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**TESTIMONY ON S.B. NO. 2682
RELATING TO SELF-STORAGE INSURANCE**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, & HEALTH

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Friday, February 19, 2016, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

To Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair; Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair; and members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health:

My name is Gerald C. Yoshida, an attorney in the Honolulu law firm of Char Hamilton Yoshida & Shimomoto. Our firm represents the Self Storage Association (SSA), the official trade organization of the U.S. and international self-storage industry representing the industry's 46,500 facilities, including a majority of the storage facilities in the islands. SSA advocates before the U.S. Congress, federal departments and agencies, and state and local legislatures and agencies.

The SSA strongly supports Senate Bill No. 2682 (SB2682).

This Bill will allow the Hawaii Insurance Commissioner to issue a limited lines license, which would allow the self-storage licensee to sell insurance that covers tenant-renters for loss of or damage to their property stored in the tenant-renter's space.

Generally more than half of self-storage tenants are in transition, and still more live in small rental dwellings. The self-storage industry is built on month-to-month leases with the average stay in a self-storage facility being between 6 and 9 months depending on the region. Currently tenant-renters who occupy a unit at a self-storage facility have limited options to insure their stored property against loss—either purchase a homeowner's or renter's insurance policy, or purchase tenant-renters insurance from a general insurance agent.

Not all tenant-renters of self-storage space, however, have homeowner's or renter's insurance, or have ready access to a general agent that sells insurance that covers property stored in a self-storage facility.

Further, the nature and relatively low cost of this type of insurance does not make it attractive for general insurance agents to pursue on a one-off basis. A typical 1-, 2- or 4-month, \$2,000 policy that costs around \$8 per month provides very limited commission revenue.

By allowing the Commissioner to issue limited lines licenses to self-storage operators, consumers will have access to tenant-renter property insurance that is better suited to match the month-to-month dynamics of the self-storage industry tenant-renter insurance market. Consumers will be able to purchase the optional insurance from licensees at the point of rental, which is much more convenient than searching for and purchasing from an off-site general insurance agent.

A typical tenant-renter insurance program covers \$2,000 or less, for a temporary period and offers automatic enrollment, meaning there is no underwriting, thus providing a measure of convenience to the consumer. Additionally, the insurance program is designed specifically for self-storage coverage and is unlike the insurance for warehousing, which involves a bailment relationship where the lessor would maintain the duties of care, custody, and control.

The Insurance Commissioner would still have authority to dictate the basic training required of licensees, and the discretion to approve the materials used in solicitation, which typically explain the nature and extent of the coverage.

As a final note, there are currently 20 states that have implemented similar legislation, with a little less than half of them having been established in the last two years. Although the self-storage industry is relatively still in its infancy, about 40 years old, the industry is booming. The primary revenue center of these businesses, 85 percent of which are small businesses, is and always will be the rental of property, not insurance. However, the SSA believes that there should be a convenient and effective means for the consumer to have access to insurance coverage for their stored goods, especially since a majority of them do not currently have such coverage.

Again, the Self Storage Association **strongly supports SB2682**. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully submitted:

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