



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 6, 2014, 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 325

by
Tom Mick
Policy and Planning Department Director

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 1638, Relating to the Judiciary.

Purpose: To provide supplemental operating and capital improvement appropriations for FY 2015.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary strongly urges your support of House Bill No. 1638, which reflects the Judiciary's resource requirements for FY 2015. During the informational budget briefings to the members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means and the House Committee on Finance on January 6, 2014, we provided detailed information on our supplemental budget request, our current appropriation and expenditures, and on our caseload and revenue contributions to the State. Consequently, our testimony today will address only the highlights.

The Judiciary recognizes that the economy and overall economic outlook for Hawai'i have significantly improved relative to the last two fiscal biennia. However, as you know and we understand, in keeping with the biennium budget concept, supplemental budget resources will be requested largely to address unforeseen developments, inadvertent oversights, and other special circumstances which might cause hardship on those we serve. In addition, we are quite mindful of the many competing demands for the limited resources available. Accordingly, the Judiciary has tried to be very prudent in its supplemental budget request and focus on only its most pressing needs relative to the clients and public it serves, as well as to its own operations and staff. To that end, the Judiciary is requesting 18 new permanent positions and additional funding of \$4.8 million for FY 2015.



Two of our requests relate to funding needed for salary adjustments, the first being \$334K for the two percent salary increase set by the 2013 Commission on Salaries for the justices and judges. The second request results from the fact that there currently is no mechanism to adjust the pay of the Administrative Director and Deputy Administrative Director of the Courts. A separate bill has been introduced this legislative session to address this issue and if approved, \$27K would be needed to comply with this bill.

Some of our requests focus on our especially vulnerable clients, that is, our children, those with mental health issues, and others that cannot fend for themselves. For Children's Justice Center, we are requesting funding to replace its interview recording equipment at all locations on each island so that children who have been sexually abused or witnesses to violent crime will not have to be re-interviewed and re-traumatized due to faulty recording equipment that is intermittently breaking down. On January 1, 2014, the vendor discontinued supporting this recording equipment. For Mental Health Court, which was established in 2005 for people with severe mental health issues and was originally budgeted for two probation officer positions and 60 clients, a temporary probation officer position is needed to replace one lost during the economic downturn. This position would allow expansion to 30 clients per probation officer as the one probation officer currently employed is trying to handle 38 clients, with nine on a waitlist and nine more in the referral process. Another mental health request is for a position and funding to replace Mea Kokua program grant funding of \$200K, which expires on February 28, 2014, and which is used to treat offenders with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders. Replacement of grant funding would allow creation of a permanent track in Drug Court for such offenders; currently, there are 55 offenders in the program with 10 on a waitlist. Lastly, a supervisory position in the Office of Public Guardian is being requested to oversee and supervise eight O'ahu guardians who average about 80 clients each.

Another set of requests relate to adult and juvenile offenders and Family Court matters and concerns. Specifically, First Circuit has requested supplemental resources to: (1) lease space in Kapolei to further consolidate Family Court functions in one geographic location, (2) continue restoration of Purchase of Service (POS) contract funding to provide essential treatment to adult and juvenile offenders and their victims, (3) maintain and expand its Project HOPE (Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement) program, and (4) establish a mediator position for Family Court and a Nurse Manager position at the Juvenile Detention Facility; while Second Circuit has requested funds to cover increased guardian ad litem/legal counsel costs that are in excess of budget. About \$1.1 million is being requested to move from Honolulu and lease space in Kapolei for 81 employees in the Juvenile Client Services Branch (i.e., Juvenile Intake and Probation Services, Girls Court, Juvenile Drug Court, and Family Drug Court). Having this Branch in Kapolei would improve communication and coordination among Family Court



