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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
and**

**Committee on Judiciary
Friday, February 21, 2020**

10:30 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 229

**On the following measure:
S.B. 2128, RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION**

Chair Baker, Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committees:

My name is Charlene Tamanaha, and I am the Licensing Administrator of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Professional and Vocational Licensing Division (PVL). The Department respectfully opposes this bill to the extent it requires the PVL to develop a standard form to be used to confirm a new dwelling buyer's receipt of information on the benefits and costs associated with installing and maintaining a residential fire sprinkler system.

As the division responsible for implementing the licensing regulations of 52 different professions and vocations, the PVL lacks the requisite expertise to develop the form(s) required by this bill to effectuate the proposed chapter.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

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February 18, 2020

The Honorable Rosalyn Baker, Chair
Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection,
and Health
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 230
Honolulu Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Baker

Subject: Senate Bill (SB) 2128 Relating to Fire Protection

I am Manuel P. Neves, Chair of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The SFC and the HFD support SB 2128, which requires contractors of new one- and two-family dwellings to provide buyers with information on the costs associated with the installation and maintenance of a residential fire sprinkler system.

Eight out of ten deaths occur in a residential home. Studies have shown that installed fire sprinklers reduce death by upwards of 90%, regardless if smoke detectors were installed. The SFC and HFD believes it is beneficial to the future homeowner to be provided this information during the planning and design phase in order to make an informed choice. The bill will also allow the SFC to provide the information on the benefits of the residential sprinkler system.

Public safety and property protection are priorities of the SFC and the HFD, and information of an automatic fire sprinkler in new one- and two-family homes fulfills this objective.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's support on the passage of SB 2128. Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Lloyd Rogers at 723-7176 or lrogers@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,

MANUEL P. NEVES
Chair

MPN/LR:gl



February 21, 2020

The Honorable Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Committee on Judiciary
The Senate
State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Baker and Chair Rhoads:

Subject: Senate Bill (SB) 2128 Relating to Fire Protection

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2128. My name is Shamim Rashid-Sumar, I am a professional fire protection engineer working for the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA) on behalf of the Build with Strength (BWS) coalition. BWS supports SB 2128, which requires builders of new one-and-two family dwellings to provide buyers with information on the benefits and costs associated with installing and maintaining a residential automatic fire sprinkler system.

While it is no secret to fire safety professionals that automatic fire sprinklers save lives and reduce property damage, there exists a lack of awareness of the real threat of fire to our residences. It has been noted that newer properties are especially vulnerable given reliance on combustible engineered lumber and well as the increase in plastic composition of modern furnishings. Informing buyers at the time of or prior to agreeing to final pricing for construction of a new dwelling is most appropriate to educate consumers on the fire sprinkler issue.

An argument which has been made against this bill is that adding additional requirements to the home sale process would raise the cost of housing. More focus has been provided to building “cheap” at the expense of building safer and more resilient homes. The minimal cost, if any, posed by home builders to provide automatic sprinkler information to individual home buyers pales in comparison to the cost to the homeowner to recover from damage or loss of their home due to fire and, of course, the cost of human life, which is not measurable. SB 2128 will better inform homebuyers about the options to protect their homes and their families from the threat of fire through installation of a proven fire life safety system – automatic sprinklers.

The Build with Strength coalition encourages these steps toward building responsibly and urges your support of SB 2128.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 917-484-1960 or ssumar@nrmca.org should you have any questions. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shamim Rashid-Sumar".

Shamim Rashid-Sumar
Vice President, Fire Codes and Standards

SB-2128

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 7:23:21 PM

Testimony for CPH on 2/21/2020 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments: