

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in OPPOSITION to HB1634
RELATING TO TAXATION**

REPRESENTATIVE ANGUS L.K. MCKELVEY, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE
Hearing Date: February 17, 2016 Room Number: 325

Fiscal Implications: None.

Department Testimony: The Department of Health (DOH) opposes HB1634 which proposes to amend §245-3, HRS to reduce the excise tax rate on sales of large cigars from 50 percent of wholesale value to the lesser of: a) \$0.50 for each large cigar; or b) 50 percent of the wholesale price of each large cigar after July 1, 2016.

There is neither public health nor fiscal justification for giving cigars of any size preferential tax treatment. Cigar smoking is not a safe alternative to cigarette smoking. The U.S. Surgeon General has declared that cigar smoke contains the same toxic substances as cigarette smoke, with varying concentrations of these ingredients found in different types and sizes of cigars.¹ The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) states “all cigars are harmful and potentially addictive (including small cigars, cigarillos, large cigars, and premium cigars). Cigar smoking is strongly related to certain cancers (including oral, esophageal, laryngeal, and lung cancers), heart disease, and premature death. Cigar smoking can cause cancers of the mouth and throat, even for smokers who do not inhale.”² A large cigar may contain as much tobacco as a whole pack of cigarettes.³

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking-50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014, p.428

² National Cancer Institute (NCI), Cigars: Health Effects and Trends, Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph 9, 1998, <http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/tcrb/monographs/9/index.html>

³ Baker, F., S. Ainsworth, J.T. Dye, et al., “Health Risks Associated with Cigar Smoking,” Journal of the American Medical Association, 284(6):735-740, 2000.

Low cigar prices also increase the number of youth who try cigars and become addicted, and reduce the number of adult smokers who quit. A study presented at the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco provided preliminary confirmation that premium cigar use is increasingly being reported by young adults (18-29 years), and that such use is not restricted to older adults.⁴

There are no safe tobacco products, and there is no safe level of exposure to tobacco smoke. Smoking and tobacco use are the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Hawaii, claiming 1,200 lives each year, and exacting an excess of \$526 million in annual medical costs directly attributable to smoking, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 2014 report “Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs.”

Cigars have fewer federal regulations than cigarettes and other tobacco products. This, as well as their lower taxes, is resulting in increased popularity. While cigarette smoking is declining across the nation, total consumption of all cigars increased dramatically between 2000 and 2014. Cigar consumption increased by 122% while cigarette consumption declined by 40%.² In Hawaii, current adult cigar use tripled from 3.2% in 2006 to 10.8% in 2010.

CDC research has shown that increasing the unit price of all tobacco products is an effective strategy for curbing adult and youth smoking. Conversely, lowering the price of tobacco products may increase smoking rates and discourage individuals from quitting. A cap on the state large cigar tax could also be considered favoring those smokers who buy and smoke expensive brands.

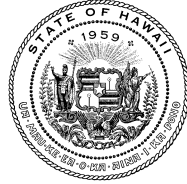
Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Offered Amendments: None.

⁴ Coleman B.N., C.G. Corey, C.D. Delnevo, et al. “Use of Flavored Cigars, Cigarillos, and Little Filtered Cigars: Findings from the 2012-13 National Adult Tobacco Survey,” presented at the Conference for the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco (2014).

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SHAN TSUTSUI
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION
P.O. BOX 259
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

MARIA E. ZIELINSKI
DIRECTOR OF TAXATION

JOSEPH K. KIM
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

To: The Honorable Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Date: February 17, 2016

Time: 2:00 P.M.

Place: Conference Room 325, State Capitol

From: Maria E. Zielinski, Director
Department of Taxation

Re: H.B. 1634, Relating to Taxation.

The Department of Taxation (Department) provides the following comments on H.B. 1634 for the Committee's consideration.

H.B. 1634 amends the tax on large cigars by replacing the current rate of 50% of the wholesale price with a rate of the lesser of either 50 cents per cigar or 50% of the wholesale price. H.B. 1634 is effective for large cigars sold on or after July 1, 2016.

The Department notes that it can implement this measure as currently drafted. The Department defers to the Department of Health with respect to the effect this measure would have on the health of the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



Testimony **STRONGLY OPPOSING** HB 1634, “Relating To Taxation”

The American Heart Association **STRONGLY OPPOSES** HB 1634, “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.

While cigarette smoking has been gradually declining in the United States, cigar smoking has recently increased dramatically. More importantly, cigar smoking is not limited to adults; it is the second most common form of tobacco use among youth. Among high school students, while cigarette smoking declined between 2005 and 2011, cigar use did not change statistically. The most recent data available show that 13.1 percent of high school students currently smoke cigars (17.8% among boys; 8.0% among girls). Cigars also appeal to youth because they, unlike cigarettes, can be purchased individually.

Cigars are Under Taxed & Less Restricted. The federal government and almost all of the states compound these problems by sharply under-taxing cigars compared to cigarettes, often making smaller cigars a less-expensive alternative to cigarettes. Moreover, many laws and restrictions pertaining to cigarettes – such as federal laws banning flavored cigarettes, blocking illegal Internet sales and restricting cigarette marketing – do not apply to cigars.

In addition, the most recent Youth Risk Behavior data for Hawaii shows that state tax revenue for cigar sales, as well as for cigarette sales, actually rose for the first time in recent years indicating a need to not only stay the course on these taxes, but to begin considering actually raising them to serve as a dissuasion to youths considering experimentation with these lethal products.

Because of these reasons, the AHA strongly opposes suggestions that cigar taxes be capped or 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 1634.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald B. Weisman
Hawaii Government Relations/Community Relations Director

*“Building healthier lives,
free of cardiovascular
diseases and stroke.”*

life is why™ es por la vida™ 全为生命™

Please remember the American Heart Association in your will.



From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 10:39 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: wfujio@abcstores.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wendy	ABC Stores	Support	No

Comments: ABC Stores agrees with a tax cap of 50 cents for large Cigars, therefore, highly recommends support of HB1634. Thank you very much for allowing us to submit testimony on this bill.

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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TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

126 Queen Street, Suite 304

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: TOBACCO, Adjust tax rate on large cigars

BILL NUMBER: HB 1634

INTRODUCED BY: SOUKI, KAWAKAMI, MORIKAWA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Reduces the tax on large cigars to the lesser of: (1) 50 cents per cigar; or (2) 50% of its wholesale price on and after July 1, 2016.

BRIEF SUMMARY: Amends HRS section 245-3 to provide that large cigars shall be taxed at the lesser of: (1) 50 cents per cigar; or (2) 50% of its wholesale price on and after July 1, 2016.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2016.

STAFF COMMENTS: Presently, the tobacco tax on large cigars is 50% of the wholesale price. This measure would reduce it to either 50 cents each, or 50% of the wholesale price, whichever is less, on and after July 1, 2016.

The adoption of this measure would, in theory, lower the price of large cigars, but it is questionable why the legislature would want to single out costly large cigars for a tax break.

In addition, because the tobacco tax now feeds several special funds, the recipients of largesse from those special funds, such as the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and the John A. Burns School of Medicine, would have a vested interest in any proposal to reduce this tax.

Digested 2/12/2016

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 11:25 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: b.leong@thehavanaclub.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/14/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bernard Leong	Havana Club Honolulu	Support	No

Comments: I am writing to support a tax cap on large cigars. I have been in business since 2002 and as a small business a tax cap would promote more local business. The current tax structure on large cigars does not promote local sales. This tax cap would help local, small businesses. Thank you for your consideration.

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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hawaiiCigar

ASSOCIATION

To: The Honorable Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Date: Wednesday, February 17, 2016
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 325, State Capitol

From: Les Drent
for the Hawaii Cigar Association

Re: HB1634, Relating to Taxation

Dear Representative McKelvey and Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

The Hawaii Cigar Association (HCA) supports the findings of the Legislature, and we also support HB1634.

The HCA contends that large cigars are rarely--if ever--possessed or consumed by minors and therefore pose negligible risk to them. Children are not attracted to cigars, and their cost--between \$5 and \$30 apiece on average--prices them beyond the reach of most minors.

The HCA is committed to protecting the freedom of legal-age adults to enjoy cigars. Pursuant to that aim, HCA is also committed to revising the burdensome Hawaii tax code, which disadvantages local cigar retailers, and the Kauai grown cigar industry by requiring it to pay far more than its fair share in taxes for their artisanal products. The current wholesale tax of 50% also incentivizes consumers to buy cheaper cigars from unlicensed sources outside the state.

The HCA stands united with the Legislature and with Tobacco-Free in ensuring that Hawai'i's youth be discouraged from using tobacco of any kind, including cigars.

On behalf of all those who enjoy cigars, we thank you for your consideration on this very important tax bill. This law would bring parity to the tax code, support local businesses, and farms, and keep Hawaii's tax dollars at home.

Sincerely,



Les Drent
for the Hawaii Cigar Association

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiicigarassociation.org



CAP THE CIGAR TAX!