divisions as they would all be co-located in the same geographical proximity, eliminate travel time (lost time) between Honolulu and Kapolei, result in workers being more productive and efficient and in spending more quality time with juveniles and their families, improve morale and performance by reducing travel stress and fatigue, and free up second floor space in Ka'ahumanu Hale (the Circuit Court Building in Honolulu) for additional courtrooms and related offices. Regarding POS funding, another \$650K is being requested this year to continue the restoration process begun last year when the Legislature generously provided us more than \$600K in this area. Such funding is important to providing needed services to our adult and juvenile offenders; victims; and their families, relatives, and loved ones. For Project HOPE, the Judiciary is requesting funding for two permanent drug testing positions which provide random drug testing on more than 2,000 offenders (125 tests daily), and for which grant funding ended on June 30, 2013. A second Project HOPE request is for funding for three temporary positions so as to continue to maintain and expand this successful program, cover lab analysis and supply costs that are significantly exceeding budgeted amounts, and lessen workload per probation officer. The Family Court mediator position being requested would provide an on-site alternative to costly and time-consuming litigation, and give parties a neutral place and process to explore and resolve pending issues and settle cases. The Nurse Manager position is needed to ensure proper medical protocols are established and in place relative to the juveniles housed at the Detention Facility, and to oversee and supervise the three nurses employed.

Other supplemental resources are being requested in the court operations and services area. In First Circuit, these requests relate to court interpreting, audio/visual recording systems in Kapolei courtrooms, and cashiering functions; in Second circuit, the one request relates to legal documents; and in Third Circuit, the requests relate to security and information technology (IT) needs. First Circuit needs a position to help manage and schedule court interpreters, as court interpreter requests have increased by 77% in nine years – from 3,740 requests and 43 languages in FY 2005 to 6,600 requests and 68 languages in FY 2013. The need to secure interpreters will only increase as the Judiciary responds to Federal and State requirements to provide interpreters for all types of court hearings and processes (such as drivers education training classes). The Jefferson audio/visual “autolog 6” recording equipment used to produce official records of the courtroom proceedings in all 14 courtrooms in Kapolei needs to be upgraded to “autolog 7” equipment as the vendor will discontinue production and support of this equipment on January 1, 2015. First Circuit is also requesting four clerk positions for its cashiering sections at its Circuit, District and Family Courts – two at Circuit Court and one at District Court to replace positions that were transferred to Family Court at Kapolei without replacement, and one for an additional supervisory position at Kapolei. The Second Circuit request in this area is for a Legal Documents Clerk to replace the position that was eliminated during the economic downturn and related funding cuts. The lack of this position along with increased workload has created a backlog in indexing, inputting, docketing, updating, researching, following-up, and responding to cases; average overtime costs of \$15K annually to compensate for the lost position; and \$33K



annually in lease costs to store 3,600 boxes of case files because the Legal Documents Branch has fallen behind in being able to review and purge these files.

The two Third Circuit requests in this area relate to security issues. The first request is for funding to hire two special duty police officers full-time to provide needed security at our Kona Family Court and our Kona Circuit/Drug Court which Department of Public Safety is currently unable to provide. Currently, Third Circuit is paying “out of hide” for such services two days a week at the Family Court on its two most vulnerable days due to the nature of the hearings being held those days (e.g., temporary restraining orders, divorces, etc.). Not having such security every weekday at these two locations leave court staff and court users at risk. The second request is for two bailiff positions – one for Kohala/Hamakua to replace a position that was eliminated during the economic downturn and one for Hilo Family Court which has only one bailiff to serve two judges. Bailiffs are needed to help with court security and to help process cases in court, among other things. As it is now, bailiffs assigned to Hilo or Kona travel two hours round trip to Kohala/Hamakua whenever court is in session. Not only is this unproductive time, but additional mileage costs are incurred by the Judiciary and other clerks in Hilo or Kona have to help absorb some of the bailiff’s duties.

The last area of concern for which the Judiciary is requesting supplemental resources are areas which affect the Judiciary overall, or affect the staff, their operations, and their performance of duties. Specifically, funding is being requested for a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Specialist position; training of judges and staff, an identified area of concern by Judiciary employees and management, and an education specialist position; a new multi-point control unit for video-conferencing; an additional IT specialist position in Administration; and the replacement of aging computers in the First Circuit. The CIP position is essential for helping to manage, coordinate, and oversee CIP related activities at some 40 Judiciary buildings/office spaces on six islands statewide. This is especially important as we continue forward with building the new Kona Judiciary Complex which will require much of one CIP person’s time, and to help with the 19 projects totaling \$53 million that were provided during the last three legislative sessions and the additional six projects and \$8.2 million (not including the Kona Judiciary Complex) being requested this session. Two requests relate to training, the first for \$63K, partly for a one day judicial conference focusing on bias, cultural awareness, barriers to access to justice, new/revised laws, amended court rules, and innovative courtroom practices; and partly for employees to enhance their knowledge base and technical skills so as not to negatively affect efficiency or customer service. The second training request relates to establishing an educational specialist position to help expand training opportunities and coordinate such training in the Education Office. Judiciary Administration is requesting funding for: (1) a new multi-point, videoconferencing control unit to allow for expansion of videoconferencing services and replace two existing, aging units – one that is nearing the end of its life cycle and another that does not support traditional systems such as Polycom or



