

HB 1564 HD1

RELATING TO VETERANS

Requires the counties to obtain approval from the office of veterans' services prior to any action that may impact the State's obligation to establish and maintain veterans cemeteries. Effective July 1, 2030.

(HB1564 HD1)

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1564 HD1
A BILL RELATING TO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY,
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY
MAJOR GENERAL DARRYLL D. M. WONG
ADJUTANT GENERAL AND DIRECTOR OF STATE CIVIL DEFENSE
March 13, 2014

Chair Espero, Vice Chair Baker, and the Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs.

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 1564 HD1.

Counties should coordinate and receive approval from the Office of Veterans' Services (OVS) when taking any action that impacts the State's obligation of maintaining veterans cemeteries in their counties. Counties should work with OVS during the process to establish a cemetery.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 1564 HD1.

Date: March 10, 2014

To: The Honorable Will Espero, Chair
The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

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

Subject: Strong Support for HB1564, HD1

As the Chair, Advisory Board to the Office of Veterans' Services representing over 170,000 Hawaii veterans, we support HB1564. We do not believe that it is taking away from home rule. The intent is to ensure that all of our state veterans' cemeteries comply with federal requirements to receive federal funding.

This measure will also provide a more uniform compliance within all state veterans' cemeteries. We always want to make sure that veterans are honored but we do not want to jeopardize funding or other federal support.

The Board urges passing this measure.

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



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**Testimony of
Thomas Smyth**

Military Officers Association of America, Hawaii Chapter

Before the

Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

Thursday, March 13, 2014, 2:45 pm, Room 224

HB 1564 HD1 Relating to Veterans

Chair Espero, Vice Chair Baker and Committee Members

Our chapter of 500 retired and currently serving officers of the Uniformed Services strongly supports HB 1564 HD1, as amended. This critically important bill requires the counties to get approval from the Office of Veteran Services, who manages our state wide network of VA cemeteries, before they can take any action that may negatively impact our VA cemeteries.

We understand that there have been incidents such as when the county controlled water to a cemetery was cut off, leaving it without irrigation. I suppose that county roads could be blocked for repairs or otherwise, denying access to family and cemetery workers.

This is not to deny the county the need to efficiently and economically manage its assets, just to require them to cooperate with cemetery officials with timely notice of activities and to understand the possible unusual impact on these important facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.