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**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [makule@maui.net](mailto:makule@maui.net)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1849 on Mar 28, 2014 09:15AM  
**Date:** Thursday, March 27, 2014 8:51:03 PM

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**HB1849**

Submitted on: 3/27/2014

Testimony for WAM on Mar 28, 2014 09:15AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bill Medeiros	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Flat taxes on tobacco products are fairer to both local retailers and consumers, therefore I support House Bill 1849 HD1 SD1 which places a flat tax cap on taxes on large cigars. This measure would allow local small businesses to be more competitive and therefore would support the Hawaii economy and protect local jobs. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

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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**From:** [Brent Tamamoto](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition for HB 1849, SD 1 Relating to Taxation  
**Date:** Thursday, March 27, 2014 11:58:44 PM

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I strongly oppose HB1849, SD1 which would create a new definition for premium cigars and reduce the taxes on these products. Cigars, regardless of how the tobacco is grown or processed are NOT a safe alternative to cigarettes. Cigar smoke similar to cigarette smoke contains toxic and cancer-causing chemicals that are harmful. Cigar smoke is harmful to both smokers and nonsmokers.

All other tobacco products including cigars should be taxed at the same amount as cigarettes. Cigars, whether large, small, or premium, should be taxed at rates equivalent to cigarettes.

This bill will also exempt premium cigars from the product placement law set to take effect, July 1, 2014, HRS section 328J-18. The product placement law requires all tobacco products to be secured in a manner that requires a face-to-face sales transaction, eliminating all self-service displays for tobacco products. Premium cigars should not be exempted from this law.

This bill would (1) create a tax exemption for a luxury tobacco product, (2) create a loophole for premium cigars, and (3) exempt premium cigars from the product placement law. Time and time again the tobacco industry has found ways to take advantage of loopholes.

Lowering taxes on any tobacco product and exempting premium cigars from current laws sends the wrong message. Our State has been leading the way in tobacco control, this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1849, SD1 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo

Brent Tamamoto  
98-1065 Kaamilo Street  
Aiea, HI 96701



**From:** [Bryan Mih](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition for HB 1849, SD 1 Relating to Taxation  
**Date:** Thursday, March 27, 2014 3:53:59 PM

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Re: Opposition for HB 1849, Relating to Taxation

Dear Committee Members:

As a pediatrician and medical director of the HEALTHY Quit Smoking Program, I strongly oppose HB 1849, which would reduce the tax on large cigars.

Cigars are tobacco products, just like cigarettes, and have the same harmful effects. They are strongly addictive. The secondhand smoke is toxic and contains many cancer causing chemicals.

Tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death in the United States and in Hawai`i. It costs our state over \$336 million in healthcare expenditures every year. Tobacco impacts both smokers and those exposed to secondhand smoke. Smokers can suffer from cancer, cardiovascular disease, and lung disease. More than 1,000 people die in Hawai`i every year from tobacco use. Many more of our keiki suffer from respiratory illnesses, asthma, and additional hospitalizations due to secondhand tobacco smoke.

All other tobacco products including cigars should be taxed at the same amount as cigarettes. This bill would create a loophole for the industry to take advantage of. By creating a tax cap on large cigars, tobacco companies will likely modify their "small" cigar to ensure that it is taxed in the large cigar category. Cigars already experience less regulation by FDA and lower taxes on a federal and state level. Lowering taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong message.

I strongly oppose HB 1849. For the health of our keiki and everyone in Hawaii, I urge you to hold this bill in committee.

Bryan Mih, MD, MPH, FAAP  
Pediatrician

Bryan Mih  
1944 Naniu Pl  
Honolulu, HI 96822



**From:** [Diane Omura](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition for HB 1849, SD 1 Relating to Taxation  
**Date:** Thursday, March 27, 2014 2:51:42 PM

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I strongly oppose HB1849, SD1 which would create a new definition for premium cigars and reduce the taxes on these products. Cigars, regardless of how the tobacco is grown or processed are NOT a safe alternative to cigarettes. Cigar smoke similar to cigarette smoke contains toxic and cancer-causing chemicals that are harmful. Cigar smoke is harmful to both smokers and nonsmokers.

All other tobacco products including cigars should be taxed at the same amount as cigarettes. Cigars, whether large, small, or premium, should be taxed at rates equivalent to cigarettes.

This bill will also exempt premium cigars from the product placement law set to take effect, July 1, 2014, HRS section 328J-18. The product placement law requires all tobacco products to be secured in a manner that requires a face-to-face sales transaction, eliminating all self-service displays for tobacco products. Premium cigars should not be exempted from this law.

This bill would (1) create a tax exemption for a luxury tobacco product, (2) create a loophole for premium cigars, and (3) exempt premium cigars from the product placement law. Time and time again the tobacco industry has found ways to take advantage of loopholes.

Lowering taxes on any tobacco product and exempting premium cigars from current laws sends the wrong message. Our State has been leading the way in tobacco control, this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1849, SD1 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo

Diane Omura  
1650 Kaahumanu Ave.  
Wailuku, HI 96793



**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [ferneliussdd@yahoo.com](mailto:ferneliussdd@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB1849 on Mar 28, 2014 09:15AM\*  
**Date:** Friday, March 28, 2014 3:46:51 AM

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**HB1849**

Submitted on: 3/28/2014

Testimony for WAM on Mar 28, 2014 09:15AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Donald Fernelius	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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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**From:** [Jermy Domingo](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition for HB 1849, SD 1 Relating to Taxation  
**Date:** Friday, March 28, 2014 7:52:31 AM

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I strongly oppose HB1849, SD1 which would create a new definition for premium cigars and reduce the taxes on these products. Cigars, regardless of how the tobacco is grown or processed are NOT a safe alternative to cigarettes. Cigar smoke similar to cigarette smoke contains toxic and cancer-causing chemicals that are harmful. Cigar smoke is harmful to both smokers and nonsmokers.