smartphones or tablets; and (2) establishment of an IT specialist position to replace a position that was eliminated during the economic downturn and which is needed to provide support to Judiciary programs on a wide range of applications from email to internet/intranet, mainframe database administration, and system backup, among others. Lastly, funding is being requested by First Circuit to establish a computer replacement plan that would allow replacing all its computers on a 7-year cycle, that is, one-seventh each year or about 160 computers annually. This would eliminate the “replacement in crisis” mode and “wishful” year-end funding availability methods that occur now, and which cause inefficiencies and hinder the ability of court employees to process court cases and matters in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

In summary, our supplemental budget request is for 18 new permanent positions and approximately \$4.8 million in FY 2015, which is about 3.3% more than our current general fund budget base of \$144.4 million. We believe that this additional amount is a relatively small amount to enhance court and client services; ensure the protection of the public, employees, and clients alike; continue our emphasis on access to justice; and provide for employee training, productivity, and morale concerns and needs.

With regard to CIP requirements, these are a major item of concern as the Judiciary’s infrastructure continues to age and deteriorate, and as the population served and corresponding demand for services provided by the Judiciary keep increasing. To that end and like last year, the number one priority item in the CIP area is the Kona Judiciary Complex. While we are extremely grateful for the \$9 million provided by the Legislature last year towards construction of this Complex, we are requesting an additional \$81 million in construction funding so that we can move forward with this vitally needed project and provide our citizens in Kona with a secure, efficient, and modern court facility. Land issues and related site selection have been resolved, and the Judiciary is moving forward with design planning and work, with the Project Development Report due for publication by the design consultant in February 2014. Another \$6.2 million in CIP construction funding is being requested for elevator replacement at Ka‘ahumanu Hale as the nine elevators in the building are original, about 30 years old, are intermittently breaking down with repair support becoming more difficult and costly, and are old gear technology as opposed to the new gearless elevators. Lastly, some \$2 million in planning and design funds is being requested for five CIP projects - Ka‘ahumanu Hale cellblock redesign, upgrade of the air conditioning and ventilation systems at Kauikeaouli Hale (the District Court Building on O‘ahu), and the air conditioning system at the Lahaina District Court Building; upgrade of the fire alarm systems at Hoapili Hale (the Circuit Court Building on Maui), and assessment of all parking structure systems (e.g., fire sprinkler, sewage, storm drainage, and air conditioning piping) at Hoapili Hale.



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The proposed supplemental budget is the Judiciary's best estimate of the resources necessary to maintain the integrity of the courts and to fulfill our statutory, constitutional, and public service mandates. The Judiciary respectfully requests your support of House Bill No. 1638, the Judiciary's supplemental budget request.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

William P. Kenoi
Mayor



Lincoln S.T. Ashida
Corporation Counsel

Katherine A. Garson
Assistant Corporation
Counsel


COUNTY OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL

333 Kilauea Avenue, Second Floor • Hilo, Hawaii 96720 • (808) 961-8251 • Fax (808) 961-8622
E-mail: corpcounsel@co.hawaii.hi.us

February 5, 2014

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 1638 – RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY

TO: HONORABLE KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
HONORABLE SHARON HAR, VICE CHAIR
and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: LINCOLN S. T. ASHIDA
Corporation Counsel  Feb 5 2014 10:34 AM
County of Hawai'i

Thank you for accepting this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of H.B. 1638, specifically the provision related to the funding of the Kona Judiciary Complex.

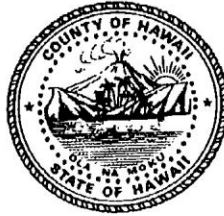
In the Public Administration course I teach at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, we discuss the importance of good government being the product of all three branches of our government thriving. Like all judges, Third Circuit Court Administrative Judge Ronald Ibarra demands appropriate decorum in his Court, and often speaks of the importance of a decent courtroom as the gateway for access to justice for our citizens.