Create Fairness and Equal Opportunity for Hawaii Businesses

Tax Caps in other US States with high % Cigar Taxes

Arkansas
(68% mfr. price, 50¢ cap)

Connecticut
(50% wholesale, 50¢ cap)

Florida
(no tax on cigars)

Iowa
(50% wholesale, 50¢ cap)

Michigan
(32% wholesale, 50¢ cap)

New Hampshire
(No tax on premium cigars)

Oregon
(65% wholesale price, 50¢ cap)

Pennsylvania
(no tax on cigars)

Rhode Island
(80% wholesale price, 50¢ cap)

Wisconsin
(71% mfr. price, 50¢ cap)

Washington
(95% taxable sales price, 75¢ cap)

US Government
(52.75% mfr. price 40.26¢ cap)

hawaiicigarassociation.org



To: The Honorable Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Date: Wednesday, February 17, 2016
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 325, State Capitol

From: Les Drent
for the Kauai Cigar Company

Re: HB1634, Relating to Taxation

Dear Representative McKelvey and Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

The Kauai Cigar Company, its employees, and industry partners stand in strong **SUPPORT** of HB1634.

This bill, if passed, would bring parity to the Hawaii tax code, and our Kauai grown cigars would finally be treated fairly under the law. For years, our company has been paying much more than its fair share of taxes as a result of an extremely high cost of production here in the Islands. Because the tax rate is percentage based, our competitors are selling the same size cigars, but are able to charge less tax as a result of a much lower cost of goods. Furthermore, many of our competitors' cigars are made entirely by machine and sell at very low price points, thus driving the tax liability to a mere fraction of what Kauai Cigar Company must pay every month on its M19 returns.

Also impacting our farming business negatively is the loss of sales as a result of many Hawaii consumers purchasing lower priced mail order premium cigars from outside of Hawaii. We strongly believe that few, if any, of these consumers file usage tax returns on their out of State purchases. We lose, the Department of Revenue loses, and ultimately the people of Hawaii lose with the loss of tax collection.

Even under this unfair tax structure, no farm laborer is paid less than fifteen dollars per hour, and full time employees receive the benefit of full health care insurance, paid in full by the company. Every employee is covered by Worker's compensation insurance, and Temporary Disability Insurance. When you add all this together and tax the final product at 50% what you have are cigars that are priced between ten to twenty dollars by the time they hit store shelves. And at these prices, we would venture to guess that these cigars never reach the hands of a youth consumer!

For all these reasons listed, all of us at Kauai Cigar Company applaud each and every Hawaii Legislator that recognizes our hard work, and our right to be treated fairly under Hawaii tax code.

Sincerely,

Les Drent
Farmer/President

Kauai Cigar Company
6200 Kawaihau Road, Unit B, Kapaa, HI 96746 USA
Ph: 808-822-4495 Fax: 808-822-9731



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

As a premium cigar consumer and enthusiast **SB 2135** will protect my passion for premium cigars and will no longer deny premium cigars parity and fairness under the tax code.

Furthermore, **SB 2135** will also benefit retailers, consumers, and in turn the state by encouraging in-state purchases of premium cigars. The fixed tax rate will allow premium cigar retailers to better price their products and compete in the market for retail sales of premium cigars and ultimately generate positive growth of in-state jobs and tax revenue.

In addition, **SB 2135** is purely a proposed tax bill; therefore any testimony not directly related to taxation should be dismissed as unrelated testimony.

Also, I urge you to **PREVENT** these bills from being "gutted and replaced" with other language unrelated to an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars; it is an unethical circumvention and manipulation of the proper process for public involvement.

In closing, I respectfully ask that you **STRONGLY SUPPORT** Hawai'i premium cigar consumers, retailers, distributors, and manufacturers and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: _____

2/8/16

Printed Name: _____

Dan Miyahira

Email Address: _____

dmiyahira@gmail.com

Zipcode: _____

96744



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Printed Name: Jacob B. Denton

Email Address: Jacobjv@guard.com

Zipcode: 96817

Date: 2-8-2016



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: _____

2-8-2016

Printed Name: _____

Justin L. Williams

Email Address: _____

JLWilliams1688@Hotmail.com

Zipcode: _____

96797



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Jon Nishihara

Date: _____

2/8/16

Printed Name: _____

JON NISHIHARA

Email Address: _____

jnishihara@hotmail.com

Zipcode: _____

96701



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: *Gerald C. Matthews Jr.*

Date: *08 Feb 2016*

Printed Name: *Gerald C. Matthews Jr.*

Email Address: *g.matt-3@hotmail.com*

Zipcode: *96815*



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: FEB. 08, 2016

Printed Name: BRIAN PARK-SIART

Email Address: ~~AKUBONEMEDIA@GMAIL.COM~~ AKUBONEMEDIA@GMAIL.COM

Zipcode: 96822



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: 2/8/2016

Printed Name: BRIAN NISHIMURA

Email Address: nishimurb001@hawaii-rr.com

Zipcode: 96789



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: _____

2/8/16

Printed Name: _____

STEVEN T. NAKANO

Email Address: _____

no email NAKANO

Zipcode: _____

96816



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: 2/8/16

Printed Name: Jason Felton

Email Address: jfelton@honey-supply.com

Zipcode: 96817



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

As a premium cigar consumer and enthusiast **SB 2135** will protect my passion for premium cigars and will no longer deny premium cigars parity and fairness under the tax code.

Furthermore, **SB 2135** will also benefit retailers, consumers, and in turn the state by encouraging in-state purchases of premium cigars. The fixed tax rate will allow premium cigar retailers to better price their products and compete in the market for retail sales of premium cigars and ultimately generate positive growth of in-state jobs and tax revenue.

In addition, **SB 2135** is purely a proposed tax bill; therefore any testimony not directly related to taxation should be dismissed as unrelated testimony.

Also, I urge you to **PREVENT** these bills from being "gutted and replaced" with other language unrelated to an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars; it is an unethical circumvention and manipulation of the proper process for public involvement.

In closing, I respectfully ask that you **STRONGLY SUPPORT** Hawai'i premium cigar consumers, retailers, distributors, and manufacturers and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: 2/8/16

Printed Name: Thomas Baldwin

Email Address: thomas.dan.baldwin@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96814



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Thomas R. Stockwell, Jr.

Date: Feb. 8, 2016

Printed Name: Thomas R. Stockwell, Jr.

Email Address: sanjuro808@yahoo.com

Zipcode: 96815



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Andrew-Kayne Shaw

Date: 2/8/16

Printed Name: Andrew-Kayne Shaw

Email Address: WayneTheGooat25@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96822



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: _____

2/09/2011

Printed Name: _____

ALAN WATABUCHI

Email Address: _____

ALAN.WATABUCHI@EMAIL.COM

Zipcode: _____

96706



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: 2/9/16

Printed Name: Marcus T Lopez

Email Address: MLOPEZ@hawaii1.com

Zipcode: 96707



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Herbert H.W. Lee

Date: 2/09/2016

Printed Name: Herbert H. W. Lee

Email Address: HHWLEE@HOTMAIL.COM

Zipcode: 96789



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: 2/2/16

Printed Name: Jeffrey Ken Kamehaha

Email Address: karn1051@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96816



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: 2/9/16

Printed Name: Adrian Robakowski

Email Address: adrianr23@yahoo.com

Zipcode: 96792



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Bronson K. Silva
Printed Name: Bronson K. Silva
Email Address: BronsonKSilva@gmail.com
Zipcode: 96848

Date: 2/9/2016



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Edward Kohler

Date: 2/9/16

Printed Name: Edward Kohler

Email Address: 1343 Ala Hoku Pl.

Zipcode: 96819



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: 09 FEB 16

Printed Name: _____

JULIAN V CRAWFORD

Email Address: CRAWFORD, JULIAN @ GMAIL.COM

Zipcode: _____

96817



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: Nua Araki

Email Address: nuaaraki@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96789



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: _____

Date: _____

[Handwritten Signature]
Carter John
whoop1000@ychoo.com
96719

2/11/16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Jaime L. Headrick

Date: 2/11/2015

Printed Name: Jaime L. Headrick

Email Address: maryrips07@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96815



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: 2/10/16

Printed Name: _____

Travis Keller

Email Address: _____

Travis_Keller@hotmail.com

Zipcode: _____

96813



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Cristie Cujan
Printed Name: Cristie Cujan
Email Address: CristieCujan@gmail.com
Zipcode: 96797

Date: 2/10/10



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Jacob Siason

Date: 2/14/14

Printed Name: Jacob Siason

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96813



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: 2-10-16

Printed Name: DOUG MEADOR

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96701



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: Feb 14, 2016

Printed Name: ERIC VIEIRA

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96701



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

As a premium cigar consumer and enthusiast **SB 2135** will protect my passion for premium cigars and will no longer deny premium cigars parity and fairness under the tax code.

Furthermore, **SB 2135** will also benefit retailers, consumers, and in turn the state by encouraging in-state purchases of premium cigars. The fixed tax rate will allow premium cigar retailers to better price their products and compete in the market for retail sales of premium cigars and ultimately generate positive growth of in-state jobs and tax revenue.

In addition, **SB 2135** is purely a proposed tax bill; therefore any testimony not directly related to taxation should be dismissed as unrelated testimony.

