at \$430,000 for structure and contents. Woman escaped. (TMK: 9-1-051:032; built 1989.)
<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2008/Jun/07/br/hawaii80607048.html>
5. June 8, 2008. 1000 block of Kamahale Street, Enchanted Lake, Kailua. No injuries. Home was unoccupied. Suspected arson. Damages estimated at \$40,000 for structure and \$5,000 to contents.
6. November 28, 2008. Mililani. <http://www.topix.com/forum/city/honolulu-hi/TF1SG1UMDFBPJR803#comments>
7. December 19, 2008. Ala Moana apartment, The Commodore. Caused by a clock radio's electric malfunction. No one home during fire.
<http://exactproductsinc.com/WordPress/?cat=15>
8. December 27, 2008. 45-114 Pua'ae Place, Kaneohe. No one home during fire, which started shortly after power resumed. (TMK: 4-5-084:048; built 1963.)
<http://www.kitv.com/news/18367181/detail.html>
9. December 27, 2008. Ahuimanu Road, Kaneohe. Witnesses saw intense flames shortly after power resumed. <http://www.kitv.com/news/18367181/detail.html>

2009

1. April 23, 2009. 2069 Mauna Place, above Roosevelt High School, Makiki. (TMK: 2-4-037:031; built 1952.) 2 confirmed dead. 10-15 minutes to completely destroy the home. 8 people in the home when started. Alleged arson. Owner escaped after smoke alarms went off. <http://www.kitv.com/news/19259873/detail.html>

2. May 12, 2009. Mahau Street, at intersection of Meheula Parkway and Kamehameha Highway. Four people escaped two-story home.
<http://www.kitv.com/news/19441720/detail.html>
3. October 30, 2009. Anoi Street, Kaneohe. Wood structure. No injuries. Damages estimated at \$500,000 for structure and \$100,000 to neighbor's home.
<http://www.kitv.com/news/21478971/detail.html>
4. November 8, 2009. 1277 Kipaipai Street, Pearl City. (TMK: 97024027; Permitted 1974.) Ten people resided. Damages estimated at \$50,000 to structure and \$3,000 to contents. Damage limited to upstairs bedroom. Some smoke detectors present.
<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2009/Nov/09/br/hawaii311090017.html>
5. November 25, 2009. Bertram Street, St. Louis Heights. Caused by electrical short. Two people escaped. Roof made out of aluminum.
<http://www.kitv.com/news/21724367/detail.html>
6. December 25, 2009. 95-604 Wehewehe Loop, Mililani. Suspected arson. Damages estimated at \$500,000. Single-story wooden home. No injuries. (TMK: 9-5-018:067; built 1969.)
<http://www.kitv.com/news/22059921/detail.html>

2010

1. January 11, 2010. 2740 Pacific Heights Road. Caused by arson to cover up a burglary. Estimated damage at \$50,000 to structure and \$5,000 in property damage. No one home and no injuries. (TMK: 2-2-030:013; built 1929.)
<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2010/Jan/11/ln/hawaii1110345.html>
2. January 13, 2010. Ala Hoku Place. Moanalua Valley. No injuries.
<http://www.kitv.com/news/22231386/detail.html>
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_GuoF33iww
3. February 22, 2010. Victoria and Green Streets, Makiki. No injuries.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OVLtakPIMg>
4. March 1, 2010. 760 Hauoli Street, McCully apartment complex. Suspected arson. (TMK: 2-3-031:028; built 1941.)
<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2010/Mar/01/br/hawaii303010006.html>
5. March 3, 2010. Ho'olaule'a Street, Pearl City. 89-year old victim; lived alone. Damages estimated at \$250,000.
<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2010/Mar/03/ln/hawaii3030346.html>

6. July 30, 2010. 2203 Ahe Place, Palolo. (TMK: 3-4-003:010; built 1954, 1966, 1974.) Suspected arson. No one home. Damage estimated at \$250,000.
http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/Police_looking_for_arsonist_in_Palolo_house_fire.html?id=99663254
7. August 30, 2010. Pohakupuna Road, 'Ewa Beach. 70-year old resident in critical condition from smoke inhalation. Caused by an unattended cigarette. Estimated \$85,000 in damages.
<http://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/Global/story.asp?S=13070478>
8. October 1, 2010. Waianae.