We have the present opportunity via H.B. 1638 to finally bring to Kona a court complex that is needed and our State can be proud of. The present facilities, although well intended, are simply inadequate. The rights of parties are compromised since they cannot meet privately with their attorney. Security is a concern for parties, witnesses, lawyers, judges, court staff, and the public. There is inadequate parking for the public. Having all of the courts spread out throughout Kona is not efficient—attorneys often have to rush (drive) from court to court in order to make their hearings and represent their clients.

The Big Island community is unified in their need for this new Kona Judiciary Complex. Please help us make this happen by furthering Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald's vision of bringing this needed facility to our Kona district. This facility will not only benefit Kona citizens and lawyers, but all of our citizens statewide who seek access to justice in West Hawai'i.

MITCHELL D. ROTH
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

DALE A. ROSS
FIRST DEPUTY
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



655 KĪLAUEA AVENUE
HILO, HAWAII 96720
PH: (808) 961-0466
FAX: (808) 961-8908
(808) 934-3403
(808) 934-3503

WEST HAWAII UNIT
81-980 HALEKĪ ST, SUITE 150
KEALAKEKUA, HAWAII 96750
PH: (808) 322-2552
FAX: (808) 322-6584

OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

February 4, 2014

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 1638 RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY
HEARING: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

To: Honorable Chairman Rhoads, Vice Chairwoman Sharon Har
and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Mitchell Roth
Prosecuting Attorney
County of Hawaii

Re: H.B. 1638 RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY
Specifically the Kona Judiciary Complex Funding

Honorable Chairman and Members:

Our deputy prosecutors serve at the various Kona Courthouses everyday and have seen first hand the problems in the current facilities. Although the judiciary has made improvements and do their best under the circumstances, we are deeply concerned about safety for staff, parties, jurors and witnesses. Since 2008, the Kona courts hear cases from North Kohala, South Kohala, Kona and Ka'u districts. As caseloads increase, the concerns stated below will become more pressing. We sincerely appreciate Chief Justice Recktenwald for his support for the building of the Kona Judiciary Complex.

Keakealani Building located at the old Kona hospital is the main courthouse, which houses both a circuit and district court as well as clerks offices and judiciary administration staff. It has numerous steps, which our deputies must use to enter the building, often laden with files and other equipment. Parking is scarce and efforts to obtain a dedicated stall for prosecutor and public defender were unsuccessful because of existing DAGS rules. We had one deputy fall and fracture her rib while walking with her trial box to her car, which had to be parked in the grass because there was no other parking space. She was in the midst of a felony jury trial and had to continue to work in pain.

Prisoners coming from or going to the cellblock must climb steep concrete steps in the back of the building, which is wet if it rains. We have had at least one prisoner fall with shackles, and another escape from this location. The cellblock itself is woefully inadequate. Its small space must sometimes house newly arrested defendants as well

as inmates transported from the community correctional facility. There is no place for attorneys to talk to their clients or for guards to wait. ACOs set up an outdoor table under the judge's overpass to watch the cellblock door.

There are three separate locations for Kona courthouses. In all locations, quarters are very close; resulting in jurors, parties, witnesses and families forced to intermingle in the hallways, limited waiting spaces and restrooms. During criminal proceedings, it is common for family and friends of a victim and the defendant to want to come to the courthouse and observe the proceedings. Emotions can run high and people may be distressed and desperate. Our deputies have observed jurors to appear intimidated because everyday when they arrive and leave, and at every break, these jurors must walk by supporters and family of the defendant on trial. Trials have had to halt because jurors may have inadvertently heard something improper. Deputies have been threatened by family members upset that a defendant is found guilty. The close quarters don't provide the space needed to prevent, diffuse or react to intimidation or violence. This is not safe, and a serious incident is just a matter of time.

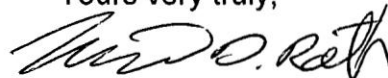
Preliminary hearings and trials in the Family Court at the Lender's Documents Building are held in a room where victims must testify within six feet of the defendant, separated only by counsel table. This Family Court also hears juvenile matters, domestic violence restraining orders, divorces, and child welfare cases. These types of cases can be highly charged. The deputy sheriffs do their best to be present and prevent incidents but they cannot be everywhere and incidents nevertheless have occurred.