Also, I urge you to **PREVENT** these bills from being "gutted and replaced" with other language unrelated to an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars; it is an unethical circumvention and manipulation of the proper process for public involvement.

In closing, I respectfully ask that you **STRONGLY SUPPORT** Hawai'i premium cigar consumers, retailers, distributors, and manufacturers and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: _____

[Handwritten Signature]
KORI LOND
Subout808@gmail.com
96817

2/14/16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: _____

Date: 2-14-14

Joni K. Lono
Joni K. Lono
96792



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Mitchell Lane

Date: 2-14-16

Printed Name: Mitchell Lane

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96792



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Ashia K. Siaron

Date: 2-19-16

Printed Name: Ashia K Siaron

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96819



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Jonathan K F Shin

Date: _____

2-14-16

Printed Name: _____

Jonathan K F Shin

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: _____

96701



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: 2-14-16

Printed Name: Cody Skinn

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96701



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: 2/14/16

Printed Name: Bronson Shim

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96701



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Joy Lono

Date: _____

2/14/16

Printed Name: _____

Joy Lono

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 16817



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: 8 FEB 2016

Printed Name: Bernard G. D. Leong

Email Address: b.leong@cdofhawaii.com

Zipcode: 96701



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Ethan Cadavona

Printed Name: Ethan Cadavona

Email Address: ECadavona2016@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96707

Date: 2/8/16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Printed Name:

Myran Kousshoun

Date:

2/8/16

Email Address:

Myran.Kousshoun@kousshounlaw.com

Zipcode:

96818



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Landon Gangan

Printed Name:

Landon Gangan

Email Address:

gangan.landon@gmail.com

Zipcode:

96707

Date:

2/8/16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Travis Sarone Ojeda

Printed Name: Travis Sarone Ojeda

Email Address: TravisSarone@yahoo.com

Zipcode: 96706

Date: 2-8-16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Selene Horita

Printed Name:

Selene Horita

Date:

2/8/16

Email Address:

miss.valdez1980@yahoo.com

Zipcode:

96706



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 
Printed Name: Nathaniel Rhodes
Email Address: Nat.Rhodes@yahoo.com
Zipcode: 96706

Date: 2/8/16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Jayna Taha

Printed Name: Jayna Taha

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96797

Date: 2/8/16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Sincerely,

Signature:

Printed Name:

Email Address:

Zipcode:


Taylor Anchetta
tcf2800@gmail.com
96700

Date:

2/8/10



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Linda Picaduro

Email Address: picaduro.linda@cox.net

Zipcode: 96706

Date: 2/8/13



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Sincerely,

Signature:

Date:

Feb 16

Printed Name:

Draven Navarru

Email Address:

dravonnavarru74@gmail.com

Zipcode:

96797



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

As a premium cigar consumer and enthusiast **SB 2135** will protect my passion for premium cigars and will no longer deny premium cigars parity and fairness under the tax code.

Furthermore, **SB 2135** will also benefit retailers, consumers, and in turn the state by encouraging in-state purchases of premium cigars. The fixed tax rate will allow premium cigar retailers to better price their products and compete in the market for retail sales of premium cigars and ultimately generate positive growth of in-state jobs and tax revenue.

In addition, **SB 2135** is purely a proposed tax bill; therefore any testimony not directly related to taxation should be dismissed as unrelated testimony.

Also, I urge you to **PREVENT** these bills from being "gutted and replaced" with other language unrelated to an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars; it is an unethical circumvention and manipulation of the proper process for public involvement.

In closing, I respectfully ask that you **STRONGLY SUPPORT** Hawai'i premium cigar consumers, retailers, distributors, and manufacturers and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Catti McCall

Printed Name:

CATTI McCall

Date:

2-8-16

Email Address:

Dockmon@g.mail

Zipcode:

96706



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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In closing, I respectfully ask that you **STRONGLY SUPPORT** Hawai'i premium cigar consumers, retailers, distributors, and manufacturers and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Nina Bennett

Email Address: _____

Date: 2/0/16

Zipcode: 76707



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: 2-9-16

Printed Name: Pua Mosales

Email Address: plc2325@yahoo.com

Zipcode: 96706



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Brandon K Agade

Date:

2/8/16

Printed Name:

Brandon K Agade

Email Address:

bka76kr@hotmail.com

Zipcode:

96706



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Chavez Navarroc

Date: 2/18/16

Printed Name: Chavez Navarroc

Email Address: NAVARRUC2011@yahoo.com

Zipcode: 96742



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: David P. Wilson

Printed Name: DAVID P. WILSON

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96792

Date: 2/8/12



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Date:

2/8/16

Printed Name:

Kristin Lum-Petrera

Email Address:

Kristin.lumpetrera@gmail.com

Zipcode:

96707



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: 2/8/16

Printed Name: Ednelyn Worum

Email Address: yukichichara@yahoo.com

Zipcode: 96791



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:


Printed Name: Jesse Asuncion

Date:

1/8/16

Email Address:

JJALAT@MSN.COM

Zipcode:

96707



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Kaniela F Fox

Printed Name: Kaniela F Fox

Email Address: _____

Zipcode: 96792

Date: 2-8-16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Sherwin Felipe

Email Address: Nabasaka@yahoo.com

Zipcode: 96797

Date: 2/8



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Kelsey A. Bartley

Date: 2/8/16

Printed Name:

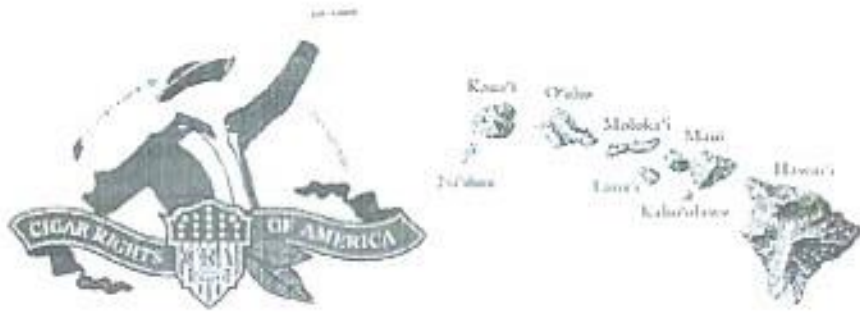
KELSEY A. BARTLEY

Email Address:

kelsey@maoorganicfarms.org

Zipcode:

96707



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Matthew Tubios

Date: 2/8/19

Printed Name: Matthew Tubios

Email Address: RaverLightsHI@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96707



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Printed Name:

Jorge R. Moya

Email Address:

02P2524@jstx.com

Zipcode:

96706

Date:

2/8/2016



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Espakio G. Semens

Printed Name: ESPAKIO G. SEMENS

Email Address: G808MONEY@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96797

Date: 02/08/16



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

I am writing to you today as a consumer of premium cigars and to urge you to **STRONGLY SUPPORT** and vote **AYE** on **Senate Bill 2135 (SB 2135)** and companion **House Bill 1634 (HB 1634)** written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars.

As a premium cigar consumer and enthusiast **SB 2135** and **HB 1634** will protect my passion for premium cigars and will no longer deny premium cigars parity and fairness under the tax code.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

2-15-2016

Grant Kawasaki

sushusupremehawaii@yahoo.com



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: _____

Date: 14 FEB 2016

Printed Name: _____

JOHNATHAN MYERS

Email Address: _____

myersglorida@rocketmail.com

Zipcode: _____

96797



Cigar Rights of America, Hawai'i

RE: Petition to STRONGLY SUPPORT an excise tax cap of \$0.50 on large cigars.

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Thank you for your time and attention on this taxation matter.

Sincerely,

Signature: Don E. Freeman

Date: 15 Feb 2016

Printed Name: DONNELL E. FREEMAN

Email Address: opsstaez@gmail.com

Zipcode: 96797

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I am a teacher, and recently I became aware of legislation that could either support, or threaten the livelihood of the Kauai Cigar Company, and other businesses that sell premium cigars in Hawaii.

I would like to say that while I place the health, and safety of our students first, I have not witnessed premium cigars being a product that is either marketed to, or consumed by youth in our schools. Furthermore, every effort should be made to protect our farms, businesses, jobs, and personal freedoms as adults.

I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

School: _____

Grade Level: _____

Email Address: _____

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I am a teacher, and recently I became aware of legislation that could either support, or threaten the livelihood of the Kauai Cigar Company, and other businesses that sell premium cigars in Hawaii.

I would like to say that while I place the health, and safety of our students first, I have not witnessed premium cigars being a product that is either marketed to, or consumed by youth in our schools. Furthermore, every effort should be made to protect our farms, businesses, jobs, and personal freedoms as adults.

I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Fawn Perry

Printed Name: Fawn Perry

School: Kapaa High School

Grade Level: 9-12

Email Address: fawn_perry@ 

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Cigars are not marketed to youth and I have never seen or heard of students smoking premium cigars.