2011

1. February 25, 2011. 923 Lolena Street, Alewa Heights. Home abandoned. Damages estimated at \$300,000. Other homes also damaged. (TMK: 1-6-010:087; no data.)
<http://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/news/fullstory/newsid/130247>
2. April 27, 2011. 3953 Koko Drive, Wilhelmina Rise. Speculated that the explosions may have come from other oxygen tanks in the home. A couple in their 80's was critically injured. (TMK: 3-3-014:072; Built 1957.)
http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/Large_fire_engulfs_house_on_Wilhelmina_Rise.html?id=120798264
3. May 31, 2011. Cottage next door to a mansion at 1 Kokee Place, Portlock. Damages were estimated at \$600,000. One person at home in the cottage got out without injuries. (TMK: 3-9-026:003; built 1971.)
<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/122891579.html?id=122891579>
4. June 8, 2011. 94-326 Apele Street, Mililani. Two women who were sleeping in the home escaped without serious injury after they were awakened by the smell of smoke. (TMK: 9-4-105:038; built 1979.)
<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/123472894.html?id=123472894>
5. June 10, 2011. Puhikani Place, Ewa Beach. Wife had just put a load of laundry in the dryer when she heard an explosion and saw flames. Three people were home and escaped without injury. Garage suffered extensive damage, but firefighters were able to help keep the fire from damaging the home.
http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/Firefighters_extinguish_fire_at_home_of_police_union_president.html?id=123639909
6. July 11, 2011. End of La'i Road off 10th Avenue, Palolo Valley. Two victims, elderly couple. Wood structure. <http://www.kitv.com/video/28517248/detail.html>

7. August 2, 2011. Two house fires: Pilimai Street, Waipahu, Waipahu Gardens Subdivision. Started in the back of the house. Kitchen fire with hot oil. Kapahu Street in Papakolea. Home belonged for former fire fighter. <http://www.kitv.com/video/28748832/detail.html>
8. September 25, 2011. Waimano Home Road, Pearl City. A cooking fire caused \$6,000 in damage. <http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/130548728.html?id=130548728>
9. November 1, 2011. 49-020 block of Kamehameha Highway, Kahaluu. The two-bedroom home was built of redwood and constructed in the **1950s**. No injuries. Damage was estimated at \$300,000. Fire source was 500 feet away.
<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/133057243.html?id=133057243>
10. November 24, 2011. 2634A Kalihi Street. Caused by a malfunctioning desk fan. A man in his 70s suffered a minor burn in the blaze. Dollar loss estimated at \$250,000. (TMK: 1-3-038:014; built **1980**.)
<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/134458963.html?id=134458963>
11. November 25, 2011. 640 Palawiki Street, Enchanted Lake. No one home. (TMK: 4-2-041:062; built **1959**.)
<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/134521273.html?id=134521273>
12. November 28, 2011. Nihi Street, Kalihi Valley. Fire was accidental due to unattended cooking (fried chicken). Possible portable propane tanks stored in home.
<http://www.kitv.com/news/29874308/detail.html>
13. November 29, 2011. Foster Village. Intentionally set. Damages estimated at \$5,000 to structure and \$1,000 to contents.
<http://www.therepublic.com/view/story/5f1e9a10d29a4bda8aefb7acd0bca553/Hi--Fire-Attempted-Murder/>
14. December 1, 2011. 91-834 Kimopelekane Road, 'Ewa. No injuries. Damages estimated at \$275,000. (TMK: 9-1-008:006; built **1959**.)
http://www.khon2.com/content/news/developingstories/story/Fire-destroys-three-bedroom-home-in-Ewa-Beach/5kL04ZM_AEaKrnvgdlodGg.cspX
15. December 4, 2011. 2243 Sea View Avenue, Lower Manoa. (TMK 2-8-016:013; built **1941, 1954, 1960**.) No injuries. Damages estimated at \$200,000 to home and contents. Three other homes damaged, approximately \$50,000.
<http://www.kitv.com/news/29919331/detail.html>
16. December 15, 2011. Bachelot Street, Liliha. 77-year old victim found on the second floor of the house. The front part of the home was on fire.