The fact that the courtrooms are located in three separate buildings has led to confusion with people going to the wrong location to conduct their business. Defendants who go to the wrong courthouse may be issued a bench warrant; attorneys and parties risk being sanctioned. A witness who appears in the wrong courthouse may result in a case being dismissed. The Kona community has only limited public transportation. A person with transportation issues cannot readily appear at the correct courtroom if he or she misunderstood their summons or subpoena.

The adult probation department is currently on the second floor of the Lenders Document Building, which does not have an elevator. Disabled defendants have to meet their probation officers in an alternate location. This is not acceptable.

The Kona community deserves a complex where all judiciary business is conducted in one location in a safe environment, and where lessons learned from other complexes built throughout the state may be applied. We urge this Legislature to enact H.B. 1638 and support the Kona Judiciary Complex.

Yours very truly,



MITCHELL D. ROTH
Prosecuting Attorney
County of Hawai'i



TO: Chair Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Sharon Har
Members of the Committee

FR: Nanci Kreidman, M.A.
Chief Executive Officer

RE: H.B. 1638

Aloha! We submit this testimony to contribute to the discussion about the Judiciary Budget bill before you this afternoon. There remains a significant community need to restore a greater amount of monies to support domestic violence POS programs.

In 2009, there was a significant cut to the programs supported with Judiciary Purchase of Services Contracts. Reduction in services and lay off of staff was the result, for victim support programs, batterer's intervention programs, and specialized domestic violence legal advocacy programs.

Rainy Day funds provided some offset to the enormity of the loss to many programs, but after the evaporation of Rainy Day Funds, it has been a scramble for programs to secure funds in an effort to re-build what was lost. You will recall that programs supported by public and private funds were forced to compete in a very tight marketplace for dollars available through private foundation, private donors, and events-when the economy had impacted these arenas as well.

The Judiciary made its first request to increase funding by legislative appropriation in 2013. ***For the Domestic Violence Action Center, this resulted in a \$51,000 increase in our contract. The original amount our contract was reduced totaled \$570,000.*** The Department of Human Services and the Department of Health began several years ago to restore funds for community contracts.

It simply is not possible to raise, through other means, this amount of funding support to continue providing the unduplicated, specialized programs that are in steady demand from the Domestic Violence Action Center. Our only option is to rebuild in a measured, manageable way, funding to support our island families who are suffering the harm of abuse.

Families are at the core of our community. And we are dismissing the significance of the consequences to our community if we do not focus attention and investment in families who need services, safety, and support as they escape or heal from their suffering.

In the first six months of this fiscal year service to the community is reflected in the following:

- DVAC staff had telephone contact with 5,756 callers
- 230 Requests for legal representation received
- 183 Legal cases Opened, 177 cases Closed
- 150 Advocacy Cases Opened, 120 Cases Closed
- 921 EXPO Court Outreach Cases Opened, 194 Cases Closed
- 251 Court appearances by agency attorneys
- 1,160 hours working on document preparation and in court proceedings
- 472 Accompaniments with clients to agencies, appointments or court
- 2,484 Safety plans completed, 1,620 Risk assessments conducted
- 2,470 Students, educators & service providers trained through Teen Alert program.

In the last 14 years, DVAC's work included:

- DVAC Staff had Telephone Contact with 247,704 Callers
- 5,787 Requests for Legal Representation Received
- 4,531 Legal Cases Opened
- 3,980 Legal Cases Closed
- 3,917 Advocacy Cases Opened
- 4,457 Advocacy Cases Closed
- 6,980 Court appearances by Agency Attorneys
- 27,533 Hours Working on Document Preparation and in Court Proceedings
- 19,575 Accompaniments with Clients to Agencies, Appointments for Court
- 44,812 Safety Plans Completed
- 43,851 Risk Assessments Conducted

Teen Alert Program (program began in 2002)

- 53,063 Students, Educators & Service providers Trained through Teen Alert Program

Please accept our gratitude for your engagement in this important conversation about the needs that remain to be addressed. Domestic violence continues to challenge our community systems and our island families. Costs and incidence have not abated. Law enforcement, courts, health care, corrections, social services and mental health services are all impacted by this crime. Learning difficulties exist, adverse health outcomes result and public safety is at increased risk. Together we can navigate a course to peace. Mahalo.

TESTIMONY

House Committee on Judiciary
Hearing: Thursday, February 6, 2014 @ 2:00 p.m.

