

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1667 HD2
A BILL RELATING TO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY
MAJOR GENERAL DARRYLL D. M. WONG
ADJUTANT GENERAL AND DIRECTOR OF STATE CIVIL DEFENSE
February 20, 2014

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I am Major General Darryll D. M. Wong, State Adjutant General and the Director of State Civil Defense. I am testifying in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 1667 HD2.

This bill exempts qualifying totally and permanently Disabled Veterans who are 100% Veterans Affairs (VA) rated from paying the State motor vehicle registration fee. As of November 2013, the Department of Veterans Affairs reported there are 2,203 Hawaii veterans rated at 100% disability.

This exemption would be a small recognition of those veterans who incurred military related injuries and are now rated 100% disabled.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 1667 HD2.

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1667, HD2 (HSCR 516-14),
RELATING TO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN

DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

February 20, 2014

Good morning Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto & Johanson and Committee members:

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to support the concept of House Bill 1667, HD2, which exempts qualifying totally and permanently Disabled Veterans who are 100% Veterans Affairs (VA) rated from paying the State motor vehicle registration fee.

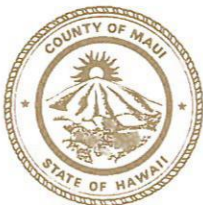
It also requires the Office of Veterans Services to report the number of qualifying Veterans to the Legislature and Department of Taxation annually and to change the effective date to September 1, 2014 to give the City Customer Services adequate time to update their computer system for vehicle registration.

As of November 2013 and according to VA metrics for Hawaii, there were 2,203 Veterans rated at the 100% disability rating.

The OVS supports the intent of this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2015.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Veteran community.

ALAN M. ARAKAWA
MAYOR



200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793-2155
Telephone (808) 270-7855
Fax (808) 270-7870
e-mail: mayors.office@mauicounty.gov

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Ke'ena O Ka Meia

COUNTY OF MAUI – Kalana O Maui

TESTIMONY OF ALAN ARAKAWA, MAYOR COUNTY OF MAUI

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, February 20, 2014, 11:00 a.m., Conference Rm. 308

HOUSE BILL 1667 HD2 RELATING TO VETERANS

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Honorable Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair
And Members of the House Committee on Finance

Thank you for this opportunity to testify **IN SUPPORT** of **HB 1667 HD2** relating to Veterans.

The purpose of this measure is to recognize the dedication and service of veterans of the armed services by exempting qualifying totally and permanently disabled veterans from paying the state motor vehicle registration fee on one of their non-commercial vehicles.

I support this important measure for the following reasons:

- As Mayor of Maui County, I am extremely grateful for the men and women of our armed forces who sacrifice so much for us – leaving behind family, children, friends, as well as personal goals and dreams, while risking their lives overseas.
- Veterans of the armed services should be recognized and honored for their selflessness and bravery in serving our country. In addition to the challenges they face overseas, many of our service members return to Hawaii with permanent physical and mental injuries including the loss of limbs, varying degrees of PTSD, and other continued hardships. "
- In 2008, the legislature (Act 141, SLH 2008) exempted one non-commercial vehicle owned by members of the National Guard, reserves, and active duty armed services, including the coast guard, who are residents of Hawaii from paying the motor vehicle weight tax. Permanently disabled veterans were not included.

For these reasons I support of HB 1667, as amended by the Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts, and respectfully urge this body to exempt qualifying disabled veterans from paying the state motor vehicle registration fee on one of their non-commercial vehicles. As I see it, it is the least we can do.

