

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 314
A BILL RELATING TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

PRESENTATION TO THE
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

MR. EDWARD T. TEIXEIRA
ACTING DIRECTOR OF CIVIL DEFENSE

February 10, 2011

Chair Aquino and Committee members:

I am Ed Teixeira, Acting Director of Civil Defense, State Department of Defense. I am providing written testimony in opposition to House Bill 314.

We oppose House Bill 314 because the proposed bill establishes an office of disaster preparedness and disaster preparedness commission within an undesignated department for the purpose of developing a comprehensive disaster preparedness plan for the State of Hawaii. The proposed bill, if passed, will duplicate ongoing emergency preparedness functions and planning performed by the State Civil Defense Division and other State and county agencies.

If this proposal is passed, there will be considerable cost implications generated by creating a new office of the director of disaster preparedness including support for a disaster preparedness commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony that opposes this bill.



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TESTIMONY OF ALISON POWERS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
Representative Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair
Representative Ty Cullen, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 10, 2011
9:00 a.m.

HB 314

Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Cullen and members of the Committee, my name is Alison Powers, Executive Director of Hawaii Insurers Council. Hawaii Insurers Council is a non-profit trade association of property and casualty insurance companies licensed to do business in Hawaii. Member companies underwrite approximately 40% of all property and casualty insurance premiums in the state.

Hawaii Insurers Council supports the intent of HB 314. Hawaii Insurers Council believes it is prudent for the state to have a disaster preparedness plan in place before the next disaster occurs.

In addition, we do offer the following comments:

The inclusion of "human-caused catastrophes" in the definition of "disaster" appears to include acts of terrorism, which could possibly conflict with Homeland Security laws. If it is the intent of the committee to include disaster preparedness for some human-caused catastrophes, but not acts of terrorism, then acts of terrorism should be specifically excluded in the definition of "disaster."

Hawaii Insurers Council also suggests that "fire" be replaced with "wildfire" under the definition of "natural hazard" because it is more closely aligned with extraordinary situations.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this measure.