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PRESENTATION OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMPLAINTS OFFICE

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION & BUSINESS

TWENTY-SIXTH STATE LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION, 2012

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2012 8:30 A.M.

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2003 RELATING TO INFORMATION PRACTICES

TO THE HONORABLE ANGUS L.K. MCKELVEY, CHAIR, AND TO THE HONORABLE ISAAC W. CHOY, VICE CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department") appreciates the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2003, Relating To Information Practices. My name is Jo Ann Uchida. The Department offers the following comments.

House Bill No. 2003 amends §92F-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to delete "the record of complaints including all dispositions" as an exception to the types of information in which an individual has a significant privacy interest. The bill would preclude government from disclosing the existence of consumer complaints until

and unless those complaints result in legal action by the government agency. Several of the Department's programs, particularly the Regulated Industries Complaints Office ("RICO"), would be affected by this bill to the extent they currently provide licensee complaints information to the public and encourage consumers to check licensing and complaints history prior to hiring licensed professionals.

A similar bill, House Bill No. 2298, was heard by this Committee last week and was passed out of this Committee in revised form. In comparing the two bills, this bill is more restrictive in that only legal actions that resulted in discipline against a licensee could be disclosed.

The Department acknowledges that the Legislature faces a difficult policy issue in trying to balance the interests of consumers in obtaining information about the professionals that they hire versus the interests of professionals in ensuring that their reputations are not unfairly tarnished by uncorroborated complaints. This issue has been the subject of legislation over the past several years, including but not limited to, House Bill No. 1212 (2010), which is identical to this bill and was vetoed by the Governor, and House Bill No. 1141 (2011).

The Department has long encouraged consumers to obtain licensing and complaints information prior to hiring professionals and, as such, supports the disclosure of information that enhances consumer awareness and decision-making.

The public is always urged to judge a business's complaints history on the outcome of the investigation rather than on the number of complaints or the fact that a

complaint was filed. Moreover, there is a concerted effort upon receipt of a complaint to determine whether there is sufficient cause to investigate, and to disclose complaints information only on those cases in which investigation is warranted. Thus, many complaints are not included in the complaints database because they do not meet the sufficient cause test.

By way of background, RICO¹ provides complaints information to the public in three ways. First, complaints histories are publicly disclosed via the internet at www.businesscheck.hawaii.gov. This method of disclosure is the most popular for the public and the most problematic for licensees because of its ease of access on a 24/7 basis. Website usage data shows that there is strong public interest in the information that is being provided, with webpage views at 592,116 times in FY 2011 (includes hits for both RICO and OCP).

The second method of access to complaints information is by telephone at 587-3222. This form of access remains an important resource, especially for consumers who do not have internet access.

The third method of disclosure is by way of a request for specific documents, usually in the form of a Chapter 92F, HRS, request. The information that is disclosed pursuant to a Chapter 92F, HRS, request varies, depending upon the request and the applicable provisions of Chapter 92F, HRS.

The Department understands, based upon numerous discussions with licensee groups, that the primary concern with RICO's complaints disclosures

centers on its online complaints history reports. However, the bill as drafted would preclude all three methods of access to complaints information, as well as access to complaints filed with other government agencies. If that is not the intent of the bill, the Department suggests that the bill be tailored to more closely address industry concerns.²

Also, House Bill No. 2003 would preclude the Department from apprising the public of pending investigations. In particular, RICO would not be able to issue warnings to the public regarding pending investigations or solicit information from the public about law violators, regardless of the seriousness of the conduct. It is important that the Department have the ability to provide timely and meaningful information to consumers when they need it most.

As examples, when a travel agent failed to book reservations or provide tickets to customers for flights to Manila, RICO responded to press coverage, solicited complaints, and distributed information to affected members of the public. When a RICO investigation showed that unlicensed driveway pavers had migrated to the State and had triggered consumer complaints, the Department alerted the public to the problem, issued a citation, and averted continued violations. House Bill No. 2003 would preclude RICO from fulfilling this most basic consumer protection function – that is, protecting consumers.

RICO has enforcement authority for over 45 different licensed professions, including unlicensed contractors, licensed contractors, doctors, real estate agents, dentists, nursing home administrators, travel agencies, and cemeteries and funeral trusts.

² Hawaii was one of the first states in the country to utilize the Internet to share complaints information with the public. Since that time, a number of state and federal agencies have followed with their own online complaints sites. A sampling of those sites is attached to this testimony.

Over the course of many years, RICO has consistently accommodated industry concerns through refinements of its online Complaints History website. In particular, legal actions in which licensees have complied with all sanctions are removed from the website after five years. Similarly, cases in which the respondent acted expeditiously to resolve the complaint are closed with a "resolved expeditiously" description.

RICO has made recent changes to its website such that at the present time, RICO's Complaints History website (1) segregates RICO cases from cases investigated by the Department's Office of Consumer Protection; (2) captures two, rather than, five years of non-legal action complaints; and (3) archives certain complaints that did not result in legal action. RICO believes that these website revisions represent a fair, reasonable, and appropriate balance of public and industry interests. No legislation was necessary for these modifications to occur.

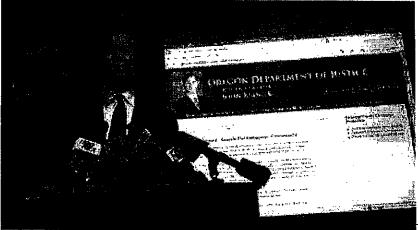
Thank you for this opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2003. I will be happy to answer any questions that the members of the Committee may have.



Oregon puts consumer complaints data online

Published: Tuesday, March 09, 2010, 3:09 PM Updated: Tuesday, March 09, 2010, 3:58 PM





The Associated PressAttorney General

John Kroger kicked off National Consumer Protection Week today in Portland. Kroger unveiled a new online search feature that will allow consumers to look for complaints against businesses. The **Oregon attorney general's office** has put its **complaints database** online, meaning consumers can better research companies before deciding where to take their business.

Consumers without Internet access may call the agency at 1-877-877-9392.

Entries on the database, which contains complaints received since Jan. 1, 2008, do not include consumers' names and offer limited information, such as a company's address, the general category of the complaint and whether it was resolved.

As part of the attorney general's recognition of **National Consumer Protection Week**, today's announcement included a rundown of the top complaints the state received in 2009. Of the 14,021 complaints --a 13 percent increase from 2008 -- the top five industry areas were telecommunications with 1,506 complaints; international money-transfer schemes, 1,021; health-related companies, 893; collection agencies, 774; and home-ownership lending firms, 761.

Last year was the fourth in a row in which telecommunications companies ranked No. 1 on the state's complaint list.

Printer Friendly



Ohio Department of Education Learning Supports

Early Learning and School Readiness (ELSR) [+]

Family and Community

Engagement

Food and Nutrition [+]

Gifted Education [+]

Limited English Proficient (LEP)

Students [+]

Literacy improvement [+]

Pupil Transportation [+]

Safe and Supportive Learning [+]

Scholarship Programs - Other [+]

Students with Disabilities

Comprehensive Monitoring

System

Educating Students with

Disabilities

Funding and Data

Laws, Policies and Performance Mediation, Complaints and Due

Procee

Process

Preschool Special Education

Resources and Support

Complaint and Due Process Databases

These databases are made available to provide the public with information regarding complaint investigation results and due process hearing decisions related to students with disabilities. The databases contain letters of findings and due process hearing decisions issued since October 21, 2009.

Complaint Database

The Complaint Database includes letters of findings corresponding to specific complaints. Each letter provides the name of the district, the issues investigated, facts determined in the investigation, conclusions the ODE reached regarding the complaint, and any corrective action the district was required to complete as a result of the investigation.

The database is updated monthly.

Complaint Database

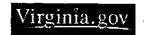
Due Process Database

The Due Process Database contains decisions resulting from due process cases. Parents, school districts or other agencies (e.g., county boards of developmental disabilities) may request an impartial due process hearing to resolve disagreements about the identification, evaluation and placement of a student with a disability or the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to that student. Each due process hearing is conducted by an impartial hearing officer appointed by ODE. The hearing officer issues the decision.

