



West Maui Mountains Watershed Partnership

January 30, 2013

LATE

Supporting H.B. 357 Relating to Environmental Protection

West Maui Mountains
Watershed Partnership
P.O. Box 13240

Lahaina, Hawai'i
96761

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Watershed Partners

County of Maui

Dept. of Land &
Natural Resources

General Finance
Group, Inc.

Ka'anapali Land
Company, LLC

Kahoma Land, LLC

Kamehameha Schools

Makila Land Co., LLC

Maui County
Department of Water
Supply

Maui Land &
Pineapple
Company Inc

Wailuku Water Co.
LLC

The Nature
Conservancy

Aloha Legislators,

The West Maui Mountains Watershed Partnership Supports H.B. 357 to provide funding to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for watershed protection programs through the checkout bag fee. Identifying funding sources for the DLNR's "Rain Follows the Forest" watershed protection initiative is a highly worthy cause.

The proposed bill would allow for resource management to be increased, reverse the degradation of additional forests resources, and further secure the water resources that our state depends on for residential, agricultural and commercial use. Funding will also be leveraged with federal, county, or private grant sources to further stimulate local economies, **bring in millions of outside dollars and provide more jobs.**

As a partnership and as individual entities, we understand that the roots of our success has been built upon the waters which flow from our forests. Without the forest we cannot depend on the water which nourishes our personal and economic interests and understand the necessity of natural resource stewardship even during challenging financial times. Our forefathers recognized this need and we need to echo that wisdom now that the demand for water resources is increasing and supply is decreasing.

The DLNR's watershed initiative proposes a sound investment in our forests. We hope that you can join us in lending your support for watershed protection.

By unanimous consent and on behalf of our partners,

Mahalo nui loa,

Christopher N. Brosius
Watershed Coordinator



Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

PO Box 2577, Honolulu, HI 96803
808.538.6616 hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org

LATE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 22, 2013, 3:00 P.M.
(Testimony is 3 pages long)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 357 HD2

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, with 10,000 dues-paying members and supporters, ***strongly supports*** HB 357, HD1. This measure creates an offset fee for most single-use bags (whether paper or plastic) and incentivizes retail stores to encourage the use of less-harmful bags. An offset fee smartly places a fee on one of our environmental problems to fund clean water for our *keiki* and environmental protection.

I. The Importance of Protecting Hawai'i's Water Resources

We know that climate change is going to impact in Hawai'i in significant and detrimental ways. This is the new reality of today and tomorrow. We have to foresee these changes and adapt to a changing world.

The funding provided by this bill would provide a significant, long-lasting, and vital contribution to addressing one of the critical impacts of climate change and ensure Hawai'i has water for future generations.

Further, enhancing efforts to protect Hawai'i's watersheds would have the additional benefit of protecting Hawai'i's cultural legacy from the destruction of invasive species. Hawai'i is home to more threatened and endangered species than anywhere in the country. In order to ensure future generations will have the opportunity to appreciate the diversity of Hawai'i, increased protections and funding are needed today.

II. Reducing Our Opala Problem.

Single use bags simply are not in our sustainable future and strong efforts should be made to discourage their continued use.

Hawai'i is faced with a solid waste crisis. The proliferation of single use bags directly contributes to this problem. They tax our economy and environment when they are littered or placed in our overflowing landfills. For example, a recent study conducted in Seattle concluded -- even with a high 13% recycling rate (greater than the national average of 3-5%) -- approximately 1,650 tons of plastic bags were put into the landfill annually.¹ The net cost to Seattle and ratepayers of collecting, transferring and disposing of waste was calculated to be approximately \$121 per ton or approximately \$200,000 for plastic grocery bags.

Even if these bags are burned at H-POWER (only on O'ahu), they are essentially converted to greenhouse gasses, further hastening global climate change, and ultimately not addressing the root of the problem. Similarly, with nearly 40% of the State's solid waste-stream able to be diverted from disposal at the landfill, plastic bags pose the single-most significant challenge to composting facilities, contaminating the compost, getting wrapped in the splines of processing equipment, and reducing the value of the compost product.

III. Consumers Already Indirectly Pay for Single Use Bags.

"Free" single use bags are an expense that is typically not directly visible by customers. Retailers spend hundreds of millions of dollars annually to provide single-use bags to customers. For example, supermarkets can spend up to \$1,500 to \$6,000 a month just to provide single-use bags to their customers at the check-out.² Even major retailers such as Target and CVS are realizing this significant cost burden and are offering discount incentives to customers who bring their own bags.³

The cost of purchasing tens of millions of bags in Hawai'i annually is most certainly passed on to local consumers, but it is not a visible cost and, thus, normal market controls do not take place. As with anything "free," we tend to take advantage of the ready supply plastic bags without considering the indirect costs.

