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January 30, 2020

The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Chair  
Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental,  
and Military Affairs  
The State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 214  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Nishihara

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.

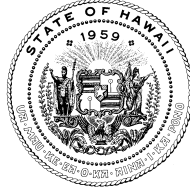
Public safety and property protection are priorities of the SFC and the HFD, and information of an automatic fire sprinkler in new one- and two-family homes fulfills this objective.

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](mailto:lrogers@honolulu.gov).

Sincerely,

MANUEL P. NEVES  
Chair

MPN/LR:gl



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**Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the  
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs  
Friday, January 31, 2020  
1:45 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 414**

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

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

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.



**SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 414**  
**415 South Beretania Street**  
**1:45 PM**

January 31, 2020

.RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2128, RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION

My name is Dwight Mitsunaga, 2020 President of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii is opposed to SB 2128, which proposes to require builders of new dwellings to provide buyers with information on the benefits and costs associated with installing and maintaining a residential fire sprinkler system.

It seems the proposed bill would shift the responsibility to educate future home buyers of the costs and benefits of installing a new automatic fire sprinkler system in their new home from the State Fire Council to the individual builder. The responsibility for educating people on the benefits of an automatic fire sprinkler system should rest with the State Fire Council.

The bill does not identify which agency would provide oversight for the enforcement of this new requirement, and the standard to determine a "wilful violation" is merely that the person who is found in violation of this section knew or should have known about this requirement. The standard seems a bit arbitrary and unenforceable.

In the past, BIA-Hawaii has provided, at no cost to the Honolulu Fire Department, booth space at our two home shows annually to educate consumers on the fire sprinkler issue. Shifting this responsibility to the new home buyer with additional bureaucratic acknowledgement procedures will add to the cost of a new home. All builders will attempt to satisfy the desires of a new home buyer in providing additional amenities or options in the purchase of a new home, as long as the buyer is aware of the additional cost.

In the 2020 Legislative Session, both Chambers of the Hawaii State Legislature, and Governor Ige's Administration put forward a comprehensive package of bills to improve the quality of life for Hawaii's middle class families. A large part of the package attempted to address housing affordability. Adding more requirements to the home sale process will raise the cost of housing

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter.

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**SB-2128**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 12:59:12 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/31/2020 1:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The state needs to get its nose out of private personal property be for it gets cut off.

I really do not see the need to keep adding new requirements to Building a house just because you say so. The added cost is a burden on the People. The people are very tired of getting ripped off by the State or the County. The system you are taking about is more for Office buildings, Hotels Ect.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and  
Military Affairs**

**Friday, January 31, 2020 at 1:45 P.M.  
Conference Room 414, State Capitol**

**LATE**

**RE: SB 2128 RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION**

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai and Members of the Committees:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **opposes** SB 2128, which would require builders of new dwellings to provide buyers with information on the benefits and costs associated with installing and maintaining a residential fire sprinkler system. This bill also requires the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs Professional and Vocational Licensing Division to develop a standard form for this purpose.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

This bill would add additional requirements to the home sale process, which would raise the cost of housing. The bill would shift the responsibility to educate future home buyers of the costs and benefits of installing a new automatic fire sprinkler system in their new home from the State Fire Council to the individual builder.

In addition, this bill does not identify which agency would provide oversight for the enforcement of this new requirement, and the standard to determine a "willful violation" is merely that the person who is found in violation of this section knew or should have known about this requirement.

In the past we understand that BIA-Hawaii has provided, at no cost to the Honolulu Fire Department, booth space at their two home shows annually to educate consumers on the fire sprinkler issue. Shifting this responsibility to the new home buyer with additional bureaucratic procedures will add to the cost of a new home.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our opposition to SB 2128.