Due Process Database

Last Modified Mar 22, 2011 99:06 AM

John R. Kasich, Governor | Sten W. Heffner, Superintendent of Public Instruction | Privacy | Johs | State Board | Employees | Survey | Site Map | Mobile | Contact ODE |
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Complaint Topic Selector

- Searchable Databases
- Registrations and Forms
- Links
- News and Events
- Return to VDACS





SEARCH OUR COMPLAINT DATABASE

Use this search to investigate the status of complaints against a specific business. Find out how many complaints have been filed and if they were resolved favorably.

Enter Company Name and/or Trade Name and Press SEARCH

Company Name

Wildcard character (*) can be used to match zero or more characters.

Trade Name

SEARCH

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<u>WAI Level A Compliant</u>

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One trick athletes use to build muscle



The trick for your brain to learn a new language fast



Secrets to settling back taxes with the IRS

Vehicle complaint database

The U.S. government's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) allows the public to file complaints about vehicles and transportation-related equipment. Complaints can be submitted by phone, fax, mail or online and are typically reported by consumers and attorneys. The complaints are monitored by NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation, which looks for trends and, in some cases, orders investigations. Here are complaints about vehicles filed with NHTSA since Jan. 1, 2010. This list is updated daily, and the data are reprinted "as is" from the filings. Search by manufacturer and model and sort by model year, date filed and date of claimed incident.

Toyota: Road to recall

Check out the Times' Road To Recall series. Read the stories that broke news leading to the largest recall in Toyota's history. Browse the Times' official death count, with links to more contextual information about each incident.

Read more »

SEARCH FOR YOUR MAKE AND MODEL

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Enter model (ex: Mustang, Corolla, A4)

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RECENT COMPLAINTS

SORT BY DATE RECEIVED

SORT BY MODEL YEAR

SORT BY INCIDENT DATE

Recent vehicle complaints ជ

Search the U.S. Department of Transportation's

Complaint on a 2000 Dodge Ram 1500

Complaint on a 2002 Toyota Sienna

Complaint on a 2001 Dodge Ram 2500

Complaint on a 2003 Honda Civic Hybrid

Complaint on a 2009 Dodge Journey

More complaints »



automobile recall list. »

Source: National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration Credits: Ken Schwencke, Thomas Sub Lauder

In Case You Missed It ...





Mapping L.A. Neighborhoods











L.A. Noir: The Gangster Squad

Oregon Department of Justice Attorney General John Kroger

Oregon DOJ Home | About the Justice Department | Divisions | Civil Enforcement | Consumer Protection | Search For Consumer Complaints

Be InfORmed: Search For Consumer Complaints

At the Oregon Department of Justice we believe a well informed consumer is less likely to become a victim of consumer fraud. In an effort to provide more resources to Oregon consumers we offer this online database of complaints submitted to our Consumer Hotline.

To find information about a specific business or about businesses in your area, please offer at least one search term. You may also search by partial criteria. For example, a search for "ale" in the City field will return "Alexandria," "Salem," "Glendale" etc.

Searcn Name	process () () () () () () () () () (
Business Description		
City:	The state of the s	
ZIP:	The second secon	
Complaint C	pened - Date Range: (mm/de	d/yyyy)
Start:		
End:	1/31/2012	
Results per page	10	
Search F	onGonsumenComplaints	Olean Formula (A)

The database of consumer complaints is derived from consumer contacts since January 1, 2008 and is for information only. This database may not offer a completely accurate or comprehensive account of every incident. Several factors, including a company's size and volume of transactions, may affect the likelihood of a consumer complaint being filed. The number of complaints about a business may not be a reliable measure as to whether it is appropriately conducting business.

The information in this database is updated as soon as possible. However, recently submitted complaints may not be immediately available for view.

The statements in this database do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the DOJ.



Missouri Attorney General



Know MO -- Check on a Business

Each year, almost 100,000 Missourians contact the Attorney General's office with questions and complaints about consumer issues. Missouri consumers have a tool to help them in making decisions about buying goods or contracting for services.

