



OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL

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Testimony of
Scott Glenn
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before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Tuesday, March 22, 2016
8:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in SUPPORT of
HCR 187

**URGING THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY CONTROL TO ADOPT THE ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT AS AGENCY POLICY FOR USE IN THE
STATE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS**

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Lowen, and Members of the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection,

The Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC) administers Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343, Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). The purpose of the EIS law is to "establish a system of environmental review which ensures that environmental concerns are given appropriate consideration in decision making along with economic and technical considerations" (HRS §343-1). Additionally, the OEQC serves "the Governor in an advisory capacity on all matters relating to environmental quality control," as directed in HRS §341-3.

OEQC supports this resolution and believes that focusing on improving guidance and training to be appropriate. OEQC will review the environmental justice (EJ) guidance document for what may have changed since the EJ guidance document was written 8 years ago, update as applicable, incorporate the updated guidance into OEQC's policies and trainings, and report back to the Legislature as requested by the resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Cynthia K.L. Rezendes

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March 22, 2016

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Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
Tuesday, March 22, 2016, 8:30 a.m., Conference Room 325

RE: Testimony in **Support** of HB2770 RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

Dear Chair Lee and members of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support** of HCR187 which requests the Office of Environmental Quality Control and the Environmental Council to implement recommendations based in the Hawaii Environmental Justice Initiative Report dated January 9, 2008 to ensure that principles of environmental justice are included in all phases of the environmental review process.

As many of you may be aware of the significant environmental disasters that have occurred throughout the U.S., i.e. chemical plant explosions, the BP oil spill, the molasses spill in Honolulu Harbor, the Flint, Michigan drinking water tragedy, the Gold King Mine (Silverton, Colorado), and other recent environmental tragedies. Many of these tragedies impact those who can least afford the impacts they might suffer from these disasters. Many of these occurrences are within high poverty, lower educated, minority communities causing multitudes of problems, especially health problems.

By enhancing the processes that we have today to include environmental justice in our consideration as we consider various projects throughout the State, we will be able to more clearly evaluate whether or not we are impacting certain groups of people who might be less able to speak up as to the effects of these projects on their communities. One of these considerations would definitely include housing developments which might impact the traffic flow of certain communities causing a further degradation on quality of life by being located in certain areas.

With looking at developments of projects not just locally but more holistically to the region, we would be better able to consider whether that development places an undue burden on a neighboring community and the fairness factor of those less able to relocate, or protect themselves from negative impacts.

Therefore, I request your favorable support in passing HCR187.