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

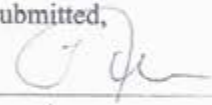
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I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Lorna Tresler-Basquez

School: Kauai High School

Grade Level: 9, 11, 12

Email Address: Lorna-Tresler-Basquez@ 

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

AMY WEUNTEN

School: _____

KAPAA HIGH SCHOOL

Grade Level: _____

10-12

Email Address: _____

amyweunten@yahoo.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Teacher's Petition

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I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Doug Super

Printed Name: Doug Super

School: Waimanalo Grade Level: 9th-12th

Email Address: doug.super@hotmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

*Cigars on campus are/would be the least of our concerns.
I have never seen a student smoking a cigar.*

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Marjana Helton

Printed Name: MARJANA HELTON

School: Kapaa High School Grade Level: 9-12

Email Address: yougotabkiding@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Hari Messer

Printed Name: Hari Messer

School: Waimea High School Grade Level: 10-12

Email Address: harimarc@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

I have seen many things on campus, but never cigars.

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I would like to say that while I place the health, and safety of our students first, I have not witnessed premium cigars being a product that is either marketed to, or consumed by youth in our schools. Furthermore, every effort should be made to protect our farms, businesses, jobs, and personal freedoms as adults.

I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: ROSS KAGAWA

School: KAPAA HIGH SCHOOL

Grade Level: 9

Email Address: rkagawa@kauai.gov

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I would like to say that while I place the health, and safety of our students first, I have not witnessed premium cigars being a product that is either marketed to, or consumed by youth in our schools. Furthermore, every effort should be made to protect our farms, businesses, jobs, and personal freedoms as adults.

I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Ryan Grogan

School: Kauikapuni

Grade Level: K-12

Email Address: hryang@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiiicigarassociation.org

March 31, 2013

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

My name is Shana T. Carvalho, and I am a Hawaii public school teacher at Wilcox Elm. School. Recently, I became aware of legislation that could either support or threaten the livelihood of the Kauai Cigar Company, and other businesses selling premium cigars in our State.

I would like to say that while I place the health and safety of our children and students first, I have not witnessed nor heard of premium cigars being a product that is either marketed to, or consumed by youth in our public schools.

I feel that premium cigars should be regarded as a luxury product that is enjoyed by legal aged adult consumers, and every effort should be made to protect our Island farms, businesses, jobs, and personal freedoms.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry.

Sincerely,

STC

Shana T. Carvalho

March 31, 2013

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

My name is Kathryn Bailey, and I am a Hawaii public school teacher at Kapaa High School. Recently, I became aware of legislation that could either support or threaten the livelihood of the Kauai Cigar Company, and other businesses selling premium cigars in our State.

I would like to say that while I place the health, and safety of children first, I have not witnessed or have knowledge of premium cigars being a product that is either marketed to, or consumed by youth in our schools.

I feel strongly that premium cigars should be regarded as a luxury product that is enjoyed by legal aged adult consumers, and every effort should be made to protect our Island farms, businesses, jobs, and personal freedoms.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn E. Bailey". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Printed Name
Kathryn Bailey

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I am a teacher, and recently I became aware of legislation that could either support, or threaten the livelihood of the Kauai Cigar Company, and other businesses that sell premium cigars in Hawaii.

I would like to say that while I place the health, and safety of our students first, I have not witnessed premium cigars being a product that is either marketed to, or consumed by youth in our schools. Furthermore, every effort should be made to protect our farms, businesses, jobs, and personal freedoms as adults.

I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Anne Torio

Printed Name: Anne Torio

School: KanuiKapono Grade Level: 4

Email Address: anniewinthrop@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Sarah L. Schoenfeld

Printed Name: Sarah L. Schoenfeld

School: Kanukapuno PCS Grade Level: Student Services Coordinator

Email Address: sjschoenfeld@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Malia Finazzo-Krueger

School: Kanui Kaponu

Grade Level: K

Email Address: maliafinaz@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature:  _____

Printed Name: Taylor Kanocho

School: Kanukapono PCS Grade Level: 1st

Email Address: taylorntabin@hotmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Shelby E. Dabin

Printed Name: Shelby E. Dabin

School: KanuiKapono PCS Grade Level: 2nd

Email Address: Shelbydabin@hotmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

There is no concern or problem of this nature @ our school at all.

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Taryn Craig

Printed Name: Taryn Craig

School: Kanui Kaponu PCS

Grade Level: 3

Email Address: tarynkatei@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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hawaiicigarassociation.org

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Kathryn Winters Smith

Printed Name: Kathryn Winters Smith

School: Kanu. Kapono PCS Grade Level: 5

Email Address: Kathrynsmith8@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

I have not witnessed any cigars at our school, ever.

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Teacher's Petition

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

School: _____

Grade Level: _____

Email Address: _____

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Mari Yokoi

School: Kanuikapono PCS Grade Level: Administration Support - SASA

Email Address: mari.la.yokoi@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: _____

Jordyn Danner

Printed Name: _____

Jordyn Danner

School: _____

Kanui Kaponu

Grade Level: _____

K-12

Email Address: _____

jordyn.danner@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Cody Arashiro

Printed Name: Cody Arashiro

School: Kanuiikapoho Grade Level: 6-12

Email Address: Codyarashiro@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

School: _____

Grade Level: _____

Email Address: _____

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

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hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

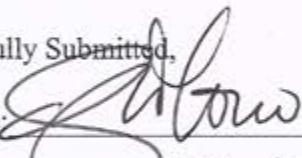
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I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Ipo Torio

School: Kanui Kaponu PCS

Grade Level: K-12

Email Address: ipotorio@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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I am a teacher, and recently I became aware of legislation that could either support, or threaten the livelihood of the Kauai Cigar Company, and other businesses that sell premium cigars in Hawaii.

I would like to say that while I place the health, and safety of our students first, I have not witnessed premium cigars being a product that is either marketed to, or consumed by youth in our schools. Furthermore, every effort should be made to protect our farms, businesses, jobs, and personal freedoms as adults.

I understand that a premium cigar as defined by the Hawaii Cigar Association is a cigar made entirely by hand of all natural tobacco leaf, hand-constructed and hand-wrapped, with no filter or characterizing flavors, and weighing more than four pounds per one thousand cigars.

I would kindly ask that you consider my testimony when considering legislation that could either support or negatively impact the premium cigar industry in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Martina Hilldorfer

Printed Name: Martina Hilldorfer

School: Kawai'i Grade Level: College

Email Address: martinahildorfer@yahoo.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiicigarassociation.org

Teacher's Petition

(And Response to Alleged Cigar Use in Our Schools)

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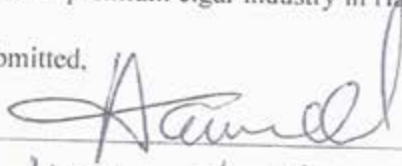
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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: _____



Printed Name: _____

Michael Hannawald

School: _____

Kauai Community College

Grade Level: _____

Email Address: _____

mwh@ [REDACTED]

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: RYAN GERARD

School: KAUAI C.C.

Grade Level: Community College

Email Address: GERARDR@ [REDACTED]

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

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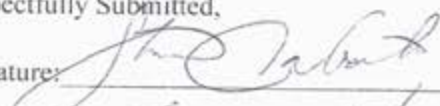
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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: STEVEN NAKATA

School: Kauai Community College Grade Level: _____

Email Address: sakatas@

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Duane Y. Miyasato

School: Kauai Community College

Grade Level: College

Email Address: duanemiy@

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: gdrent

Printed Name: 6761 DRENT

School: Kauai Community College Grade Level: College

Email Address: gdrent@██████████

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Loni Delaplane

School: Kauai Community College Grade Level: Comm. Col.

Email Address: lonidelaplane@yahoo.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature:  _____

Printed Name: Pat McGrath

School: Kauai Community College Grade Level: college

Email Address: pmcgrath@  _____

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: Brian E. Cornwall

Printed Name: Brian E. Cornwall

School: Kaui Community College

Grade Level: _____

Email Address: Cornwall@ 

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: ALAN BOYES

School: KAUAI COMMUNITY COLLEGE Grade Level: COLLEGE

Email Address: A.Boyes@KCC.edu

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature:

Joyce Y. Nakahara

Printed Name:

Joyce Y. Nakahara

School:

Kauai Comm College

Grade Level:

college

Email Address:

jnakahar@hawaiiicigarassociation.org

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

If people can afford to buy premium cigars, they should be well aware of any possible health risks.

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: SVT

Printed Name: Steve Taylor

School: Kauai Community College Grade Level: College

Email Address: SVT@██████████

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

There is a difference between a cigars, namely a substantial price ; quality difference. This is too cheap a high to blow this kind of money on it.