It should be noted that two highly successful businesses in Hawai'i -- Costco and Wholefoods -- do not offer its customers plastic bags. These businesses are flourishing. The switch by Wholefoods alone kept 100 million plastic bags out of the environment between April 22, 2008 and the end of 2008.

¹ See Alternatives to Disposable Shopping Bags and Food Service Items, available at http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/util/Services/Recycling/Reduce_Reuse_Exchange/ProposedGreenFee/index.htm

² Downing, J. "Free Grocery Bags Targeted for Extinction in California," *Sacramento Bee*, Aug. 25, 2008. Estimates from bag manufacturers and the Food Marketing Institute. Available at http://www.roplast.com/documents/Free_grocery_bags_targeted_for_extinction_in_California_-_Sacramento_Politics_-_California_Politics_Sacramento_Bee.pdf.

³ Horovitz, B. "Target, CVS Put Plastic Bags in the Bull's-Eye, Pay for Reusables," *USA Today*, Oct. 19, 2009.

IV. Single Use Bags Tax Our Environment.

Single use bags contribute to litter and pose a threat to avian and marine life in Hawai'i. As noted by NOAA,⁴ plastic photo-degrades -- breaking down into smaller and smaller pieces due to exposure to solar UV radiation. However, when in water plastic does not get direct sunlight exposure, therefore breakdown happens much more slowly in the aquatic environment. So far as we know, plastics do not ever fully "go away," but rather break down into smaller and smaller pieces, sometimes referred to as microplastics.

Plastics also have the potential to adsorb contaminants from the marine environment and carry these contaminants through the food chain. Plastic debris attracts and accumulates hydrophobic organic toxins such as PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) up to 100,000-1,000,000 times ambient seawater concentrations. These toxins can then bioaccumulate up the food chain, where they directly impact human health.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

⁴ See <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/info/plastic.html>



LATE

League of Women Voters of Hawaii

49 South Hotel Street, Room 314 | Honolulu, HI 96813
www.lwv-hawaii.com | 808.531.7488 | voters@lwvhawaii.com

House Finance Committee
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

February 22, 2013, 3:00 pm, House Conference Room 308
HB357 HD2, Relating to the Environment

TESTIMONY

Janet Mason, Legislative Committee Member, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Luke and Members of the Finance Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB357 HD2 which establishes a single-use bag program and fees.

We support the general intent of HB357 HD2, funding watershed initiatives through single use bag fees. Among the other related bills, we find HD357 HD2 more comprehensive, anticipatory, and complete.

We would caution, however, (1) that the bag fee is regressive, impacting lower income levels disproportionately, and (2) that the sustainability of income from fees, if desired behavior changes take place, may be insufficient for program maintenance.

As there is a remedy for increased bag fees if desired changes do not take place, there should also be a remedy if the minimum operational income threshold is not met.

We urge you to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



Princeville at Hanalei

Testimony of Michael Loo
Supporting H.B. 357 HD2 Relating to the Environment.
House Committee on Finance
Friday, February 22, 2013, 3:00 PM, Room 308

My name is Michael Loo, representing Princeville Utilities Company Inc. We are members of the Kauai Watershed Alliance which works diligently, constructively and proactively to protect and sustain the watershed areas of Kauai. This precious resource must be protected and there is never enough funding to actively support activities to sustain this resource, which is the heart of life for all of us. We support the implementation of this measure so that there will be some funding set aside to protect our drinking water supplies. As the owners and operators of a public utility that delivers drinking water, we are acutely aware of the need to preserve and protect our water shed. Consumers will have options; they can learn to use reusable bags as we Kauaians already do. So implementation of this bill should not be viewed as a penalty. Thank you for considering our remarks.

LATE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 22, 2013, 3:00 P.M.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 357, HD2

Aloha Chair McKelvey and Members of the Committee:

Critics dismiss this idea as manini: a feel-good policy pushed by limousine-liberals at the expense of 'ordinary consumers.' Please don't listen to them!

This bill is effective in so many ways. First it raises money to protect our watersheds. Studies by UH professor Tom Giambelucca show that our rainfall patterns are starting to succumb to climate change. Bill Tam, the Deputy Director of the state Commission on Water Resource Management has repeatedly warned that our aquifers are not being recharged at the same rate as before and that they may be close to their maximum sustainable yield. Bill Aila, Chair of DLNR has warned that invasive species like strawberry guava are slashing the ability of the conservation forest lands to replenish the aquifers. In other words if our keiki are not to face a drinking water crisis, our watersheds desperately need money for conservation efforts. At a time when it is extremely hard to find funds for such efforts this bill would provide a guaranteed revenue stream.

