

HB1638

HD2

LATE

TESTIMONY



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Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Tuesday, March 18, 2014
10 a.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

Re: HB 1638 HD2

Aloha Chair Hee, Vice Chair Shimabukuro and Members of this Committee:

My name is Vivian Landrum, and I am the President/CEO of the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce (KKCC). KKCC represents over 525 business members and is the leading business advocacy organization on the west side of Hawai'i Island. KKCC also actively works to enhance the environment, unique lifestyle and quality of life in West Hawai'i for both residents and visitors alike.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the appropriation of at least the \$40 million in CIP funds for the Kona Judiciary Complex. Understanding the total requested funding of \$90 million must come in phases, we are extremely grateful for the \$40 million as noted for this year.

A new Judiciary Complex in Kona is vitally needed and long overdue. The current facilities are spread out between Kona and Kealahou and housed in buildings originally built for other purposes. These makeshift court facilities are barely able to serve their purpose and contain safety as well as parking issues. A centralized, modern, efficient and safe facility is needed to provide our citizens with access to the justice system for all our West Hawai'i citizens.

With the site selection and land issues currently put to rest, and progress with design and planning moving forward, these CIP funds are needed to keep the project on target and on budget. We urge this Committee to approve the \$40 million as noted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Vivian Landrum'.

Vivian Landrum
President/CEO

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1638, HD2 RELATING TO THE JUDICIARY
CIP -FOR KONA COURTHOUSE COMPLEX
SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE HEARING, MARCH 18, 2014, 10:00 AM, RM 016

To: SENATOR CLAYTON HEE, CHAIR, AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

From: Charlene Iboshi, Hawaii State Bar Association, Senior Counsel Division Director for Hawaii County; Member of the West Hawaii Bar Association and Hawaii County Bar Association

I have practiced law in the State for over thirty years. Over the years, I have seen each circuit build new courthouse complexes. Now, the Kona Judiciary Complex is the last one to be built. The Judiciary selected the Kona Judiciary Complex Capital Funding as their #1 priority. The Hawaii State Bar Association, the two voluntary bar associations (West Hawaii County Bar Association and the Hawaii County Bar Association) in the Third Circuit strongly support the judiciary's request. The proposed Kona Judiciary Courthouse Complex serves, not only the Third Circuit, but all the citizens of the state. Unlike services in county government, the judiciary serves interests statewide.

The Kona Courthouse system was cobbled together as the population and commercial demands of the island exploded. I practiced in Kona when there was only one courthouse, and all jury trials were in Hilo. Now, West Hawaii's filings and litigation are nearly 40% of the filings in the Third Circuit. Hawaii County is unique in that it is the largest county in the entire state, encompassing the same land mass as all the other counties combined. Logistics and infrastructure development are always more expensive because of its sheer size. Moreover, Hawaii County has many areas that are the fastest growing in the State. Hawaii County's Third Circuit Kona Courthouse system has many issues because the facilities were not designed for the demands and safety concerns of our court system. The Hawaii County Prosecutor's Support testimony details the specific problems that would be corrected by with a new Kona Judiciary Complex.

The courthouse complex is needed for the safety of those who are required to use the Courthouse or Judiciary Services. It provides a more cost-effective use of state resources for our long-term support of our Third Branch of Government.

I am writing support testimony, because the need for the new Kona Courthouse Complex is unquestionable and detailed more fully in other testimonies. From my perspective as Senior Counsel Division Director, I realize that to encourage the community's respect to uphold the "Rule of Law" and the role of the judiciary as the institution that dispenses justice, there must be a "sense of place" that commands respect. The Judiciary has a clear plan to build this "Hale" that commands respect, and this needed Kona Judiciary Complex benefits all the citizens in the state, including all the practitioners throughout the state, the litigants, witnesses, services providers and statewide community which rely on the courts to pursue justice.

Please fund the Judiciary's request for the Kona Judiciary Complex. Thank you for the opportunity to provide support testimony.

Charlene Y. Iboshi
Hawaii State Bar Association, Senior Counsel Division Director, Hawaii County

Member of the West Hawaii Bar Association and Hawaii County Bar Association