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Erin A. Millard

School: Kauai C.C. Grade Level: College

Email Address: emillard@

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: Mingjing, Chi

School: Kauai Community College

Grade Level: College

Email Address: mjkoko808@gmail.com

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

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Respectfully Submitted,

Signature: 

Printed Name: CODY CLIFTON

School: Kauai Community College Grade Level: college

Email Address: cclifton@ 

Add personal comments here, or attach additional testimony:

Please email this petition to les@lbdcoffee.com, or fax to: 808-822-9731

For More Information on the Hawaii Cigar Association please visit

hawaiicigarassociation.org

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 5:23 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: mz9995@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/16/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Zehner	Hawaii Smokers Alliance	Support	No

Comments: The Hawaii Smokers Alliance supports any reduction in tobacco taxes.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

February 16, 2016

TO: Chair Angus McKelvey and Members of the House Committee on
Consumer Protection & Commerce

FROM: Cigar Association of America, Inc.
(William Goo)

RE: **SB 1634** - Relating to Taxation
Hearing Date: February 17, 2016
Time: 2:00 pm

My name is William Goo. I represent the Cigar Association of America, Inc. (CAA).

CAA **supports** HB 1634 which creates a tax cap on the sale of large cigars. This bill would tax large cigars at the lesser of 50¢ for each large cigar or 50% of the wholesale price of a large cigar which is the current rate. The effect of a cap would not necessarily be an increase in the number of cigar consumers or the consumption rate but should result in an increase in local purchases and hence, more tax revenue for the State.

Thank you for considering this testimony.



16 February 2016

The Honorable Angus L.K. McKelvey
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Room 320
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representative McKelvey:

On behalf of Cigar Rights of America, which represents consumers, retailers, and manufacturers of premium cigars – including the Kauai Cigar Company – we write to you today in order to extend our full support and endorsement for HB 1634, which would create a tax cap for premium and large cigars.

In these sensitive economic times, tax caps serve as a ceiling that protect premium cigar manufacturers, retailers, and consumers from being subjected to onerous and regressive levels of taxation of a product that is sold at higher prices than other tobacco products.

Tax cap measures, such as HB 1634, allow for the creation of a fair and equitable tax system on products enjoyed by discerning adults. These measures, also make a statement to the small business friendly environment within your state. We applaud Representative Souki, Representative Kawakami, and Representative Morikawa for their actions in standing up for the entrepreneurs of Hawaii who want to sell large and premium cigars and for protecting the consumers of Hawaii who want to enjoy their passion for great artisan cigars without being subjected to unfair taxation.

A cornerstone mission of any state government is to protect the interests of small businesses and to design policies that do not hinder their growth. This mission is accomplished through legislation like HB 1634

On behalf of our Hawaiian members, Cigar Rights of America again wishes to express our full endorsement for HB 1634.

Sincerely,
Glynn Loope
J. Glynn Loope
Executive Director



Date: February 15, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

From: Jessica Yamauchi, Executive Director, Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Re: **Strong Opposition for HB 1634, Relating to Taxation**

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00pm at Conference Room 325

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG OPPOSITION** of HB 1634 which would lower the tax on large cigars to the lesser of a) 50 cents each or b) 50 percent of the wholesale price for each cigar.

The Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i (Coalition) is a program of the Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) that is dedicated to reducing tobacco use through education, policy, and advocacy. With nearly two decades of history in Hawai'i, the Coalition has led several campaigns on enacting smoke-free environments, including being the first state in the nation to prohibit the sale of tobacco and electronic smoking devices to purchasers under 21 years of age.

Cigar smoking harms health. According to the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Surgeon General, cigar smoking causes oral cavity cancers (cancers of the lip, tongue, mouth and throat) and cancers of the larynx, esophagus and lung, heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Cigar smoke contains the same toxins as cigarette smoke, and many new cigar products are more easily smoked and inhaled just like cigarettes.

Changing the tax rate promotes regulatory and tax loopholes. The Coalition has been fighting this legislation for the last 3 years. Large cigars are already taxed 20% less than other tobacco productsⁱ. Tobacco companies are notorious for taking advantage of loopholes to qualify for lower rate by modifying their cigars, even increasing cigar weight by adding material used in kitty litterⁱⁱ. Lowering the tax on large cigars compared to cigarettes and small cigars will make these



products more affordable to price-sensitive youth and encourages those smoking cigarettes to switch to cigars, rather than quit.

Large cigar sales have INCREASED while State health costs continue to RISE. Between Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015, cigar sales in Hawai'i increased by 7%ⁱⁱⁱ. Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Hawai'i, claiming 1,400 lives each year and costing the State \$526 million in healthcare costs directly attributed to smoking^{iv}. Cigars today are no longer just smoked by older men. Instead, the cigar market consists of products that vary widely in sizes, shapes, flavors and prices, making them appealing to a broader audience, including kids. Lowering the tax will make it even more appealing for teens to start smoking.

The public supports taxing large cigars. An independent poll conducted by Ward Research Inc. for the Coalition in November 2015 finds that 79% or nearly 8 out of 10 registered Hawai'i voters support taxing other tobacco products such as smokeless tobacco and cigars at the same rate as cigarettes as part of efforts to reduce tobacco use^v.

Cigars appeal to kids. High school students and young adults smoke cigars at twice the rates of all adults. Young people model adult behaviors and more kids are learning to smoke cigars. According to the national 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey^{vi}, young adults (ages 18-24) have the highest cigar smoking rate at 15.9 percent compared to 6.6 percent of all adults that smoked cigars in the past month. In addition, cigars are less regulated than cigarettes and are able to use kid-friendly flavors that attract youth to their product.

Lowering or capping taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong public health message. Hawai'i is already considered a vanguard state in the nation, with our current smoke-free and tobacco control laws protecting our residents and children. Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. Hawaii's progress against tobacco must continue.

The Coalition strongly opposes HB 1634 and respectfully ask the members to hold this bill in committee.



Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jessica Yamauchi'.

Jessica Yamauchi
Executive Director

ⁱ Tobacco Tax (Chapter 245-3) - \$0.16 per cigarette and little cigars, 50% of wholesale price for large cigars, and 70% of wholesale price for all other tobacco products. http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol04_Ch0201-0257/HRS0245/HRS_0245-0003.htm

ⁱⁱ Bloomberg News. "Tobacco Firms Save \$1Billion With Kitty Litter in Cigars," 28 Feb 2013.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-03-01/tobacco-firms-save-1-billion-with-kitty-litter-in-cigars>

ⁱⁱⁱ State of Hawai'i, Department of Taxation. "Tobacco Tax Collections and Licenses – Year Ending June 30, 2015."

<http://files.hawaii.gov/tax/stats/monthly/2015fy7.pdf>

^{iv} Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "The Toll of Tobacco in Hawai'i," 25 Sept 2015.

http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts_issues/toll_us/hawaii

^v This study by War Research, Inc. summarizes findings from a phone survey among n=806 Hawaii registered voters, conducted between October 17 and November 8, 2015.

^{vi} Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "Not Your Grandfather's Cigar," 13 Mar 2013.

https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/content/what_we_do/industry_watch/cigar_report/2013CigarReport_Full.pdf



Executive Officers:
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores - Chairperson
John Erickson, Young's Market Company – Vice Chair
Bob Stout, Times Supermarkets – Secretary/Treasurer
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

1050 Bishop St. PMB 235
Honolulu, HI 96813
Fax : 808-791-0702
Telephone : 808-533-1292

TO: COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE
Representative Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Representative Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: Wednesday, February 17, 2015
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 325

RE: HB1634

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

We support this measure. A taxation rate for large cigars of the lesser of: fifty cents for each large cigar or fifty per cent of the wholesale price is a fair and reasonable rate for these products.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

From: Lynda Hirakami <diabeatit@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 2:42 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

I strongly oppose HB 1634, which would lower the tax on large cigars to the lesser of a) 50 cents each or b) 50 percent of the wholesale price for each cigar.

Cigars are tobacco products. According to the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Surgeon General, cigar smoking causes cancer, heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Cigar smoke contains the same toxins as cigarette smoke, and many new cigar products are more easily smoked and inhaled just like cigarettes.

Large cigar sales have increased, while sales of small cigars has decreased. Between Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015, cigar sales in Hawai'i increased by 7%. Cigars today are no longer just smoked by older men. Instead, the cigar market consists of products that vary widely in sizes, shapes, flavors and prices, making them appealing to a broader audience, including kids. Lowering the tax will make it even more appealing for teens to start smoking.

High school students and young adults smoke cigars at twice the rates of all adults. Young people model adult behaviors and more kids are learning to smoke cigars. According to the national 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, young adults (ages 18-24) have the highest cigar smoking rate at 15.9 percent compared to 6.6 percent of all adults that smoked cigars in the past month.

Lowering or capping taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong public health message. Hawai'i is already considered a vanguard state in the nation, with our current smoke-free and tobacco control laws protecting our residents and children. Large cigars are already taxed at lower rates than other tobacco products. Lowering the tax on large cigars compared to cigarettes and small cigars will make these products more affordable to price-sensitive youth and encourages those smoking cigarettes to switch to cigars, rather than quit.

Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Lynda Hirakami
15-2866 Pahoia Village Rd
P.O. Box 1455
Pahoia, HI 96778

From: Lawrence Denis <lbd3emails@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 2:44 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

I strongly oppose HB 1634, which would lower the tax on large cigars to the lesser of a) 50 cents each or b) 50 percent of the wholesale price for each cigar.

