



LIFE OF THE LAND

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COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE
Chair Angus L.K. McKelvey
Vice Chair Derek S.K. Kawakami

DATE: Wednesday, February 05, 2014
TIME: 2:10 PM
PLACE: Conference Room 325

HB 2587 PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Kawakami and Members of the Committee

Life of the Land is Hawai`i's own energy, environmental and community action group advocating for the people and `aina for four decades. Our mission is to preserve and protect the life of the land through sound energy and land use policies and to promote open government through research, education, advocacy and, when necessary, litigation.

HB 2587 strengthens the ability of the PUC to manage its budget and personnel. We strongly support the bill.

The job of being a Legislator, a Judge or a PUC Commissioner is tough. It can't be done without staff. Each legislator, Judge and the Chair of the PUC are allowed to hire staff to help them. These staff members are separate from Committee and Commission Staff which work for the whole.

*** The two junior PUC Commissions do not have their own staff. SB 3087 authorizes commissioners other than the chairperson to hire 2 staff members each. Life of the Land believes that this idea should be incorporated into SB 2948.

Mahalo

Henry Curtis
Executive Director

kawakami3-Benigno

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2014 5:40 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: skaye@runbox.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2587 on Feb 5, 2014 14:10PM*

HB2587

Submitted on: 2/1/2014

Testimony for CPC on Feb 5, 2014 14:10PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
sally kaye	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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TESTIMONY OF HERMINA MORITA
CHAIR, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

FEBRUARY 5, 2014
2:10 p.m.

MEASURE: H.B. No. 2587

TITLE: Relating to the Public Utilities Commission

Chair McKelvey and Members of the Committee:

DESCRIPTION:

This measure proposes to clarify the authority of the Chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") concerning the hiring of personnel and operational expenditures.

POSITION:

The Commission supports this measure and would like to offer the following comments for the Committee's consideration.

COMMENTS:

The Commission appreciates the Legislature's recognition of the major transition that the Commission is currently undergoing due to increased workload complexity and increased mandated program responsibilities, particularly in the area of energy regulation. In order to fulfill its evolving set of responsibilities, a streamlined administrative process that clearly defines the authority of the Commission's Chairperson to make decisions on hiring and operational expenditures is necessary.

The supervision of attached agencies within the State is generally governed by the provisions of Section 26-35, Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS"), which attempts to delineate the administrative responsibilities and the authority of the department head to

which the agency is attached. Specific provisions within the enabling chapter of the agency can help clarify the agency head's authority and administrative autonomy, and may clarify potential overlap of administrative authority between the department and its attached agency. Thus, the Commission believes that this measure will help avoid any future ambiguity regarding the Commission's autonomy and ability to hire the right personnel and/or make the necessary expenditures to support it in carrying out its various regulatory responsibilities within a legislatively-approved budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.