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/45670970/ns/local_news-honolulu_hi/t/woman-dies-injuries-liliha-house-fire/#.Tu_YvjUeN5g

17. December 16, 2011. Kaipii Street, Kailua. Fire began in a cabinet located in the living room and was caused by a malfunction of a game console battery charger. Estimated damage at \$400,000. <http://www.kitv.com/news/30067057/detail.html>
18. December 17, 2011. Makule Road, 'Ewa. Damages estimated at \$250,000 for structure and \$50,000 to contents. Fire appeared to have started in the kitchen. No injuries. <http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/135816908.html?id=135816908>
19. December 21, 2011. 434 Launiu Street, Waikiki. Flames started in the living room of a downstairs rental unit and was caused by a hand-held electric massager. Damage estimated at \$450,000. (TMK: 2-6-017:046; built 1941.) <http://www.kitv.com/news/30067057/detail.html>



Alan Shintani Inc.
GENERAL CONTRACTOR BC 13068

February 1, 2012

Rep Rida T. R. Cabanilla, Chair
Rep. Ken Ito, Vice Chair
Committee on Housing
State Capitol, Room 325
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: HB 1795, Relating to Fire Sprinklers

Dear Chair Cabanilla, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for holding a hearing on SB 2397, which prohibits counties from requiring installation or retrofitting of automatic fire sprinklers in new or existing one- or two-family dwelling units used only for residential purposes. **Alan Shintani, Inc. strongly supports HB 1795, with an amendment.** I would like to propose an amendment so HB 1795 instead reads: "No code adopted by a county may include a requirement that fire sprinklers be installed in a single-family dwelling or a residential building that contains no more than two dwelling units."

Alan Shintani, Inc. is committed to the safety of the communities in which we build, and opposes mandating fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family homes because: 1) new homes are now being built with better fire safety measures and other fire safety measures are required that are proven to save lives; 2) fire sprinklers are not cost-effective; 3) targeted fire safety education programs work; 4) fire sprinklers have not been proven to enhance the safety of occupants; and 5) if a homeowner wants to install a fire sprinkler, that option should be theirs.

New homes are now built better and safer.

There have been significant improvements to the fire safety of homes over the past few decades leading to a dramatic and continued decrease in fire incidents, injury, death, and property loss. There is no data to suggest that sprinklers will significantly improve this decline. Furthermore, the majority of residential fires that occur today are in older homes that generally do not have many of the improved fire safety features required in today's construction.

Fire sprinklers are not cost-effective.

Costs for residential fire sprinklers can vary, but proponents have only presented cost estimates based on mainland figures and the County of Maui, about \$7,000 to \$9,000. As we have recently seen, Kailua homeowners were quoted a price upwards of \$16,000 for a sprinkler system. It was unclear whether that cost also included connecting the system to the City's water source. Depending on where the new home will be built, issues such as water pressure or whether trenching is required, will also significantly add to the cost of the system. Another substantial expense not included is the cost of shipping, labor, and maintenance.

Fire sprinklers have not been proven to enhance the safety of occupants.

Sprinkler mandates apply only to new homes, which are those homes at least risk. Based on National Fire Protection Data, the risk of death in a home with sprinklers is still close to 30% with property loss still being substantial. Overall, this would still be far less than the total cost of sprinklers under mandatory requirements.

Homeowners should decide.

The homeowner should decide whether a sprinkler system is what they want. Even though the government is responsible for the public's health and safety, the homeowner is still who will bear the additional cost. Proponents also discuss a possible tax credit as an incentive to install fire sprinklers. However, if sprinklers are mandated, tax credits as incentives do not work.