Second, plastic bags have a far greater impact on the waste stream than the manufacturers would have us believe. They contribute tons of waste that pollute our streets, parks, oceans and waterways – even when burned they dump CO₂ in the atmosphere, helping accelerate sea-level rise.

In the sea they break down into microplastics which are ingested by fish and enter the food chain, which helps explain why the average American has over a pound of dissolved plastic in our bodies, according to the acclaimed scientist David Suzuki.

The cost argument is bogus. This bill does not add an expense to the average grocery bill – shoppers already pay for the bags, but the cost is hidden in the mark-up on each item. By making the cost a discrete and transparent expense, we harness market forces and consumer choice to encourage action that is good for the environment. Shoppers are still free to choose and use plastic bags, but going forward they will be made aware of the cost by paying a separate charge, instead of seeing the charge rolled into their overall grocery bill.

Finally most of the retailers themselves support this bill.

I respectfully urge you to pass this bill.

Anthony Aalto

LATE

Dear House Finance Committee,

Thank you for your time and consideration in the support for HB 357. I hope you share its diverse value to our State.

The value of tourism to the State of Hawai'i's economy cannot be under-estimated. Related to that, the quality of the natural ecosystem is the driving force that enchants millions of people to visit here each year. Anything that detracts from the enjoyment of this island paradise WILL have a tangible negative impact on the desire of people to continue to visit here. Something as simple and now ubiquitous as the plastic bag increasingly taints the natural vistas that these tourists seek to experience.

The vast number of volunteers who dedicate their time to cleaning up beaches here highlight the need to remediate this tainted landscape. Personally, I have participated in a beach clean up almost every month that I have lived here. There are ALWAYS plastic bags, and often in strange and difficult locations to access. The plastic bag - that too few of us ever think about - really has an extremely sordid impact on all life (please review <http://neptune911.wordpress.com/2011/10/11/more-plastic-debris-than-plan> & the creative <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLgh9h2ePYw>). These negative impacts of plastic bags are something that needs dire attention – for it IS also impacting the very base of our marine food chain. Instead of just keeping picking up bags, we need help to reduce their use in society. This bill HB 357 helps to achieve this and much more. Hawai'i is, and should remain, special in its respect and appreciation for the land and ocean that surrounds us. The beauty of this bill is that it will help to reduce the use of single-use bags AND have a direct benefit to the important watershed areas that are increasingly neglected. It's a win-win and something that spoiled consumers will quickly adapt to – as has already been shown the world over.

The need for this bill can be seen in any shop. I always try to bring reusable bags when I shop. However even then if I am not watching, the store packer will pack them into plastic bags and THEN put them into the reusable bag! This is as crazy as the plastic bag that is almost mandatorily imposed upon any small convenience store customer – even if it's a single, plastic-wrapped item that one buys, it seems you are not allowed to leave the store unless you take it in another small plastic bag... Things are out of control and the amount of plastic entering our world and oceans must be reduced.

I invite you to participate in any beach clean-up and if you've never experienced it, I would be surprised if this experience does not leave you changed. There it's obvious that we must do all we can to simply use less. Please support HB 357.

Please enjoy the online resources provided and following are some of the efforts of my weekend activities:

Before

After

Apparently this bag lived here for years, tainting the often-photographed view of Diamond Head:



Let's remove these proactively, now.

And we can keep our shores looking how at their best!

Malama Pono,
James McCay
2957 Kalakaua Avenue #216,
Honolulu, HI 96815-4650

SUPPORT

LATE

HB357 HD2
(SINGLE-USE CHECKOUT BAGS FEE)
Friday, February 22, 2013, 11:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Rm. 308

FINANCE COMMITTEE (FIN)
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson, Vice Chair

Dear Representatives:

What a great idea and it's about time too!

Single-use bags are extremely polluting to our environment and ocean system. I prefer to ban it altogether. But before such time can happen, please support **HB357 for now!**

Mahalo nui,

Anjie Pham
Honolulu, Hawaii

LATE

Leilei Joy Shih, M.A.S.
3267 Mokihana Street
Honolulu, HI 96816
(650) 380-5482
joyshih@hawaii.edu

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Feb 22, 2013, 3:00 pm
(Testimony is 1 page long)

TESTIMONY IN STRONG FAVOR OF HB 357

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo nui for hearing this environmentally significant bill. Your support for this legislation is truly appreciated. I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 357 as proposed.