Council Chair
Gladys C. Baisa

Vice-Chair
Robert Carroll

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Michael P. Victorino

Council Members
Elle Cochran
Donald G. Couch, Jr.
Stacy Crivello
Don S. Guzman
G. Riki Hokama
Mike White



Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.maui-county.gov/council

February 19, 2014

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Gladys C. Baisa
Council Chair *Gladys C. Baisa*

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 20, 2014; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1667,
HD2, RELATING TO VETERANS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to exempt qualifying totally and permanently disabled veterans from paying the State Motor Vehicle Registration Fee on one of their noncommercial vehicles.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. Veterans of the armed services should be recognized and honored for their selflessness and bravery in serving our country. In addition to the challenges faced overseas, many veterans return home with permanent physical and mental injuries, including the loss of limbs, varying degrees of post-traumatic stress disorder, and other continued hardships. I applaud the Legislature for putting forward a bill that will show a small measure of our appreciation for their sacrifices.
2. By Act 141 (2008), the Legislature exempted one noncommercial vehicle owned by members of the National Guard, military reserves, and active-duty armed services, including the Coast Guard, who are residents of Hawaii from paying the Motor Vehicle Weight Tax. Permanently disabled veterans were not included, yet they are equally deserving of this exemption.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLE, LICENSING AND PERMITS
ADMINISTRATION
P.O. BOX 30300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96820-0300

KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR



SHERI T. KAJIWARA
DIRECTOR

PRESTON P. H. K. KO
ACTING LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR

TESTIMONY OF PRESTON KO, ACTING LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU, DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
Thursday, February 20, 2014, 11:00 a.m., Conference Room 308

HOUSE Bill 1667 HD2, "RELATING TO Veterans"

Position: Comments

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Finance

The City and County of Honolulu has no objections to H.B. No. 1667 HD2 which allows the exemption of the state motor vehicle registration fee for certain one hundred percent disabled veterans.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on H.B. No. 1667 HD2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Preston P. H. K. Ko". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Preston P. H. K. Ko
Acting Licensing Administrator

Date: February 18, 2014

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
The Honorable Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

From: Mike Golojuch, Lt Col, USAF (Ret), Chair, Advisory Board on Veterans' Services

Subject: Strong Support for HB1667, HD2

As the Chair, Advisory Board on Veterans' Services, we support HB1667, HD2. We believe service-connected 100% disabled veterans should be exempted from paying the annual vehicle registration fee.

This measure will be saying to disabled veterans that we thank you for your service to your country and the sacrifices you have made. We can never make these individuals whole but we can provide them with some relief by exempting for one more expense to their limited income.

The Board urges that you pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the views of the Advisory Board.

TAXBILLSERVICE

126 Queen Street, Suite 304

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: MOTOR VEHICLE, Exempt motor vehicle registration for disabled veterans

BILL NUMBER: HB 1667, HD-2

INTRODUCED BY: House Committee on Veterans, Military, and International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts

BRIEF SUMMARY: Adds a new section to HRS chapter 249 to provide that any totally and permanently disabled veteran who is: (1) a resident of Hawaii; (2) other than dishonorably discharged from the U.S. uniformed armed forces; (3) determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to have a service-connected 100% disability rating for compensation or a service-connected disability rating of 100%; and (4) in receipt of disability retirement pay from any branch of the uniformed armed forces, shall not be required to pay any state motor vehicle registration fees provided the exemption shall not extend to vehicles used for commercial purposes, nor to more than one vehicle of the disabled veteran.

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2014

STAFF COMMENTS: This measure proposes to exempt one noncommercial motor vehicle owned by disabled veterans who are residents of the state from the state motor vehicle registration fee. The legislature by Act 141, SLH 2008, exempted from the motor vehicle weight taxes, one noncommercial motor vehicle owned by members of the national guard, reserves, active duty armed services, including the coast guard, who are residents of Hawaii.

Inasmuch as the motor vehicle weight tax and registration fees are user charges designed to recover the cost of construction and maintenance of Hawaii's highway system, there is little justification for the proposed exemption. All motorists use the state highways and should, therefore, lend a hand in paying for good and safe roads. Any exemption granted to a select group of users requires that the lost revenues be made up by those who must continue to pay. So while the exemption would provide relief to a disabled veteran, a single mom making minimum wage, barely making ends meet, must continue to pay these fees. Motorists who will have to pick up the additional costs created by this proposed exemption should hold those who would propose such an exemption responsible for raising their taxes.