"Know MO" enables consumers to look up complaints the Attorney General's Office has received about individuals and businesses. Simply enter the name of a person or a business in the search form below, and you will be able to see information from a database of more than 100,000 consumer complaints.

Educated consumers are one of the best weapons against fraud. Use this page as a tool to help yourself be a better informed consumer. If you want to file a consumer complaint with the Attorney General's office, you can do that here.

Begin your search here:	
Enter company name:	
Search Search	

Search Tips

OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

STATE OF HAWAII NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT BUILDING 250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 107 HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

TELEPHONE: 808-586-1400 FAX: 808-586-1412 EMAIL: oip@hawaii.gov

To:

House Committee on Economic

Revitalization & Business

From:

Cheryl Kakazu Park, Director

Date:

February 7, 2012, 8:30 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 312

Re:

Testimony on H.B. No. 2003

Relating to Information Practices

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to this bill.

The Office of Information Practices ("OIP") administers Hawaii's public records law, the Uniform Information Practices Act (Modified), chapter 92F, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) (UIPA). Since its adoption in 1988, the UIPA has made clear that any individual granted any type of license in the State does <u>not</u> have a significant privacy interest in "the record of complaints including all dispositions" so that the UIPA's privacy exception provided in HRS section 92F-13(1) could not apply to exempt such records from public disclosure. Thus, currently under the mandatory disclosure requirements of the UIPA, the public has access to complaint records about any and all licensees.

This bill proposes to eliminate the UIPA's mandatory disclosure requirements for <u>all</u> licensees' complaints records so that these records would potentially be eligible for protection from public disclosure under the UIPA's exception for a "clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." In effect, this

House Committee on Economic Revitalization & Business February 7, 2012 Page 2 of 3

bill would overturn the current policy that has existed for more than 22 years of allowing the public access to complaint records about licensees. This bill would have a dramatic and widespread effect because it seeks to eliminate public access to the complaint records pertaining to any and all individuals licensed by any agency in the State, such as nursing home operators, doctors, travel agents, and teachers.

Additionally, this bill would require OIP to conduct a case-by-case analysis of whether a licensee's significant privacy interest in complaint records is outweighed by the public interest in disclosure of the records. With such a potential increase in workload, OIP would need additional staffing and resources, which do not appear likely to occur given the State's fiscal restraints. Consequently, OIP opposes this bill.

Your Committee recently passed out House Bill No. 2298 that only protects the records of individuals licensed under chapter 436B, HRS. If your Committee seeks to protect only the complaint records about persons licensed under HRS chapter 436B, then OIP recommends that your Committee not amend the UIPA, chapter 92F, as provided in this bill, and instead use the provisions of House Bill No. 2298, which your Committee amended to address the disclosure of complaints directly in HRS chapter 436B itself. By doing so, the specific complaints disclosure provision in HRS section 436B would prevail over the UIPA's general disclosure provisions and would not unnecessarily impact the UIPA.

OIP understands the desire of persons falsely accused of improper professional or vocational activity to protect their reputation. However, in originally providing express access to licensees' complaint history information, the Legislature apparently believed that consumers had a right to access licensee complaint information that could potentially protect them and that the public could give appropriate weight to pending complaints or complaints that resulted in no

House Committee on Economic Revitalization & Business February 7, 2012 Page 3 of 3

findings of misconduct. Accordingly, OIP has long agreed that the disclosure of complaint information is valuable to consumers and furthers the public interest in ensuring accountability of government agencies in carrying out administration of laws and regulations governing businesses and designed to protect consumers. Therefore, we urge this Committee to reject this bill.



"Building Better Communities"

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Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Revitilization & Business Tuesday, February 7, 2012

8:30 a.m.

State Capitol, Room 312

RE: H.B. 2003, Relating to Information Pracitices

Good morning Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Choy, and members of the committee:

My name is Karen Nakamura, Chief Executive Officer of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, BIA-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.

BIA-Hawaii strongly **supports** H.B. 2003, "Relating to Information Practices." H.B. 2298 removes records of complaints from the exceptions to the types of information that are not subject to disclosure as public documents.

