

SB2877

To abolish statutory requirements to reimburse the City and County of Honolulu for the operation and maintenance of the fireboat and allow for broader flexibility in the management of fireboat operations by the Department of Transportation.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

IN REPLY REFER TO:

February 7, 2012

SB 2877

RELATING TO HARBORS FIREBOAT

HOUSE COMMITTEE(S) ON WATER, LAND, AND HOUSING and ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

The Department of Transportation (DOT) supports this administration bill to allow for broader flexibility in its management of fireboat operations. Removal of the requirement to reimburse the City & County of Honolulu's Fire Department for the maintenance and operation of the State's Fireboat "Moku Ahi" will allow for more economical management and enable a more comprehensive marine incident response program to be implemented. The maritime community and citizens of Hawaii will be better served by providing DOT with this flexibility.

The "Moku Ahi" is an important component in responding to a landside fire in the harbor vicinity as well as playing an important role in any marine incident response. Recently, the US Coast Guard updated its marine firefighting and salvage regulations that commercial vessel owners/operators must comply with. Marine firefighting requires different training and techniques than landside structure firefighting. In order to comply with the US Coast Guard's regulations and OPA 90 marine spill response requirements, commercial vessel owners/operators have contractual arrangements with organizations for marine spill/firefighting/salvage operations. The organizations that the vessel owners/operators have contracts with are prepared for any type of marine casualty, be it a petroleum spill, vessel fire, or grounding/salvage response through an incident command center with the necessary assets and skilled manpower available whenever necessary.

This Bill does not 'shut down' the "Moku Ahi" and merely allows the Harbors Division to pursue management alternatives ranging from contracting out for management services to entering into an agreement with an existing marine casualty response organization.

We urge your support of our efforts to pursue the most economical and operationally comprehensive manner to provide fireboat services. This bill will provide the DOT with the flexibility to establish a more comprehensive response program and achieve

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cost savings through economies of scale and expertise of the marine response community that is in place today.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



HAWAII FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

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The Senate
The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2012
Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs and
Committee on Water, Land, and Housing
February 7, 2012

Testimony by
Hawaii Fire Fighters Association

S.B. No. 2877 RELATING TO HARBORS FIREBOAT

My name is Robert H. Lee and I am the President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, Local 1463, IAFF, AFL-CIO. HFFA represents the 2,800 active and retired professional fire fighters throughout the State. HFFA appreciates the opportunity to **provide comments on S.B. 2877.**

HFFA members current provide operational support on the existing fire boat. While S.B. No. 2877, may be seen as a cost-saving measure, HFFA will not allow the safety of our members to be compromised. If the replacement services are less than comparable, we will address our concerns and the involvement of our members from an operational standpoint with the Honolulu Fire Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the transfer of the operations of the fire boat back to the State

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Sunday, February 05, 2012 10:01 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Testimony for SB2877 on 2/7/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for PGM/WLH 2/7/2012 1:15:00 PM SB2877

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Abraham Farakish
Organization: Individual
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Submitted on: 2/5/2012

Comments:

I would like to voice my opposition to SB 2877. The Honolulu waterfront deserves the best means of protection available, privatizing the fire boat will most definitely lower the standard that is currently in place. With HFD personnel manning the fire boat you are not only getting highly trained firefighters you are also getting Hazardous Materials Techs, expert rescue and water men, highly skilled pilots, and EMT's to respond to medical emergencies. It is also very important that the fire boat interface easily with HFD and responder personnel to ensure the fastest and best service is available, this current seamless working relationship will surely suffer if altered. When it comes to safety the public's best interest must come first and not be greatly compromised as this proposed bill intends to do. Thank you.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 8:21 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Testimony for SB2877 on 2/7/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for PGM/WLH 2/7/2012 1:15:00 PM SB2877

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Michael Thomson
Organization: Individual
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

I oppose the bill for many reasons. It will reduce the amount of Fire Fighters thus reducing emergency help. The Boat provides public service outside the Harbor as well. As in if an aircraft were to go off the reef runway or other vessels are in trouble the Fire Boat is there to assist. The Fire Boat has also come to the aid of Coast Guard in search and rescue operations. To do away with the boat will remove a valuable asset for Oahu.

~~PGM Testimony~~
From: PGM Testimony
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 11:23 AM
To: WLH Testimony
Subject: FW: Testimony for SB2877 on 2/7/2012 1:15:00 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [<mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov>]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 11:07 AM
To: PGM Testimony
Cc: kevfarm@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2877 on 2/7/2012 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for PGM/WLH 2/7/2012 1:15:00 PM SB2877

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kevin Farm
Organization: Honolulu Fire Department
E-mail: kevfarm@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/6/2012

Comments:

My name is Kevin Farm, I have 22yrs. with the Honolulu Fire department and I am stationed at the Fireboat. I oppose SB 2877. If the state wants someone else to take over the Fireboat, they don't have the years of experience, interoperability with HFD and other agencies, command and control experience, responding to medical, Hazardous materials, and ocean rescue experience. Basic firefighting and ship firefighting experience, classroom is one thing but actual experience putting out House, auto, warehouse, and boat fires which all of us have is very useful. Honolulu Fire Department is very experienced, knowledgeable and has the background knowledge of how to mitigate, extinguish and control a variety of emergencies. Our motto is pride, service and dedication and that's how we operate the Fireboat Moku Ahi.

February 6, 2012

Jeff Lee
kalanikaau@yahoo.com

Regarding SB 2877

I am submitting testimony that his bill **not be passed** for the following reasons:

- 1) Has the Harbors division formulated a plan for fire protection within Honolulu Harbor in absence of the present protection afforded by Honolulu Fire Department? Will this plan afford a seamless transfer of protection should the Honolulu Fire Department be eliminated from it's present mission
- 2) If so, what, if any accreditation do any private entities possess pertaining to firefighting?
- 3) Do these proposed parties possess the scope, equipment, training and manpower to afford such protection?
- 4) What experience, if any do these parties have relating to firefighting, rescue missions, basic lifesaving, etc.?
- 5) What has been their track record pertaining to fire protection at all?

Indeed, would you trust your families safety and health to anyone else than the Honolulu Fire Department?

Respectfully,

Jeff Lee