Digested 2/19/14



Hawaii Chapter, MOAA
P.O. Box 1185
Kailua, Hawaii 96734-1185

**Testimony of
Thomas Smyth
Military Officers Association of America, Hawaii Chapter
Before the
Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 20, 2014, 11:00 am, Room 308
HB 1667, HD 2 Relating to Veterans**

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Nishimoto and Johanson and Committee Members

Our chapter of 500 retired and currently serving officers of the Uniformed Services strongly supports HB 1667, HD 2, as amended. This important bill provides a specific vehicular tax for an honorably discharged armed services veteran who is a Hawaii resident and is permanently totally disabled.

We note that it is likely that such a veteran would have a relatively heavy vehicle to accommodate his or her disability, so this tax structure is especially important to those who have given us so much of themselves.

We understand that those charged with issuing state vehicle tax bills understand how the veteran's disability system works and can accommodate this added tax variation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



Headquarters: Department of State of Hawaii
438 Hobron Lane, Suite 407
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815

February 19, 2014

**Testimony in Support of HOUSE BILL 1667 HD2
Relating to Veterans Before the
House Committee On Finance
Hearing On Thursday, February 20, 2014, 11:00 A.M. In Conference Room 308**

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs Johansen and Nishimoto and Committee Members,

The Department of Hawaii, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) represents 3,800 members in 20 Posts located throughout the State of Hawaii. VFW is a federally chartered national association of soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen who have served the United States of America in wars, campaigns, and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters.

H.B. 1667 HD2 Exempts qualifying totally and permanently disabled veterans from paying the state motor vehicle registration fee. Requires the Office of Veterans Services to report the number of qualifying veterans to the legislature and department of taxation.

VFW Hawaii fully supports the purpose of this measure to give some recognition of the sacrifices made by members of the armed forces by exempting certain totally and permanently disabled veterans from having to pay annual motor vehicle fees on one of their noncommercial vehicles. This measure would provide some relief for those veterans who may find paying the combined state and county motor vehicle registration fee more of a financial burden than it would for non-disabled veterans

VFW Hawaii members are grateful for your efforts to promote this tangible benefit for qualifying veterans.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 1667 HD2.

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto

Lawrence M.G. Enomoto
VFW Hawaii State Legislative Liaison

FIN-Jo

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2014 11:10 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: stacy.crivello@mauicounty.us
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1667 on Feb 20, 2014 11:00AM

HB1667

Submitted on: 2/19/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 20, 2014 11:00AM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stacy Helm Crivello	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support the measure and for the reasons stated in Maui County Council Chair Gladys Baisa testimony submitted.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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finance1

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2014 3:26 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: greenlee@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1667 on Feb 20, 2014 11:00AM*

HB1667

Submitted on: 2/18/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 20, 2014 11:00AM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann Greenlee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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FIN-Jo

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2014 4:02 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: sonnyfernan@msn.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1667 on Feb 20, 2014 11:00AM

HB1667

Submitted on: 2/18/2014

Testimony for FIN on Feb 20, 2014 11:00AM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stanley Y. Fernandez Sr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments: In support of HB1667.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



Testimony of
GLENN M. OKIMOTO
DIRECTOR

Deputy Directors
FORD N. FUCHIGAMI
RANDY GRUNE
AUDREY HIDANO
JADINE URASAKI

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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

February 20, 2014
11:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 308



H.B. 1667, H.D.2
RELATING TO VETERANS

House Committee on Finance

The Department of Transportation (DOT) appreciates veterans and respectfully recognizes the merits to reward their sacrifices for duty, honor and country. Lowering fees and charges and anything else that might be helpful to them would be taken into consideration.

The DOT, however, **opposes** H.B. 1667, H.D.2 because it would have an adverse impact on fees that support the operations, maintenance, and construction of our highways.

This exemption for the state motor vehicle registration fee will reduce the revenues deposited into the State Highway Fund. The state vehicle registration fee accounted for 16.5 percent of the total State Highway Fund Revenues for fiscal year 2013 and is estimated to provide the same percentage for fiscal year 2014. Any proposed decrease would have a negative impact on the health of the State Highway Fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.