All other tobacco products including cigars should be taxed at the same amount as cigarettes. Cigars, whether large, small, or premium, should be taxed at rates equivalent to cigarettes.

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This bill would (1) create a tax exemption for a luxury tobacco product, (2) create a loophole for premium cigars, and (3) exempt premium cigars from the product placement law. Time and time again the tobacco industry has found ways to take advantage of loopholes.

Lowering taxes on any tobacco product and exempting premium cigars from current laws sends the wrong message. Our State has been leading the way in tobacco control, this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1849, SD1 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo

Jermy Domingo  
894 Queen St.  
Honolulu, HI 96706



**From:** [Jessica Spurrier](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition for HB 1849, SD 1 Relating to Taxation  
**Date:** Thursday, March 27, 2014 4:07:47 PM

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Mahalo

Jessica Spurrier  
45-027A Lilipuna Pl  
Kaneohe, HI 96744



**From:** [Jody Ferchaud](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition for HB 1849, SD 1 Relating to Taxation  
**Date:** Friday, March 28, 2014 6:42:43 AM

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Lowering taxes on any tobacco product and exempting premium cigars from current laws sends the wrong message. Our State has been leading the way in tobacco control, this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1849, SD1 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo

Jody Ferchaud  
1582 Laukahi St.  
Honolulu, HI 96821





**From:** [mark VASCONCELLOS](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Strong Opposition for HB 1849, SD 1 Relating to Taxation  
**Date:** Thursday, March 27, 2014 12:07:15 PM

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I strongly oppose HB1849, SD1 which would create a new definition for premium cigars and reduce the taxes on these products. Cigars, regardless of how the tobacco is grown or processed are NOT a safe alternative to cigarettes. Cigar smoke similar to cigarette smoke contains toxic and cancer-causing chemicals that are harmful. Cigar smoke is harmful to both smokers and nonsmokers.

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Mahalo

mark VASCONCELLOS  
3837 KAIMUKI AVE  
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Subject: Opposition to HB 1849, Relating to Taxation

To: Senate Ways & Means Committee

Re: Opposition for HB 1849, Relating to Taxation

Dear Committee Members:

AAP-Hawaii Chapter strongly opposes HB 1849, which would reduce the tax on large cigars.

Cigars are tobacco products, just like cigarettes, and have the same harmful effects. They are strongly addictive. The secondhand smoke is toxic and contains many cancer causing chemicals.

Tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death in the United States and in Hawai`i. It costs our state over \$336 million in healthcare expenditures every year. Tobacco impacts both smokers and those exposed to secondhand smoke. Smokers can suffer from cancer, cardiovascular disease, and lung disease. More than 1,000 people die in Hawai`i every year from tobacco use. Many more of our keiki suffer from respiratory illnesses, asthma, and additional hospitalizations due to secondhand tobacco smoke.

All other tobacco products including cigars should be taxed at the same amount as cigarettes. This bill would create a loophole with which the industry could take advantage. By creating a tax cap on large cigars, tobacco companies will likely modify their "small" cigar to ensure that it is taxed in the large cigar category. Cigars already experience less regulation by FDA and lower taxes on a federal and state level. Lowering taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong message.

We strongly oppose HB 1849. For the health of our keiki and everyone in Hawaii, we urge you to hold this bill in committee.

Sincerely,

R. Michael Hamilton, MD, MS, FAAP



American Heart Association | American Stroke Association

*Learn and Live.*

**Serving Hawaii**

## Testimony **STRONGLY OPPOSING** HB 1849, HD1, SD1 “Relating To Taxation”

The American Heart Association **STRONGLY OPPOSES** HB 1849, HD1, SD1 “Relating to Taxation.”

Cigar use is a significant public health concern. Cigars—just like cigarettes and other tobacco products—are not safe. Cigar smoking exposes users to toxic chemicals; causes cancer of the oral cavity, larynx, esophagus, and lung; and increases risk for heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and aortic aneurysm. Exposure to secondhand cigar smoke also places nonsmokers at risk.

Unfortunately cigar use is increasing, particularly among adolescents. According to the Centers for Disease Control, cigars are one of the most commonly used tobacco products among high school students and middle school students (11.6% and 3.4% respectively), second only to cigarettes (15.8% and 4.3%). And while cigarette use among adolescents has gone down in recent years, use of cigars, loose tobacco, and other non-cigarette forms of tobacco has increased by 123%.

Much of the increase in cigar use can be attributed to the availability of cigars in fruit and candy flavors that appeal to children. Cigars also appeal to youth because they, unlike cigarettes, can be purchased individually.

Because of these reasons, the AHA strongly opposes suggestions that cigar taxes be reduced. If anything, cigar taxes should be increased to create parity with cigarette taxes in Hawaii.

The American Heart Association urges legislators to oppose HB 1849, HD1, SD1.

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph V. Shoheit, M.D.  
Cardiologist and Researcher  
AHA Hawaii Division Volunteer

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free of cardiovascular  
diseases and stroke.”***