Currently, the Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO) posts on its website all complaints received against any licensee, including construction contractors. These listed complaints remain on the website for 5 years and are not removed, even if the investigation is closed for lack of evidence or merit, or if there is a determination by RICO that a violation did not occur. Members of BIA-Hawaii have experienced the continued listing of their names even when it was determined that no violation had occurred. BIA-Hawaii believes that this practice is unfair to their reputation and credibility as licensed contractors. We understand the responsibility of a regulating agency such as RICO to the consumers of this state, however, in this case, we believe that consumers are misled by such a listing that continues long after the complaint has been settled or dismissed.

BIA-Hawaii believes that many other licensed professionals share the same concern and that the principle of fairness should prevail. Under the proposed measure, the public would still have the right to information on a licensee's disciplinary history, whether or not there was a finding of wrongdoing, and the resulting disciplinary action has been taken.

The placement of a licensee's name on a list of complaints against the person gives the perception that the licensee is guilty of the charge against him/her. Anyone who checks for any complaints against a contractor and sees a potential contractor's name on the list would think that the contractor was not a good choice.

The fact that the names are not removed for 5 years or more, even when the complaints are unfounded or settled, is a real disservice to contractors.

For the foregoing reasons, BIA-Hawaii is in strong support of H.B. 2003.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Karen J. Nakamur

EVP/CEO

BIA-Hawaii

Hawaii State Legislature State House of Representatives Committee on Economic Revitalization and Business

Representative Angus L. K. McKelvey, Chair Representative Isaac W. Choy, Vice Chair Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Tuesday, February 7, 2012, 8:30 a.m. Room 312 House Bill 2003 Relating to Information Practices

Honorable Chair Angus L. K. McKelvey, Vice Chair Isaac W. Choy and members of the House Committee on Economic Revitalization and Business,

My name is Russel Yamashita and I am the legislative representative for the Hawaii Dental Association and its 960 member dentists. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2003 Relating to Information Practices. The bill before you today would seek to provide basic due process for those licensees who have complaints filed against them with any State or County agency.

For the last three legislative sessions, the HDA, along with other concerned groups, have sought to obtain a semblance of justice from the Legislature in the blatantly unfair and unconscionable act of the public listing of unfounded and unsubstantiated complaints against licensees. It is important to note that Hawaii is the only state that provides for the unresolved and uninvestigated complaints to be listed for the public.

This bill provides no complaint can be made public until it has been resolved and action taken against the licensee.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

The REALTOR® Building 1136 12th Avenue, Suite 220 Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

Phone: (808) 733-7060 Fax: (808) 737-4977

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February 7, 2012

The Honorable Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair House Committee on Economic Revitalization & Business State Capitol, Room 312 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: H.B. 2003, Relating to Information Practice

HEARING: Tuesday, February 7, 2012, at 8:30 p.m.

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Choy, and Members of the Committee:

I am Myoung Oh, Government Affairs Director of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, and its 8,500 members. HAR is in **support** of H.B. 2003, which removes records of complaints from the exceptions to the types of information that are not subject to disclosure as public documents.

HAR believes in the public's right to have access to information regarding disciplinary actions taken against state-licensed professionals in various occupations. However, under the present practice of the Hawai'i Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA), complaints against licensed professionals are disclosed on a website to the public regardless of the outcome, without any minimum due process provided by law. These complaints are posted online before there is any conclusive evidence of wrongdoing and, in some occasions, where a licensee is not offered an opportunity to officially respond to allegations made.

Moreover, even where there is a finding that a case lacks evidence or merit, such complaints are retained on the DCCA website for several years. This has two potentially negative effects—the public may be misled about a licensee's complaint history, and a licensee may be unfairly judged because of the disclosure.

While HAR supports this measure, we also believe that it is appropriate to create minimum safeguards and a procedure in the law that provides a balanced approach for the disclosure of complaints against licensees and businesses.

HAR is willing to work with the Committee, the DCCA and other stakeholders to address any concerns regarding the specific provisions in this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.





