



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

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March 24, 2014

The Honorable David Ige, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 208
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Ige:

Subject: H.B. 2365, H.D. 1 Relating to the State Fire Council

I am Manuel P. Neves, Chair of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The SFC and the HFD support H.B. 2365, H.D. 1, which proposes to authorize the SFC to establish statewide qualifications and procedures for testing, certifying, and credentialing individuals who conduct maintenance testing of fire extinguishers, fire protection, and fire alarm systems and coordinate agreements and understandings with other agencies and departments for the effective use of fire and life safety resources.

Fire extinguishers, fire protection, and alarm systems require routine maintenance to protect building occupants under emergency conditions and ensure reliable operability when they are utilized by fire department personnel. Individuals are licensed by the HFD and required to pass a written exam every three years. However, the current exam has not been revised for several years. This bill would authorize the SFC to certify individuals to meet minimum competency standards for vital fire protection systems and appliances. This certification is normally under the jurisdiction of the State Fire Marshal's Office. The SFC is Hawaii's equivalent of the State Fire Marshal's Office. Licensing fees will be administered by the county fire departments.

The bill also seeks to authorize the SFC to implement statewide memoranda of understanding and agreements for the effective utilization of fire and life safety resources for natural and manmade disasters and emergencies. Currently, each county fire department may individually enter into agreements and understandings between

The Honorable David Ige, Chair
Page 2
March 24, 2014

agencies and departments. This bill would allow the SFC to collectively coordinate these agreements.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's passage of H.B. 2365, H.D. 1.

Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrator Socrates Bratakos at 723-7105 or sbratakos@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,



MANUEL P. NEVES
Chair

MPN/LR:clc