Hawaii would not be the first state to do what HB 1795 proposes to do. To date, according to the National Association of Home Builders, at least 33 states across the nation either have amended the mandate out at the state level, or have passed legislation requiring that no model code be adopted by a municipality mandating residential sprinklers.

Finally, the State Building Code Council (SBCC) has formed an investigative committee that is preparing a report addressing infrastructure and access relating to fire sprinklers. That report is due to the Legislature in 2015. However, discussions at the SBCC on the upcoming 2009 IRC, which includes the sprinkler requirement, will likely begin in mid-2012 and can be adopted before the committee report is due.

Alan Shintani, Inc. strongly supports HB 1795 with an amendment.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views with you.

Sincerely,



President
Alan Shintani, Inc.

Testimony of Glenn Ida
Representing,
The Plumbers and Fitters Union, Local 675
1109 Bethel St., Lower Level
Honolulu, Hi. 96813

In Opposition of HB1795

Before the House:
Committee on Housing
Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2012
8:45 AM, Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Cabanilla, Vice-Chair Ito and Members of the Committee,

My name is Glenn Ida; I represent the 1300 plus active members and about 600 retirees of the Plumbers and Fitters Union, Local 675.

Local 675, is in **Opposition of HB1795**, which Prohibits counties from requiring installation or retrofitting of automatic fire sprinklers in new or existing one or two family dwelling units used only for residential purposes.

The requirement of fire sprinklers in multifamily occupancies started in the 1980's. An optional International Residential Code (IRC) Appendix extended those requirements to single-family homes in 2006, and in 2008 the members of the International Code Council approved fire sprinklers as a standard feature to be included in all new homes. The action was upheld on appeal and later reaffirmed at a 2009 public hearing before the ICC Residential Building Code Committee, which oversees the IRC. As a result the fire sprinkler requirement will be included in the 2012 edition of the International Residential Code (IRC).

I was advised by our Union's Training Coordinator, Mr. Harold McDermott, that he is a member on a sub-committee of the State's Building Codes Council discussing the issue of residential fire sprinklers along with other stakeholders which will provide a report before the requirement goes into effect. He estimated the cost for a system would be around \$4000.00 for a 1500Sq ft., home, but added that the homeowner would receive some savings on homeowner insurance. How do you put a price on a safety feature, which may save lives and property?

Local 675 believes that this Bill is premature and the work of the sub-committee be allowed to finish and give its recommendations to the State Building Code Council.

Therefore, Local 675 **Opposes HB 1795**.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Glenn Ida
808-295-1280



Testimony of C. Mike Kido
External Affairs
The Pacific Resource Partnership

House Committee on Housing
Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Representative Ken Ito, Vice Chair

HB 1795 – Relating to Fire Sprinklers
Wednesday, February 1, 2012
8:45 am
Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Cabanilla, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee:

My name is C. Mike Kido, External Affairs of the Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP), a labor-management consortium representing over 240 signatory contractors and the Hawaii Carpenters Union.

PRP believes that building codes should be lenient and not mandated for fire sprinklers for the following reasons.

First, Hawaii had the nation's lowest fire death rate in 2008, 1.6 per million residents, according to data compiled by the U.S. Fire Administration (a branch of FEMA). The national rate was 12.0 deaths per million. (The District of Columbia topped the list at 32.2 million.)

Nationally, residential building electric malfunction fires are trending downward, going from 30,000 in 2006 to 26,100 in 2010, a decline of 13%. Heating-related malfunctions are the second leading cause of residential fires in the US. Because few Hawaiian homes have heating systems, the incidence of residential fires is lower than the elsewhere.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, up to 90% of residential fires are contained by the operation of just one sprinkler, and that fatality risk is reduced by about 80% with automatic fire sprinkler systems.

Next, FEMA estimates the cost of a home sprinkler system in new construction at \$1.61 per square foot. The Building Industry Association of Hawaii calculates that the average size of a new single-family home is 2,377 square feet. Using the FEMA estimate, the additional cost of system installation comes to \$3827 for an average home.