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Mahalo,

Lawrence Denis
PO Box 385847
Waikoloa, HI 96738

From: Shay Chan Hodges <shay.chanhodges@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 2:50 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Shay Chan Hodges
37 Puu Koa Place
Haiku, HI 96708

From: Michelle Gray <mmg2b@msn.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 2:59 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
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Mahalo,

Michelle Gray
430 Lanipuaa Street
Honolulu, HI 96825

From: Michael Kellar <Worldmk007@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 3:06 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Michael Kellar
435 Haleloa Place, Apt. E
Honolulu, HI 96821

From: Joseph Humphry <jhumphry@hawaii.rr.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 3:10 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
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Mahalo,

Joseph Humphry
3579 Nipo Street
Honolulu, HI 96822

From: Stephanie Austin <stephandjim@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 3:13 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
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Mahalo,

Stephanie Austin
495 Awalau Rd.
Haiku, HI 96708

From: Barbara Nosaka <barbrick@hawaiiantel.net>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 3:29 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
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Mahalo,

Barbara Nosaka
2216 Hoonanea Street
Honolulu, HI 96822

From: Kristie Roach-Holmes <krstroach@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 4:07 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Kristie Roach-Holmes
75-6115 Ka'ane'e Pl
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

From: Michele Nihipali <nihipalim001@hawaii.rr.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 4:12 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
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Mahalo,

Michele Nihipali
54-074 Kamehameha Hwy. # A
54-074 A Kam Hwy
Hauula, HI 96717

From: Ronald Chow <rowser50@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 4:27 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
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Mahalo,

Ronald Chow
548 ULUOA ST
KAILUA, HI 96734

From: Christopher La Chica <cricketlachica@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 4:29 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
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Mahalo,

Christopher La Chica
94-1410 Lanikuhana Ave, 436, Mililani, HI Mililani, HI 96789

From: Forrest Batz <fbatz@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 5:09 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Forrest Batz
HC3 Box 4730
Keaau, HI 96749

From: Jeyci Kaili <jeyci.kaili@imua.ksbe.edu>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 6:03 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
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Lowering or capping taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong public health message. Hawai'i is already considered a vanguard state in the nation, with our current smoke-free and tobacco control laws protecting our residents and children. Large cigars are already taxed at lower rates than other tobacco products. Lowering the tax on large cigars compared to cigarettes and small cigars will make these products more affordable to price-sensitive youth and encourages those smoking cigarettes to switch to cigars, rather than quit.

Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Jeyci Kaili
456 Makani Circle
Hilo, HI 96720

From: Jayson O'Donnell <jaysonod@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 7:09 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

I strongly oppose HB 1634, which would lower the tax on large cigars to the lesser of a) 50 cents each or b) 50 percent of the wholesale price for each cigar.

Cigars are tobacco products. According to the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Surgeon General, cigar smoking causes cancer, heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Cigar smoke contains the same toxins as cigarette smoke, and many new cigar products are more easily smoked and inhaled just like cigarettes.

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Mahalo,

Jayson O'Donnell
3311 Campbell Ave
Honolulu, HI 96815

From: Mark Levin <levin@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 7:19 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Mark Levin
2108 Hunnewell St.
Honolulu, HI 96822

From: Cynthia P Chow <cyn.artemis@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 7:27 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Cynthia P Chow
46-369 Haiku Road
D-6
Kaneohe, HI 96744

From: Lorrie Ann Santos <anelalani@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 7:48 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Lorrie Ann Santos
45-415 Lolii Street
Kaneohe, HI 96744

From: Maria Moreno - Chow <morenochow@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 8:06 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
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Mahalo,

Maria Moreno - Chow
548 Ulua st.
Kailua, HI 96734

From: Donna Chalmers <markheritage19@msn.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 8:28 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Donna Chalmers
HCR 3 box 11074
Keaau, HI 96749

From: Nicole Xavier <nhxavier.16@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 14, 2016 10:45 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Nicole Xavier
Kapolei High School

Nicole Xavier

92-320 Kiowao Pl.
Kapolei, HI 96707

From: Alvin Wong <anwprods@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 12:16 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Alvin Wong
1163 Hooli Circle
1163 Hooli Circle
Pearl City, HI 96782/1904

From: Patricia Fleck <pat.fleckconsulting@hawaiiintel.net>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 5:46 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo, Patricia Fleck

Patricia Fleck
77-215 Ho'owaiwai Court
Kailua Kona, HI 96740

From: Marilyn Gagen <mgagen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 8:34 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Marilyn Gagen
59-398 Ka Nani Drive
N/A
Kamuela, HI 96743

From: Hau'oli Tomoso <john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 9:01 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,
John A. H. Tomoso, MSW, ACSW, LSW
51 Ku'ula Street
Kahului, HI 96732-2906

Hau'oli Tomoso

51 Ku'ula Street
Kahului, HI 96732

From: Francis Wong <fbad4@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 9:48 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

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Mahalo,

Francis Wong
3522 Ala Aloalo Pl.
Honolulu, HI 96818

From: Ronald Kuriki <kurikir001@hawaii.rr.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 11:53 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Ronald Kuriki
1655-C Palolo Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96816

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 1:08 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: keane.tanaka@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM*

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keane Tanaka	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: Jo Ann Ikehara <jikehara@lava.net>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 1:29 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

I strongly oppose HB 1634, which would lower the tax on large cigars to the lesser of a) 50 cents each or b) 50 percent of the wholesale price for each cigar.

Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo, Jo Ann Ikehara, BS, RRT

Jo Ann Ikehara
2515 North School St
2515 North School Street
Honolulu, HI 96819

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 1:30 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: myers_florida@rocketmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Johnathon Myers	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Representative Angus McKelvey and Representative Justin Woodson: I understand you will be the Consumer Protection & Commerce (CPC) Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of the Conference that will be deliberating over House Bill 1634 (HB1634). I am reaching out to you today to STRONGLY SUPPORT and vote AYE on HB1634 written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars. Creating a tax cap on large or premium cigars is not going to create new cigar smokers; all the cigar smokers already exist and we are here to stay. The tax cap will control whether we spend our money locally within the state of Hawai'i and generate taxable revenue for local and small businesses; or with no tax cap we send our money out-of-state via mail order purchases and online purchases and the state of Hawai'i does not receive a cent. All residents and locals of the state of Hawai'i inherently want to support local businesses and keep the money within the state--we all benefit. It is important to all of us consumers and purveyors of large or premium cigars that you understand. When reviewing all of the testimony, please keep in mind that this is a bill regarding taxation, not a bill regarding health. In summary, STRONGLY SUPPORT and vote AYE on HB1634 written ONLY as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars. Thank you for your time and support! Your supporter and constituent, Johnathon Myers Cigar Rights Of America Ambassador, Hawai'i

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From: Kevin Cassel <kevin@cc.hawaii.edu>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 1:40 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

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Cigars are tobacco products. According to the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Surgeon General, cigar smoking causes cancer, heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Cigar smoke contains the same toxins as cigarette smoke, and many new cigar products are more easily smoked and inhaled just like cigarettes.

Large cigar sales have increased, while sales of small cigars has decreased. Between Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015, cigar sales in Hawai'i increased by 7%. Cigars today are no longer just smoked by older men. Instead, the cigar market consists of products that vary widely in sizes, shapes, flavors and prices, making them appealing to a broader audience, including kids. Lowering the tax will make it even more appealing for teens to start smoking.

High school students and young adults smoke cigars at twice the rates of all adults. Young people model adult behaviors and more kids are learning to smoke cigars. According to the national 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, young adults (ages 18-24) have the highest cigar smoking rate at 15.9 percent compared to 6.6 percent of all adults that smoked cigars in the past month.

Lowering or capping taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong public health message. Hawai'i is already considered a vanguard state in the nation, with our current smoke-free and tobacco control laws protecting our residents and children. Large cigars are already taxed at lower rates than other tobacco products. Lowering the tax on large cigars compared to cigarettes and small cigars will make these products more affordable to price-sensitive youth and encourages those smoking cigarettes to switch to cigars, rather than quit.

Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Kevin Cassel
1054 Green St
Honolulu, HI 96822

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 1:52 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: DHCigarman@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dennis A. Huddy	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Representative Angus McKelvey and Representative Justin Woodson: I understand you will be the Consumer Protection & Commerce (CPC) Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of the Conference that will be deliberating over House Bill 1634 (HB1634). I am reaching out to you today to STRONGLY SUPPORT and vote AYE on HB1634 written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars. Creating a tax cap on large or premium cigars is not going to create new cigar smokers; all the cigar smokers already exist and we are here to stay. The tax cap will control whether we spend our money locally within the state of Hawai'i and generate taxable revenue for local and small businesses; or with no tax cap we send our money out-of-state via mail order purchases and online purchases and the state of Hawai'i does not receive a cent. All residents and locals of the state of Hawai'i inherently want to support local businesses and keep the money within the state--we all benefit. It is important to all of us consumers and purveyors of large or premium cigars that you understand. When reviewing all of the testimony, please keep in mind that this is a bill regarding taxation, not a bill regarding health. In summary, STRONGLY SUPPORT and vote AYE on HB1634 written ONLY as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars. Thank you for your time and support! Your supporter and constituent,

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Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: Debbie Apolo <debz96789@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 2:19 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

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High school students and young adults smoke cigars at twice the rates of all adults. Young people model adult behaviors and more kids are learning to smoke cigars. According to the national 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, young adults (ages 18-24) have the highest cigar smoking rate at 15.9 percent compared to 6.6 percent of all adults that smoked cigars in the past month.

