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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

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Statement of
JESSE K. SOUKI
Director, Office of Planning
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Tuesday, February 7, 2012
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of
HB 2483
RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Chair Coffman, Vice Chair Kawakami, and Members of the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection.

The Office of Planning (OP) supports HB 2483, which proposes to amend the Hawaii State Planning Act, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 226, by adding a climate change adaptation priority guideline to part III of the Act.

The purpose of this bill is to encourage collaboration and cooperation between county, state, and federal agencies, policy makers, businesses, and other community partners to plan for the impacts of climate change and avoid, minimize, or mitigate loss of life, land, and property of future generations. The bill is structured as a priority guideline to the State Planning Act, which falls under the jurisdiction of OP under HRS Chapters 226 and 225M.

OP views climate change as a serious threat to the State of Hawaii and its people, natural resources, economy, food and water security, and public infrastructure, and as such, we have

found ways to help prepare the State of Hawaii for the impacts of climate change through its planning functions, the Coastal Zone Management Program, existing mandates (such as the Ocean Resources Management Plan under HRS Chapter 205A-61), and with the support of county, state, and federal agencies and other stakeholders. While there are a number of climate change planning efforts on-going through various initiatives, we believe this measure will provide a solid policy foundation from which current and future planning efforts can be coordinated in a meaningful and effective way. Adding a climate change priority guideline to the State Planning Act will provide the basis for climate change considerations in all state and county planning, will provide the necessary authority for agencies to commit resources, and will provide a statewide framework with which to guide state and county agencies, as well as other stakeholders, on how to reduce Hawaii's vulnerability and increase resilience to the effects of climate change, and therefore be better prepared to adapt to the changing environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting H.B. 2483 Relating to Environment
House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
Tuesday, February 7, 2012, 9:00AM, Rm. 325

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawai'i's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for native species in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 32,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.

The Nature Conservancy supports H.B. 2483 to amend the Hawaii State Planning Act to include guiding policies for adapting to the effects of climate change.

Climate change is an imminent and unprecedented threat to natural systems (e.g., forests, coastlines, coral reefs, wetlands) and to every person in Hawai'i that—whether they know it or not—depends on services from the natural environment for their livelihoods, health and welfare. Scientists have examined the evidence and rapid climate change is real; it is clearly caused by human activity; it is already a problem for habitat for plants and animals; and, if sources of CO₂ are not dramatically reduced, climate change could well have catastrophic results for people and their relationship with the natural environment.

Even if we drastically reduce CO₂ emissions now, we will still feel the effects of climate change. In Hawai'i, science indicates that this may include:

- More frequent and more severe storms, and increased runoff and siltation;
- Overall, less rainfall and therefore less fresh water;
- Higher temperatures that may affect the health of forested watersheds;
- Climatic conditions even more conducive to invasive plants, insects and diseases;
- Sea level rise and high wave events that will harm coastal areas and groundwater systems; and
- Ocean acidification that will inhibit the growth of protective coral reefs.

We must plan and implement mitigative and adaptive measures to ensure the resilience of our natural and human systems. Two of the most effective tools we have to help address the effects of climate change in Hawai'i is to protect our forests and coral reefs. Healthy and diverse Hawaiian forests act like a sponge, collecting rain and moisture from passing clouds, slowly delivering fresh water into streams and aquifers, absorbing greenhouse gases, and reducing runoff and siltation into near shore waters during storm events. Healthy coral reefs that are free of non-native invasive algae and runoff are better able to withstand the effects of temperature changes and acidification, while continuing to provide food and storm protection for coastal areas.

We support this measure and look forward to being a part of successful adaptation strategies in our area of expertise related to the natural environment of these islands.

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**Testimony to the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
Tuesday, February 7, 2012
9:00 a.m.
State Capitol - Conference Room 325**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2483 RELATING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Chair Coffman and Vice Chair Kawakami, and members of the committees:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii supports the intent of H.B. No. 2483. The bill proposes to create a climate change adaptation policy for the State of Hawaii by amending the Hawaii State Planning Act to include climate change adaptation priority guidelines.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing more than 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of its members, which employ more than 200,000 individuals, to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

As drafted, the bill proposes to amend Chapter 226, HRS to require the office of planning to focus on preparing for and adapting to the expected impacts of climate change. The purpose of this bill is to encourage collaboration and cooperation between county, state, and federal agencies, policy makers, businesses, and other community partners to plan for the impacts of climate change and avoid, minimize, or mitigate loss of life, land, and property of future generations.