TO: Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Sharon Har and
Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Calvin E. Young
President, Hawaii State Bar Association

RE: HB1638 Relating to the Judiciary

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Har and Committee Members, as the President of the Hawaii State Bar Association, I am submitting comments in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Section 3 of HB1638, specifically item 1 on page 4 "Kona Judiciary Complex, Hawaii". The total funding request for this critically important project is \$90 million.

While this court complex is to be physically situated in Kona, this facility will serve the needs of all of the residents of the Big Island. And in the larger scheme, since State court facilities on all islands should be viewed as one cohesive network, this facility would increase the availability of access to justice for all of Hawaii's people.

The residential and visitor population of West Hawaii has grown and will continue to grow. Kona has been patient as the Legislature has generously approved funding requests in recent years for Kauai, Hilo, and most recently Kapolei.

The current Kona court campus consists of a number of small detached buildings which were not originally designed as court facilities. In fact, the office and chamber of Administrative Judge Ronald Ibarra is located in walking distance of the hospital wing where he was born. The Self Help Center established for self-represented litigants serviced by HSBA volunteer attorneys is a desk located in a former morgue facility. Opposing parties, oftentimes involved in emotional Family Court proceedings, are confined to one small facility. Security and safety are major concerns since criminal defendants, court staff, lawyers, witnesses and jurors are likewise confined to a small area.

The facility envisioned for the Kona site selected will meet current judicial needs and future projected judicial needs of West Hawaii, Hawaii County and the State as a whole.

The Board of the Hawaii State Bar Association stands united in its unwavering **SUPPORT** of the Judiciary's top priority funding request for the proposed Kona Judiciary Complex. Thank you for the opportunity to submit these observations and comments.

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February 4, 2014

TESTIMONY TO HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
HEARING: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014 AT 2:00 P.M.

TO: Honorable Chairman Rhoads, Vice Chairwoman Sharon Har
and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Robert D. S. Kim
President, West Hawaii Bar Association

RE: H.B. 1638 – RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY
SPECIFICALLY THE KONA JUDICIARY COMPLEX FUNDING

I am supporting continued funding for the Kona Judiciary Complex included in H. B. 1638.

There is a critical need to consolidate the courts and support services in West Hawaii. This project is currently the number one priority on the Judiciary's CIP list. Currently, the District and Circuit Court of the Third Circuit Court, Kona Division, located in Kealahou, Hawaii is located along side the State Department of Health facilities in a multi-purpose building known as the Keakealani Building that was built in 1939, and is dilapidated, and overcrowded.

There is also a Circuit Court for the Big Island Drug Court (BIDC) located blocks away that is leased. The Family Court is miles away and is also leased.

The Keakealani Building was originally the old Kona Hospital and was built by the Public Works Administration almost 70 years ago under President Franklin Roosevelt.

As a practicing attorney, I know firsthand that there exists a severe parking shortage whereby designated parking stalls are provided for the general public and staff to share. This building has eight-six (86) parking stalls, and at least sixty-one (61) are utilized by staff members and state vehicles, leaving a mere twenty-five (25) stalls for public use. The public has to park illegally every day. Jurors are unable to find parking during jury selection. Prosecutors are unable to find parking to get into court.

The BIDC has less than 10 public parking stalls. When jury trials are held, forty or more jurors are summoned at a given time. This creates a severe parking shortage, that adversely affects prospective jurors, witnesses, attorneys, and persons summoned to court for proceedings, thereby creating tremendous frustration and anxiety.

The Keakealani Building Court facilities include two (2) holding cells for all in-custody criminal defendants, which are small rooms with bars. These holding cells are substandard, covered with graffiti, and filled with offensive odors.

These approximately ten-feet by ten-feet cells have housed, on occasion, over twenty inmates in one (1) cell, which is cruel, inhumane, and a deprivation of the constitutional rights of the inmates. Currently, inmates are shackled on their legs and hands when transported by corrections officers to the courtrooms. In order to reach the courtrooms, the inmates are forced to walk up a steep staircase, of approximately twenty or more steps with shackles. At least one (1) inmate has tripped and fallen from the top of the stairs to the bottom causing severe injuries.

At both the Keakealani Building and BIDC, there are no adequate facilities for attorneys to meet with criminal defendants. Counsel are forced to discuss confidential issues with their clients either in the cells with the other inmates, or in the presence of corrections officers. There is a very small room at the Keakealani Building that has been designated for attorneys and clients, however, it is substandard. It has no air-conditioning, and is subject to the availability of court sheriffs whose presence is required for private conversations.