Single-use grocery bags have become obsolete around the world and country, yet still comprises much of litter and marine debris in Hawaii, as well as causing the continued burden on out landfills. Bags are made from and use fossil fuels to produce and ship, yet are typically used for just a few minutes before being discarded.

A small fee would help to reduce the amount of the unsustainable practice of taking single-use bags, and would help to fund important watershed initiatives.

Hawaii's watersheds are amongst our most precious resources and need our protection. It is the source of our water and life, protecting the watersheds means protecting native plants and the beautiful landscape and water for our future. This bill has widespread support and provides a wonderful outcome for our environment both directly and indirectly.

Thank you again for hearing this bill. I am available to help refine such a policy that would be most beneficial to the State of Hawai'i. Please do not hesitate to draw upon my time, effort, and knowledge in this opportunity to move forward.

I respectfully ask that this committee advance this measure. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Joy Leilei Shih

FINTestimony

LATE

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 9:39 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: kahi@sustainablecoastlineshawaii.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/21/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kahi pacarro	Sustainable Coastlines Hawaii	Support	No

Comments: It's 2013, time to wake up! Plastic bags are a detriment to our environment. We support this measure and hope it can go into effect ASAP! We've collected hundreds of these on the coastlines as we've cleaned and would prefer not to.

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FINTestimony

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 8:48 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: jbautista619@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/21/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jerome Bautista	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Supporting HB357 would be an enormous step in a positive direction for Hawaii's environment. Much of Hawaii have voiced their concern and desire to stop using single-use plastic bags. As a resident of Waikiki and someone who participates in frequent beach clean ups, it is clearly evident how these plastic bags are a danger to our wildlife. Many plastic bags do not biodegrade and they end up polluting our oceans, littering our parks, scattering in our trees, and defacing the beauty of our islands. Adding the small fee would not only reduce the amount of single use plastic bag consumption, it would help fund our watershed programs. Keeping our watersheds maintained will help keep our coastline and reefs healthy, prevent toxins from polluting the ocean, and keep our drinking water clean. This bill would be a double win for Hawaii's environment and I am in total support for passing this bill and keeping our aina healthy.

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FINTestimony

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 8:36 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: marian243@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/21/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marian Grey	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: We don't need to enlarge our government bureaucracy to punish retailers, and customers with HB 357. Retail business must charge customers 10 cents, keep 2 cents for the work of tracking these fees, but still pay G.E.T. on 10 cents. This is hurting our economy, bad for business, and worse yet exploding to 25 cents a bag in 3 years if enough money is not moving through this program. Why? Please vote NO on HB 357!

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 7:41 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: dana2854@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/21/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ms. Dana Anderson	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: I strongly support HB357 and urge its passage to help fund protection of watersheds and raise consciousness about the deleterious effects of plastic bags in our waste-stream. The time is now to make the bridge to the inception of the bag bill. I respectfully ask your support.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 9:19 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: kenzen808@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ken Sentner	Surfrider Foundation	Support	Yes

Comments: Please pass HB357. You have the opportunity to establish Hawaii as a leader in sound environmental policy, which has a ripple effect on tourism, upon which most of our economy depends. Please show some leadership on this issue and pass HB357!

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 10:06 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: Kaily429@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kaily Wakefield	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support the ban of plastic bags and charging individuals who choose to use plastic or paper bags instead of bringing their own. We need to reduce our impact on our environment, and without providing immediate consequences such as a fee for bags, it seems that we as a society will not make this change. Please pass this bill. Mahalo

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 10:34 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: sischo@sti.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shelly Sischo	Individual	Support	No

Comments: We can't afford not to pass this bill.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 10:57 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: Borgnino@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Borgnino	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please pass this bill and support the environment in Hawaii

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Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 11:51 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: landonopunui@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM*

HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Landon Opunui	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 12:59 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: rudd@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM

HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alexis	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This bill will benefit an amazing native hawaiian animal, the endangered Oahu tree snails. These snails are a hawaiian treasure. In addition, protecting native forests secures and protects the water supply for the people of Hawaii. I urge you to pass this bill.

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HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sheldon Plentovich	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This is long overdue and the right thing to do!

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Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 2:23 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: burnett@bishopmuseum.org
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM*

HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Burke Burnett	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 2:28 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: bholland@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB357 on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM*

HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brenden Holland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Danielle	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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HB357

Submitted on: 2/22/2013

Testimony for FIN on Feb 22, 2013 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chai Blair-Stahn	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please support this bill. A great idea!

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