The Chamber believes that guidance through effective public policy legislation is the first step the State needs to develop plans for the anticipated impacts of climate change.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our views.

BIA-HAWAII

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"Building Better Communities"

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W. Bruce Barrett
Castle & Cooke Homes Hawaii, Inc.

Testimony to the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
Tuesday, February 7, 2012
9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 325

RE: H.B. 2483, Relating to Climate Change

Good morning Chair Coffman, Vice Chair Kawakami, 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.

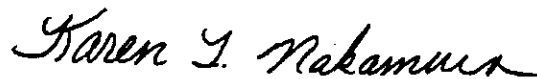
BIA-HAWAII **supports the intent** of H.B. 2483, which proposes to create a climate change adaptation policy for the State of Hawaii by amending the Hawaii State Planning Act to include climate change adaptation priority guidelines.

As drafted, the bill proposes to amend Chapter 226, HRS to require the office of planning to focus on preparing for and adapting to the expected impacts of climate change. The purpose of this bill is to encourage collaboration and cooperation between county, state, and federal agencies, policy makers, businesses, and other community partners to plan for the impacts of climate change and avoid, minimize, or mitigate loss of life, land, and property of future generations.

The BIA believes that guidance through effective public policy legislation is the first step the State needs to develop plans for the anticipated impacts of climate change.

For the foregoing reasons, BIA-Hawaii supports the intent of H.B. 2483.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



EVP/CEO
BIA-Hawaii

kawakami1 - Marissa

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 2:54 PM
To: EEPtestimony
Cc: rick.ck.barboza@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2483 on 2/7/2012 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for EEP 2/7/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2483

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Rick Barboza
Organization: Individual
E-mail: rick.ck.barboza@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

kawakami1 - Marissa

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:07 PM
To: EEPtestimony
Cc: anthuriumz@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2483 on 2/7/2012 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for EEP 2/7/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2483

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Wynnie Hee
Organization: Individual
E-mail: anthuriumz@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

This is a good start. Hawaii can't wait for Dems and Republicans in Congress to stop their power struggle and citizens' expense. We in Hawaii have to do what we can to prepare for the coming climate changes.

kawakami1 - Marissa

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 9:11 PM
To: EEPtestimony
Cc: nihipalim001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2483 on 2/7/2012 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for EEP 2/7/2012 9:00:00 AM HB2483

Conference room: 325
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Michele Nihipali
Organization: Individual
E-mail: nihipalim001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

HB2483 is the beginning of planning for climate change. This would add climate change as a "priority" in the State Planning Act, which is great. Without any specifics to address, however, it is not a very strong measure, but could be instrumental in laying the groundwork for future policy.

I support this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Anthony Aalto
3946 Lurline Drive • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96816
808.234.9779

February 6th, 2012

To: House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
Re: Hearing on Tuesday, February 7th at 9:00AM in House
conference room 325 Subject: Testimony regarding HB2483

Aloha Chair Coffman and members of the committee

My name is Anthony Aalto. I am a resident of Honolulu, a taxpayer and a voter, and I thank you for this opportunity to testify.

I strongly support this bill and I urge you to do the same.

No state in the USA is more vulnerable to the effects of climate change and sea level rise than Hawai'i. Yet thus far our planning for these certain eventualities has been woefully inadequate.

This bill at least starts to move us in the right direction, albeit in a wholly unnecessarily feeble way.

Indeed, its biggest flaw is that it is so weak. Any time I see words like "encourage," "foster," "promote," and "monitor," I know that we have a damp squib of a law.

With all due respect you should add some real teeth to this bill. How about requiring all the counties to come up with proposed planning, permitting and building code revisions to accommodate an anticipated sea level rise of between one and three feet over the course of the next 50 years? How about requiring them to implement such code revisions within a 12 to 24 month period? Now that would really have some practical benefits.

In the meantime this bill is better than nothing and I urge you to support it.