Hawaii's distance and other factors together make the FEMA estimates low. A 20% Hawaii premium would mean installation costs of \$1.92 per square foot. Using three estimates for new residential construction costs (\$100, \$150, and \$200 per square foot) suggest the additional cost of a sprinkler system would be 1.92%, 1.28%, and 0.96%, respectively. These figures are in line with national estimates, which assume that home fire sprinkler installation adds 1-1.5% to the total building cost in new construction. Based on new SFH area of 2,377 square feet, the incremental increases would thus be partly mitigated by Hawaii's overall construction costs, with the biggest percentage burden falling on builders/owners of cheaper units.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, almost two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes without smoke alarms (38%) or with non-functioning fire alarms (24%). The 1994 Uniform Building Code Section 310.9.1 adopted by Hawaii requires residents to install smoke detectors in all new and renovated dwelling units.

The death rate per 100 reported home fires, NFPA data shows, is twice as high in homes without a working smoke alarm as it is in those protected by functioning alarm systems. NFPA has also cited a survey showing that in one-fifth of US homes with smoke alarms the alarms were not working.

Statewide fire policy is coordinated by the State Fire Council (SFC), on which the chiefs of the four county fire departments and other administrators serve. The SFC's aim is to "develop a comprehensive fire service emergency management network of the protection of life, property, and the environment through the state." The current state fire code was approved by the sitting governor in 2001; Maui was the final county to adopt the code, in 2006, while Hawaii County continues to utilize a 1988 code due to legal issues. According to the Honolulu Fire Department's website, Hawaii and Colorado remained the only two states not having a state fire marshal as of June 1, 2009.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views with you and we respectfully ask for your support on HB 1795.

THE GENTRY COMPANIES



February 1, 2012

The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair
House Committee on Housing
State Capitol, Room 442
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: H.B. 1795, Relating to Fire Sprinklers

Dear Chair Cabanilla and Members of the Committee:

My name is Debbie Luning, Director of Government Affairs for Gentry Homes, Ltd., testifying in **strong support** of H.B. 1795, Relating to Fire Sprinklers. The purpose of this bill is to prohibit the counties from requiring the installation or retrofitting of automatic fire sprinklers or an automatic fire sprinkler system in any new or existing detached one- or two-family dwelling unit in a structure used only for residential purposes. We believe that mandatory installation of fire sprinklers in single family and duplex homes, while well-intentioned, will not necessarily achieve the desired results of saving lives due to home fires. We are also concerned about the added cost to new homebuyers if it becomes a mandate. Our concerns about mandating fire sprinklers are summarized below.

- 1) **The requirement to install fire sprinklers would apply only to newly constructed homes, not to older homes which are basically the source of the problem.** Homes built nowadays are much safer in terms of fire prevention because of the types of materials, construction design and methods that are used. Examples include safer electrical wiring, double wall drywall construction, fire-rated garages, draft stops, cement siding and integrated smoke detector alarm systems that are very sensitive. These features were not necessarily included in homes built over 15 years ago; yet, the mandates in these resolutions would not apply to older homes -- they would only apply to newly constructed homes.
- 2) **Fire sprinklers will be ineffective unless there is a direct source of heat that triggers the sprinklers.** Smoke and noxious gases are the biggest threats in a home fire, and asphyxiation by poisonous fumes in the air outweighs burning as cause of death by a 3:1 ratio. A fire sprinkler, unless triggered by heat, will be ineffective in these circumstances.

3) **Fire sprinklers will be ineffective unless they are regularly maintained.** One cannot merely install a fire sprinkler system; it has to be regularly maintained in order for the system to work effectively. It is our contention that many homeowners will be negligent in regularly maintaining their fire sprinkler systems, thereby rendering them ineffective.

4) **Insurance companies will not cover the cost of damage caused by false alarms.** This is a very real and very practical concern. Insurance companies will not cover the cost of water damage should the fire sprinkler go off accidentally or unexpectedly – there has to be an actual fire in order for them to do so. This could mean tens of thousands of dollars of damage that the homeowner will have to pay for out of his/her own pocket.