ROOFING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

Century Square-1188 Bishop St., Ste. 1003Honolulu, HI 96813-3304 Phone (808) 537-1224*Fax: (808) 533-2739

February 7, 2012

Testimony To:

House Committee on Economic Revitalization & Business

Representative Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair

Presented By:

Tim Lyons, CAE

Executive Director

Subject:

H.B. 2003 - REALTING TO INFORMATION PRACTICES

Chair McKelvey and Members of the Committee:

I am Tim Lyons, Executive Director of the Roofing Contractors Association of Hawaii and we support this bill.

We think it is highly unfair that complaints, legitimate and otherwise, are posted for all to see before they are even investigated or adjudicated. We have had at least two (2) of our members indicate to us that they think they have lost jobs as a result of information potential customers obtained from RICO that a "complaint was pending".

Based on the above, we support this bill.

Thank you.



House ERB Committee Chair Angus McKelvey, Vice Chair Isaac Choy

Tuesday 2/7/12 at 8:30AM in Room 312 HB 2003 – Information Practices

TESTIMONY Nikki Love, Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Choy, and Committee Members:

Common Cause Hawaii opposes HB 2003. This bill will hide the record of complaints about licensees from public access. Currently, the record of all complaints is available for the public, allowing consumers to access it and make informed decisions. This bill would change the law so that complaints about licensees would not be accessible.

We are concerned about the bill's departure from principles of open government and public access to information. Complaints filed by consumers have been made available for some time now, and the public would lose this important access.

This also represents a major departure from the trend of growing public expectations of transparency. Thanks to consumer review websites and other online information, consumers have come to expect easy access to information to make decisions about what to purchase and whom to hire. Our government, with its wealth of information, should not move in the opposite direction by hiding the information it has obtained.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Testimony opposing HB 2003 relating to Access to Consumer Complaints

February 6, 2012

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Choy, and members of the committee,

Considering HB 2003, I have to wonder what positive purpose is served by making complaints about licensees unavailable to consumers. As commerce moves to the web, sites that offer feedback from prior customers are trusted by consumers more. With open and transparent information, we can learn from others who have already experienced working with individuals around the world, and gain from their experiences.

Hiding that information does not serve the public. In fact, hiding feedback from prior customers could cause harm to others, while continuing access to this information will likely result in better service as providers seek to minimize future complaints.

Thank you for voting against HB 2003.

Aloha, Laurie Baron Honolulu From:

Sent:

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov Monday, February 06, 2012 6:55 AM ERBtestimony

To:

Cc:

brenching@juno.com

Subject:

Testimony for HB2003 on 2/7/2012 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for ERB 2/7/2012 8:30:00 AM HB2003

Conference room: 312 Testifier position: Oppose Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Brenda Ching Organization: Individual E-mail: <u>brenching@juno.com</u> Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

This goes against principles of open government and transparency.

From:

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov

Sent:

Monday, February 06, 2012 2:43 PM

To:

ERBtestimony

Cc:

MolokaiMAN@basicisp.net

Subject:

Testimony for HB2003 on 2/7/2012 8:30:00 AM

Testimony for ERB 2/7/2012 8:30:00 AM HB2003

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: George Peabody

Organization: http://www.MolokaiAdvertiserNews.com

E-mail: MolokaiMAN@basicisp.net

Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

Citizen enforcement and OIP enforcement of the UIPA should NOT be prohibited from records of complaints. Police are the worst at obstructing public knowledge of complaints against police officers, and attorneys and judges are close behind.

We need sunshine law light on all complaints made to government agencies be available to citizens to review and copy as well as personal records.

Maui Police Chief Gary Yabuta is again blocking direct access at Molokai Division station of personal records, and this is after he and then chief Thomas Phillips were informed by OIP several letters and two Opinions from OIP to comply with UIPA to allow access to personal records ten years ago. Now Yabuta is chief, and he again opposes direct public access to personal records at Molokai station with a posted sign that pre-denies all requests for access. Unfortunately, the OIP is also imposing redundant and burdensome requirements before OIP will assist with enforcement of UIPA, i.e., copies of written requests and responses even though victim testimony & Lamp; details are offered as evidence and to fill out a request form at MPD when the sign clearly says you are already denied is bureaucratic obstruction of UIPA enforcement, especially when the needed Opinion and letters from OIP for this exact same situation and same officials are the problem.