

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



SCOTT T. MURAKAMI
DIRECTOR

ANNE EUSTAQUIO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
www.labor.hawaii.gov
Phone: (808) 586-8844 / Fax: (808) 586-9099
Email: dliir.director@hawaii.gov

February 18, 2020

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Committee on Judiciary
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 204
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Rhoads:

Subject: Senate Bill (SB) 2130 Relating to the State Fire Code

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 2130, which proposes to amend the adoption process of the state fire code to conform to other state building codes.

One of the SFC's responsibilities is to adopt the state fire code, which is required to comply with the requirements of Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), Chapters 91 and 92. Chapter 91 requires that public notices, which cost approximately \$2,000, be posted in the five different Hawaii news publications for public hearings. The administrative rules process is cumbersome and time-consuming in addition to the time and effort it takes to review and amend the national fire code. Chapter 92 requires that meetings and discussions on the state fire code comply with Sunshine Law requirements in an open public forum. Since the state fire code is one of the Hawaii State building codes, it must also be approved by the State Building Code Council (SBCC) after being approved by the SFC. Other Hawaii State building codes, which include residential, plumbing, energy, and electrical codes, are adopted by the SBCC under Chapter 92 without public hearings or the administrative rules process.

The SFC believes adequate comment opportunities can be provided without public hearings through the following methods:

1. Conduct public meetings in an open forum under HRS Chapter 92
2. Publicly post the state fire code Investigative Committee meetings that initially review and amend the national fire code

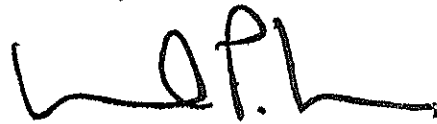
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3. Notify state fire code stakeholders during the review and adoption process

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's support on the passage of SB 2130.

Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Lloyd Rogers at 723-7176 or lrogers@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M.P.N.', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

MANUEL P. NEVES
Chair

MPN/LR:cn