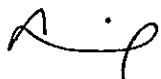
5) **Mandating the installation of fire sprinklers in new homes would affect affordability.** Whenever additional requirements are placed on the development of newly constructed homes, the cost of homes increase and more people get priced out of the housing market. If one of the goals of the Legislature and government is to provide more affordable homes for Hawaii's people, it doesn't make sense to place additional requirements that add to the cost of a home, especially when the requirement has not been proven to be necessary. We are by no means advocating placing people's lives at risk, but we do have concerns about mandating fire sprinklers which may not be needed in newly constructed homes.

6) **There may be an appraisal issue** if the appraisers don't recognize the value of fire sprinklers at the same level as the cost.

For the reasons stated above, we are strong support of this bill and urge its passage with the amendment proposed by the Building Industry Association of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

GENTRY HOMES, LTD.



Debra M. A. Luning
Director of Governmental Affairs and
Community Relations

1065 Ahua Street
Honolulu, HI 96819
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Website: www.gcahawaii.org



GCA of Hawaii

GENERAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

Quality People. Quality Projects.

Uploaded via Capitol Website

February 1, 2012

TO: THE HONORABLE REPRESENTATIVES RIDA CABANILLA, CHAIR, KEN ITO, VICE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF H.B. 1795, RELATING TO FIRE SPRINKLERS.** Prohibits counties from requiring installation or retrofitting of automatic fire sprinklers in new or existing one- or two-family dwelling units used only for residential purposes.

HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, February 1, 2012
TIME: 8:45 AM
PLACE: Conference Room 325

Dear Chair Cabanilla, Vice Chair Ito and Members of the Committee:

The General Contractors Association (GCA) is an organization comprised of over six hundred (600) general contractors, subcontractors, and construction related firms. The GCA was established in 1932 and is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year; it remains the largest construction association in the State of Hawaii. GCA **supports** H.B. 1795, Relating to Fire Sprinklers and also support of the amendment being proposed by the Building Industry Association of Hawaii.

H.B. 1795 amends Chapter 46 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes by adding a new section that would prohibit any county from mandating the installation or retrofit of automatic fire sprinklers or such a system in any new or existing detached one-or two-family residential dwelling unit.

GCA understands the intent behind this bill, which is to protect the health and safety of homeowners; however GCA is opposed to mandates that would present a significant cost burden to homebuilders and homeowners alike. Instead, GCA encourages incentives that would encourage homebuilders and homeowners to install fire safety measures that would reduce the likelihood of fire hazards.

GCA is opposed to the mandated installation of automatic sprinklers in residential homes for the following reasons: (1) cost burden to homeowners is significant; (2) new homes are built safer; (3) newer technologies to address fire hazards may be available in near future, negating installation of fire sprinklers; and (4) incentives are encouraged, rather than mandates.

GCA is in support of H.B. 1795 and would respectfully request that this Committee pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

PLUMBING & MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII



TELEPHONE: (808) 597-1216
FAX: (808) 597-1409
1314 S. King Street, Suite 961
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

GREGG S. SERIKAKU
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Via Email

January 24, 2012

Representative Rida T.R. Cabanilla, Chair
Committee on Housing
House of Representatives
The Twenty-Sixth Legislature, Regular Session of 2012

Chair Cabanilla, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: HB 1795 Relating to Fire Sprinklers

My name is Gregg Serikaku. I am the Executive Director of the Plumbing and Mechanical Contractors Association of Hawaii. Our Association represents 40 major plumbing and mechanical contractors who employ over 1,000 mechanics, technicians, managerial staff, and administrative personnel here in Hawaii.

The Association for which I speak is **strongly opposed** to HB 1795.

In 2011 the Legislature passed House Resolution 47 which tasked the State Building Code Council to investigate the feasibility of implementing the residential fire sprinklers section of the International Residential Code. This task force which is made up of fire department officials, building officials, architects, contractors, home builders, and other industry representatives, currently meets on a monthly basis and invites comments from all interested parties in an effort to openly address all concerns regarding this issue. The task force is currently researching the costs involved with residential fire sprinklers.