The Family Court is currently located approximately eight miles away from the Circuit and District Courts, in a small and inadequate space and is understaffed and unable to adequately handle the tremendous caseload of family court matters. Due to the physical limitations of the Family Court building, there is only one (1) Family Court Judge for the West Hawaii area. The nearest family court facility is located in Waimea, Hawaii which is 49.48 miles away.

The extreme caseload and severe scheduling problems are adversely affecting divorce litigants, who must wait on average 65 to 90 days for a hearing on motions. There is also a lack of security for juvenile defendants and families. Security is stretched to its limits because the sheriffs must provide protection for various locations. In all other judiciary facilities the various courts are housed in a single location, and there

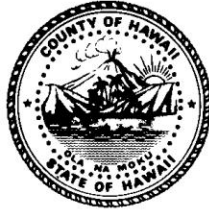
HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
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President, West Hawaii Bar Association
In Support of Kona Judiciary Complex
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is generally a single entrance. In such settings the sheriffs can provide security for the facilities with the manpower provided.

The current problems facing the West Hawaii court system in the Third Circuit are already at critical levels, and require immediate redress. On behalf of the attorneys, judges and the public, your support is in dire need. Please support the Kona Judiciary Complex by enacting H. B. 1638 and funding the Kona Judiciary Complex. Thank you.

Robert D. S. Kim
President
West Hawaii Bar Association

William P. Kenoi
Mayor



Walter K.M. Lau
Managing Director

Randall M. Kurohara
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy., Bldg. C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

February 6, 2014

The Honorable Karl Rhoads,
And Members of the House Judiciary Committee
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, 325
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: House Bill 1638, RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY

Aloha, Chair Rhoads and Committee Members:

Mahalo for the opportunity to express our strong support HB1638, relating to funding of the Kona Judiciary Complex. The \$90 million appropriation for design and construction is a priority for Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald as well as our citizens. This courthouse is needed to better serve not only our residents in West Hawai'i, but citizens and attorneys throughout our island and State.

West Hawai'i has never had a single, centralized courthouse. Currently the District Courtroom and Circuit Courtroom are in the Old Kona Hospital in the Keakealani Building, while Judge Ronald Ibarra's courtroom is in the former Al's Farm & Garden location on Halekii Street in Kealakekua. Family Court facilities are located in the Lender's Document Service Building in Kailua-Kona.

We all recognize the importance of adequate judicial facilities to provide needed security, appropriate decorum, and most importantly access to justice for all of our citizens. A centralized courthouse in Kona is needed for safety, and to ensure the timely and dignified adjudication of cases.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

William P. Kenoi
MAYOR

Hawaii County Bar Association

P.O. Box 585

Hilo, Hawaii 96720

February 5, 2014

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 1638 - RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY

TO: Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair, Honorable Sharon Har, Vice Chair and Members
of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Christopher P. Schlueter, Esq.
President, Hawaii County Bar Association

RE: H.B. 1638

On behalf of the Hawaii County Bar Association (“HCBA”) and its associated members, I write to offer my strong support of H.B. 1638, specifically the provision related to the funding of the Kona Judiciary Complex.

The Hawaii County Bar Association is comprised of attorneys residing in east and north Hawaii. On a daily basis, attorneys from east and north Hawaii conduct business in Kona and the neighboring vicinity. The present Kona judiciary facilities are simply not adequate. I have been repeatedly told my HCBA bar members that public safety at the Kona judiciary facilities is of major concern. The current facilities do not provide adequate security for the parties, witnesses, attorneys, judges, courts staff and the general public. Moreover, the Kona judiciary facilities are not conveniently located causing logistical problems for bar members attending court hearings. A centralized Kona Judiciary complex with facilitate and promote a more efficient administration of justice on the Big Island.

The Big Island legal community is unified in support of funding for a new Kona judiciary Complex. A new Kona Judiciary Complex will not only benefit citizens and lawyers residing in Kona, but all of our citizens countywide and statewide who seek access to justice.

Thank you for the consideration of H.B. 1638.

Very Truly Yours,

/s/ CHRISTOPHER P. SCHLUETER

President, Hawaii County Bar Association