



LATE

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair

Date: Feb 22, 2018

Time: 10:00 AM

Place: Conference Room 211

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO SB2286: Public
Auction of Ala Wai Permits**

Dear Senator Dela Cruz, Chair; Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair and Members of Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Melynda Dant, and I am an owner of a family owned ocean tourism business in Kona Hawaii established in 1971. We employ 50 people and serve over 65,000 guests each year. The importance of having a secure mooring for each of our vessels is critical for our survival. It is obvious that an auction every five years that would jeopardize our livelihood would not be a smart change for the state to support in our opinion.

We have winter storms, tsunamis and hurricanes challenging our survival each year. Now to hear that the state government suggests taking our moorings to auction in order to make the "most" money possible seems like killing the "golden goose" to me. The state enjoys hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes from our industry each and every year, besides the millions in annual fees charged for use of mostly sub-standard harbors.

Hawaii is rated highly in all of the world tourism destinations partially due to committed long-term business owners, not short-term business investors. We care about the environment and safety of our employees and guests on board our vessels proving this by our high repeat business ratios and good employer accolades.

There is a lot more to being a successful taxpaying business than just who can pay the highest price at an auction. Please look at this bill's consequences and hear our cries! Please DO NOT support this bill.

Sincerely,
Melynda Dant
Executive Vice President
Fair Wind Cruises

Kona Sunrise Charters