Lowering or capping taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong public health message. Hawai'i is already considered a vanguard state in the nation, with our current smoke-free and tobacco control laws protecting our residents and children. Large cigars are already taxed at lower rates than other tobacco products. Lowering the tax on large cigars compared to cigarettes and small cigars will make these products more affordable to price-sensitive youth and encourages those smoking cigarettes to switch to cigars, rather than quit.

Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Debbie Apolo, CTTS

Debbie Apolo
95-045 Wiakalani Drive

#G104
Mililani, HI 96789

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 4:02 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: sushisupremehawaii@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Grant Kawasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Representative Angus McKelvey and Representative Justin Woodson: I understand you will be the Consumer Protection & Commerce (CPC) Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of the Conference that will be deliberating over House Bill 1634 (HB1634). I am reaching out to you today to STRONGLY SUPPORT and vote AYE on HB1634 written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars. Creating a tax cap on large or premium cigars is not going to create new cigar smokers; all the cigar smokers already exist and we are here to stay. The tax cap will control whether we spend our money locally within the state of Hawai'i and generate taxable revenue for local and small businesses; or with no tax cap we send our money out-of-state via mail order purchases and online purchases and the state of Hawai'i does not receive a cent. All residents and locals of the state of Hawai'i inherently want to support local businesses and keep the money within the state--we all benefit. It is important to all of us consumers and purveyors of large or premium cigars that you understand. When reviewing all of the testimony, please keep in mind that this is a bill regarding taxation, not a bill regarding health. In summary, STRONGLY SUPPORT and vote AYE on HB1634 written ONLY as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars. Thank you for your time and support! Your supporter and constituent, Grant Kawasaki

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Representative Angus McKelvey and Representative Justin Woodson:

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Your supporter and constituent,

Noel K. Araki

94-246 Kiaha Loop
Mililani, HI 96789
(808) 623-0685
(808) 258-8379

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 7:24 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: thasugarbear@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM*

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
leroy woods jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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To: CPC committee

From: Jon Fia

February 15, 2016

Re: HB 1634

Position: In STRONG SUPPORT

As a resident of Hawaii, I understand the difficult financial situation that exists. It is important we all do our part to help the budget, however, I am writing to testify today that the premium cigar industry pays more than its fair share of taxes.

The current cigar tax rate of 50% is disproportionate to any other business in Hawaii that I am aware of:

-The high tax rate has only driven the majority of cigar enthusiasts to mail order to buy their premium cigars instead of buying locally.

-Passing HB 1634 with a .50 cent per cigar cap, would recapture sales lost to mail order and the internet thus supporting small local businesses as well as increasing tax revenue for the state of Hawaii.

-According to industry experts, the Premium Cigar Internet Business currently represents between 55-60% of all premium cigars sold in the U.S. This number is an average for all states. For high cigar tax states such as Hawaii, cigar internet purchases are much much higher. Im very tuned into the local premium cigar scene and it would be easy for me to say that virtually every cigar enthusiast I know makes the majority of their cigar purchases via the internet. In the cigar business, Hawaii is referred to as a "sampling state." That means consumers will buy one cigar for a local retailer to see if they like it and if they do they will search online to purchase boxes. What would you rather have? A couple dollars tax revenue off of one cigar or \$12.50 tax revenue from the sale of a box with the .50 cent tax cap? This is a situation where less is more.

-NO CIGAR taxes nor the state GE excise taxes are charged by online sellers so this makes it very difficult for consumers to ignore savings of anywhere from \$50-\$100 on each box of cigars. I frequently witness consumer walk into a local retailer, inquire about cost on a specific box of cigars, and scoff at the quoted price by the retailer, and then rub it in by telling the retailer that they can buy it online and save 50.00 or more. The retailer explains that we have a 50% state tax but to no avail. To the consumer money is money and they walk out without purchasing anything. This situation happens time and time again to our local retailers. The retailer loses a sale, the state loses tobacco tax revenue and GE tax revenue.

-The .50 cent tax cap is a fair number that would make us competitive. For example, Rhode Island has a higher tax but caps each cigar at \$.50 cents. This cap has served to increase tax revenues in Rhode Island as cigars are more competitively priced with online sellers. Conversely increases in New York made to their cigar tax had almost decimated the industry. They finally woke up and also implemented a cigar tax cap recently. Other states that have very high taxes like Washington State and Oregon have also implemented caps that have rejuvenated the industry and increased state tax revenues. Having a cap would be a win-win situation for the retailers, the consumers, and for the state in increased tax revenue. Many other states have also recognized this and also have implemented tax caps to the tune of 12 states now.

-I would also like to ask that you take those statistics from the anti-tobacco organizations with a grain of salt. They will tell you by raising the tax, the state will increase revenue. They obviously never took Economics 101 and learned the basic principles of price elasticity. When price goes up, sales go down. This is especially true when there are alternative places to buy the same product i.e. the internet. They will also label cigars in the same light as cigarettes which they are not. Somehow they mix in health issues concerning a bill that is supposed to be related to taxation and stir up emotions. They will threaten that the tax cap will create new smokers in the young crowd. The reality is some teenager isn't going to spend 10-15 dollars on a single cigar. With the cap lowering the price of a

premium cigar by two-three dollars with a cap, it wont make young people rush out to become premium cigar smokers.

-Premium cigars need not be bought in shops. It is extremely convenient to purchase online and consumers know this. A lack of a cigar tax cap will continue to chase business out of Hawaii thereby reducing potential revenues. I am confident that this information I have provided is accurate and that the progressive measures taken by other states be considered or our state will continue to lose potential tax revenues to other states.

Thank you for taking my testimony into consideration.

Kindest Regards,

Jon Fia
Cigar Enthusiast

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 8:27 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: rbrooks@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ronald Brooks	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Representative Angus McKelvey and Representative Justin Woodson: I understand you will be the Consumer Protection & Commerce (CPC) Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of the Conference that will be deliberating over House Bill 1634 (HB1634). I am reaching out to you today to STRONGLY SUPPORT and vote AYE on HB1634 written only as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars. Creating a tax cap on large or premium cigars is not going to create new cigar smokers; all the cigar smokers already exist and we are here to stay. The tax cap will control whether we spend our money locally within the state of Hawai'i and generate taxable revenue for local and small businesses; or with no tax cap we send our money out-of-state via mail order purchases and online purchases and the state of Hawai'i does not receive a cent. All residents and locals of the state of Hawai'i inherently want to support local businesses and keep the money within the state--we all benefit. It is important to all of us consumers and purveyors of large or premium cigars that you understand. When reviewing all of the testimony, please keep in mind that this is a bill regarding taxation, not a bill regarding health. In summary, STRONGLY SUPPORT and vote AYE on HB1634 written ONLY as an excise tax cap on large or premium cigars. Thank you for your time and support! Your supporter and constituent, Ronald Brooks

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From: Rudolf Kuzmider <rukich@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2016 8:51 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

I strongly oppose HB 1634, which would lower the tax on large cigars to the lesser of a) 50 cents each or b) 50 percent of the wholesale price for each cigar.

Cigars are tobacco products. According to the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Surgeon General, cigar smoking causes cancer, heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Cigar smoke contains the same toxins as cigarette smoke, and many new cigar products are more easily smoked and inhaled just like cigarettes.

Large cigar sales have increased, while sales of small cigars has decreased. Between Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015, cigar sales in Hawai'i increased by 7%. Cigars today are no longer just smoked by older men. Instead, the cigar market consists of products that vary widely in sizes, shapes, flavors and prices, making them appealing to a broader audience, including kids. Lowering the tax will make it even more appealing for teens to start smoking.

High school students and young adults smoke cigars at twice the rates of all adults. Young people model adult behaviors and more kids are learning to smoke cigars. According to the national 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, young adults (ages 18-24) have the highest cigar smoking rate at 15.9 percent compared to 6.6 percent of all adults that smoked cigars in the past month.

Lowering or capping taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong public health message. Hawai'i is already considered a vanguard state in the nation, with our current smoke-free and tobacco control laws protecting our residents and children. Large cigars are already taxed at lower rates than other tobacco products. Lowering the tax on large cigars compared to cigarettes and small cigars will make these products more affordable to price-sensitive youth and encourages those smoking cigarettes to switch to cigars, rather than quit.

Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Rudolf Kuzmider
438 Hobron Lane ,Suite 307
Honolulu, HI 96815

From: Kim Swartz <kswartz@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 7:18 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

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Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Kim Swartz
98-1394 Hinu PI B
Pearl City, HI 96782

From: May Rose Dela Cruz <mdelacruz@papaalokahi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 7:35 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

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Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

May Rose Dela Cruz
894 Queen Street
894 Queen Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

From: Carolyn Lee <carolynjayne@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 8:43 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

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Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Carolyn Lee
2201 Helo Place
Honolulu, HI 96816

From: Koa Robinson <krobinson@cc.hawaii.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 1:01 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: Strong Opposition to HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Hrg: February 17, 2016 at 2:00 pm in Capitol Room 325

I strongly oppose HB 1634, which would lower the tax on large cigars to the lesser of a) 50 cents each or b) 50 percent of the wholesale price for each cigar.

Cigars are tobacco products. According to the National Cancer Institute and the U.S. Surgeon General, cigar smoking causes cancer, heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Cigar smoke contains the same toxins as cigarette smoke, and many new cigar products are more easily smoked and inhaled just like cigarettes.

Large cigar sales have increased, while sales of small cigars has decreased. Between Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015, cigar sales in Hawai'i increased by 7%. Cigars today are no longer just smoked by older men. Instead, the cigar market consists of products that vary widely in sizes, shapes, flavors and prices, making them appealing to a broader audience, including kids. Lowering the tax will make it even more appealing for teens to start smoking.

High school students and young adults smoke cigars at twice the rates of all adults. Young people model adult behaviors and more kids are learning to smoke cigars. According to the national 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, young adults (ages 18-24) have the highest cigar smoking rate at 15.9 percent compared to 6.6 percent of all adults that smoked cigars in the past month.

Lowering or capping taxes on any tobacco product sends the wrong public health message. Hawai'i is already considered a vanguard state in the nation, with our current smoke-free and tobacco control laws protecting our residents and children. Large cigars are already taxed at lower rates than other tobacco products. Lowering the tax on large cigars compared to cigarettes and small cigars will make these products more affordable to price-sensitive youth and encourages those smoking cigarettes to switch to cigars, rather than quit.

Hawai'i has been leading the way in tobacco control, and this bill is a step backwards for our State. I strongly oppose HB 1634 and ask you to hold this bill in committee.

Mahalo,

Koa Robinson
701 Ilalo Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

From: Tyler Ralston <dgkahalas@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 11:58 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Tyler Ralston
PO Box 10528
Honolulu, HI 96816

From: Nicole Kerr <nicole.kerr@ah.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 11:49 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Nicole Kerr
520 N. Kalaheo
Kailua, HI 96734

From: Kanani Kilbey <KilbeyKN@ah.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 11:30 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Kanani Kilbey
642 Ulukahiki Street
Suite 105
Kailua, HI 96734

From: Napualani Spock <nspock@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 10:51 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Napualani Spock
P.O. Box 880868
Pukalani, HI 96788

From: Patti Ornellas <patti.ornellas@cancer.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 9:41 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
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Mahalo,

Patti Ornellas
3343 Kanakolu Street
Lihue, HI 96766

From: Maile Goo <goomaile@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 9:44 AM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Maile Goo
3683 Woodlawn Terrace Place
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Maile Goo
3683 Woodlawn Terrace Place
Honolulu, HI 96822

From: Nora Usita, RN <nusita.metrocare@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 7:39 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
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Mahalo,

Nora Usita, RN
170 Aikane circle
Hilo, HI 96720

From: Bryan Mih <bmih@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 8:01 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,
Bryan Mih, MD MPH FAAP
Pediatrician

Bryan Mih
1944 Naniu Pl

Honolulu, HI 96822

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 8:18 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Cc: BronsonKSilva@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1634 on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM

HB1634

Submitted on: 2/16/2016

Testimony for CPC on Feb 17, 2016 14:00PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bronson K. Silva	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce: My name is Bronson K. Silva. I am a voter and resident of Hawai'i. I truly appreciate the opportunity to address you today as a fellow constituent. I am in strong support of House Bill 1634. The State of Hawaii, as a whole, is moving towards supporting local businesses in the hope of fostering a stronger independent local economy. Nevertheless, not all Hawai'i businesses benefit from this trend. Hawaii's businesses and premium cigar manufacturer currently face very steep taxes on large cigar products. In addition to taxes provided by law, Section 245- 3 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes imposes an excise tax of 50% of the wholesale price for each large cigar. Tourists and Hawai'i residents recognize the steep prices of premium cigars in Hawai'i. Tourists purchase lower priced imported cigars over locally-produced premium cigars. Hawai'i residents often purchase cigars from competitively priced online vendors instead of local retailers. Respectively, both instances create a loss of revenue within the State of Hawaii. The effect of a tax cap, as proposed in HB 1634, will not create or increase the number of cigar consumers. Existing laws already restrict the access and use of tobacco products by individuals under the age of 21. The effect of a tax cap, as proposed in HB 1634, will simply increase tax revenue within the State of Hawaii and support the local economy. I support the purpose of HB 1634 in addressing the clear disadvantage that Hawaii's businesses currently face by changing the tax rate on the sales of premium cigars under HRS § 245- 3. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 1634. Mahalo, Bronson K. Silva BronsonKSilva@gmail.com / (202)709-9611

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

From: Michelle Kwock <nina2beach@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 9:39 PM
To: CPCtestimony
Subject: Oppose HB 1634, Relating to Taxation

Date: February 16, 2016

To: The Honorable Angus L.k. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

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Mahalo,

Michelle Kwock
814 Kinau #303
Honolulu, HI 96813

TO: Chair Angus McKelvey and Members of the Senate Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

FROM: Mokule'ia Cigar Company

RE: HB 1634, Large Cigars; Tax
Hearing Date: February 17, 2016
Time: 2:00 PM

My name is Kalani Matsuura and I am the owner of Mokule'ia Cigar Company. I recently started retailing large premium cigars in June of 2014.

I support SB 2135 which creates a tax cap on the sale of large premium cigars. I am a tobacconist and a consumer of large premium cigars. Until becoming a cigar retailer I purchased majority of my large premium cigars online. Purchasing online gains no revenue for the state. The cap would benefit local cigar retailers, consumers and generate revenue for the State. The cap will allow local retailers to price premium cigars at competitive rates and consumers will be able to purchase premium cigars at fair market pricing. The State would see an increase in local sales thus, gaining tax revenue for the State. Protection of our current brick and mortar cigar stores and cigar retailers is paramount. The tax cap will provide the local cigar industry potential for growth and stability.

Mahalo for considering this testimony.



**American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network**
2370 Nu`uanu Avenue
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96817
808.432.9149
www.acscan.org

House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Representative Angus McKelvey, Chair
Representative Justin Woodson, Vice Chair

HB 1634 – RELATING TO TAXATION
Cory Chun, Government Relations Director – Hawaii Pacific
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in *opposition* of HB 1634, which changes the excise tax rate on large cigars by setting the maximum tax at \$.50 per large cigar.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is the nation's leading cancer advocacy organization. ACS CAN works with federal, state, and local government bodies to support evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

Cigar use has substantial health risks.

Many people view cigar smoking as more sophisticated and less dangerous than cigarette smoking. Yet one large cigar can contain as much tobacco as an entire pack of cigarettes. Cigars are tobacco, and they are dangerous to your health.

Cigars contain nicotine, the substance in tobacco that addicts people. Cigar smokers who inhale absorb nicotine through the lungs as quickly as cigarette smokers. For those who don't inhale, the nicotine absorbs more slowly through the lining of the mouth. Cigar smoke dissolves more easily in saliva than cigarette smoke. This means cigar smokers can get the desired dose of nicotine without inhaling the smoke into their lungs. People who use oral or spit tobacco products absorb nicotine the same way. Nicotine in any form is highly addictive.

Cigars are not a safer alternative to cigarettes.

Cigars contain the same cancer-causing substances as cigarettes and other tobacco products. Cigar smoking increases the risk of cancers of the lung, mouth, larynx, esophagus, and likely pancreas and bladder (if inhaled). Cigar smokers are four to ten times more likely to die from laryngeal, oral, or esophageal cancers than nonsmokers.

Even cigar smokers who don't inhale are still breathing in large amounts of smoke that come from the lit end of the cigar and face an increased risk of lung cancer.

Even though people smoke cigars for different reasons, the fact is, like cigarettes, cigars deliver nicotine. Most full size cigars have as much nicotine as several cigarettes. Cigarettes contain an average of about 8 milligrams (mg) of nicotine. Many popular brands of larger cigars contain between 100 and 200 mg, or even as many as 444 mg of nicotine.

Like all other tobacco products, cigars should be subject to taxation to reduce the deadly and costly burden of tobacco use.

What this measure attempts to do is treat large cigars differently than other tobacco products by capping the tax to \$.50. Large cigars may contain more than a half an ounce of tobacco. This is as much tobacco as a whole pack of cigarettes. This measure essentially makes the purchase of tobacco cheaper for a cigar than a cigarette. We shouldn't be favoring one tobacco product over another and creating an unjustified economic advantage for a known cause of cancer. For these reasons, ACS CAN is in opposition to this measure and urges the committee to consider the negative health effects that come from making a tobacco product more affordable for people, especially our youth and young adults.

All tobacco products present the health same dangers and should be treated the same for taxation purposes. We feel creating significant advantages for large cigars for economic purposes should never have a higher priority than public health. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.