The proposed HB1795 would preempt the work of the task force by creating a blanket prohibition on counties adopting the residential fire sprinkler requirements.

This bill does not consider the many benefits associated with residential fire sprinklers such as life safety, insurance savings, water conservation, pollution control, fire fighter safety, and possible development of rural areas.

We propose that this committee allow the residential fire sprinkler task force to first complete their work and provide a report on their findings before any type of blanket prohibition is considered.

We therefore respectfully urge the committee to hold this bill.

Respectfully yours,

Gregg S. Serikaku
Executive Director

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2012 2:56 PM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: mmoritalecet@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1795 on 2/1/2012 8:45:00 AM

Testimony for HSG 2/1/2012 8:45:00 AM HB1795

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: MAURICE MORITA
Organization: Hawaii LECET
E-mail: mmoritalecet@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 1/31/2012

Comments:

CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF KAUAI4231 Ahukini, Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766
Phone (808) 246 -2662 Fax (808) 246-8642

February 1, 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2012 STATE LEGISLATURE**COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

TESTIMONY FROM THE CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF KAUAI ON:

HB 1795 – Relating to Fire Sprinklers

We are Maile Bryan, President of the hundred member Contractors Association of Kaua'i (CAK) and Laura Cushnie, Chair of the Government Affairs Committee of the Contractors Association of Kaua'i, representing CAK and its Board of Directors.

The Contractors Association of Kaua'i (CAK) Board of Directors supports H.B. 1795 and like the BIA of Hawai'i, we would strongly recommend that an amendment be included to read, *"No code adopted by a county may include a requirement that fire sprinklers be installed in a single family dwelling or a residential building that contains no more than two dwelling units."*

The Contractors Association of Kaua'i is a strong supporter of minimum building code requirements with options left to homeowners based on what they can afford. Mandatory fire sprinklers for residential construction can best be termed a "deal breaker" for many, if not most of your constituents, Hawai'i's working families dreaming and working towards home ownership. A "deal breaker" in that most who already have difficulty qualifying for a mortgage may not be able to qualify at all because of the costs associated with the installation and maintenance of a fire sprinkler system. As you know many of these families buy into affordable housing projects, Self-Help Housing or Habitat for Housing programs.

The Contractors Association of Kaua'i encourages the State of Hawai'i to join the 34 other states who have legislatively removed language from building codes mandating the installation of fire sprinklers in residential construction.

Thank you.



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Island Toll Free: 1-800-644-2882
E-mail: sales@rmasalesco.com
Website: www.rmasalesco.com

January 30, 2012

Testimony to the House Committee on Housing

Wednesday, February 1, 2012

8:45a.m.

State Capitol, Room 325

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: H.B. 1795, Relating to Fire Sprinklers

Dear Chair Cabanilla, Vice-Chair Ito, and members of the Committee:

My name is Anthony Borge, General Manager of RMA Sales. RMA Sales is a small, locally owned and operated company that started business in 1961. We fabricate and distribute vinyl, aluminum window and door products/components as well as other related building materials to the construction trade. We currently employ a full-time staff of 16.

We are in support of SB 2397 that which prohibits the counties from requiring installation or retrofitting of automatic fire sprinkler systems in new or existing one or two family dwellings used for residential purposes.

We firmly believe in the safety of our homes to protect the occupants not only from nature's elements and natural disasters, but fire hazards/accidents as well. The constant improvement in technology has provided homeowners with the tools, materials and devices to enhance in-home fire protection. Examples of these safety improvements to residential homes that have resulted in the reduction in household fires, injury and death include:

- Interconnected, hardwired smoke alarm systems
- Carbon monoxide detectors
- Improved fire ratings on building materials and furnishings

Fire sprinkler systems for residential use is another tool and option currently available to homeowners that should remain just that: **an option**. Mandating fire sprinkler systems in residential dwellings will significantly increase the cost of home ownership and fall short of the desired intent.

Thank you.

Respectively submitted,


Anthony B. Borge