

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1203
A BILL RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

PRESENTATION TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY,
& INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS

BY

MAJOR GENERAL DARRYLL D. M. WONG
ADJUTANT GENERAL
February 13, 2013

Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Military, & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts Committee:

I am Major General Darryll D. M. Wong, State Adjutant General. I am testifying in **OPPOSITION** of House Bill 1203.

HB 1203 as written will require a National Guard officer's promotion to have state senate confirmation. Federal statutes govern the promotions of all active, Guard and Reserve general officers. Officers must meet several prerequisites prior to being recommended for promotion. The prerequisites include mandatory schooling, experience factors, and time in service and grade. These officers meet a central promotion board convened and run by the applicable service. These boards conduct a thorough screening of an officer's record. A panel of higher ranking officers reviews each record for promotion. Those officers recommended for promotion are forwarded to the applicable service secretary for review and recommendation. Officers approved by the service secretary face a United States Senate confirmation hearing. The names of those confirmed go to the President of the United States for his signature.

The second section of HB 2103 as written will require all candidates for the adjutant general hold a commission or have held a commission in the grade of lieutenant general. Currently within the entire National Guard structure nationally, there are only three lieutenant generals (three star), the Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and the Directors of the Army and Air National Guard. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau is a four star general. The proposed lieutenant general qualification requirement will severely limit qualified candidates for our state's adjutant general.

I strongly oppose HB 1203 and ask that you vote not to pass it the bill out of committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



11 February 2013

Representative K. Mark Takai
Chairman, Veterans, Military and International Affairs Committee
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairman Takai and committee members,

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I strongly oppose HB 1203 for the following reasons:

First, the Hawaii State Senate provides "advice and consent" on nominations appointed by the Governor. Many of the General Officers are selected based on nationwide competition by the Chief of the National Guard. Although the Generals are from the Hawaii National Guard, they may serve military organizations in Washington DC, or other Active Duty Commands in this State. What is the purpose of the "advice and consent" from the Hawaii State Senate? Every Hawaii National Guard General receives confirmation for their rank from the United States Senate prior to promotion. I know of no State legislative body over riding the United States Senate.

Second, there is no drive nationwide to have Adjutant Generals serve at the 3 star level, especially with the cut backs the military will face. Federal recognition of the Adjutant General at the rank of Lieutenant General will not happen. A few states promote their Adjutant Generals to Lieutenant General due to the large size of their National Guard. Some examples are Texas, Georgia, and Pennsylvania where their troop strength number close to 50,000. The Adjutant General wears 3 stars while in the state but revert to 2 stars when leaving the state.

Therefore, HB 1203 is not necessary.

Robert G.F. Lee
Major General, US Army (Ret)
(Former Hawaii Adjutant General)