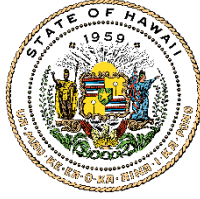


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Thursday, February 8, 2024
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1886
RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION

House Bill 1886 proposes authorizing the use of the Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarette Program Special Fund to support the State Fire Council (Council) and its programs and activities, including hiring administrative personnel. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this measure.**

The Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) is the primary responder for wildland fires across 1,368,002 acres of the State of Hawai'i's forested watersheds (or 26% of the land area in Hawaii) and supports federal and county responders on remaining areas in the state. DOFAW is a member of the Council and supports increased funding to the Council through the Fund for the Council staff to meet the increased demands upon the Council and to make up for the operational shortfall of the Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarette Program. The funds would provide for statewide educational efforts to protect life, property, and the environment, such as the statewide firefighter safety guide program for Hawai'i's youth and the residential smoke alarm installation program for Hawai'i's at-risk senior population.

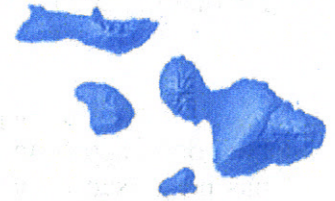
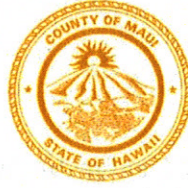
Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director

BRADFORD K. VENTURA
Fire Chief

GAVIN L.M. FUJIOKA
Deputy Fire Chief



DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & PUBLIC SAFETY
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 DAIRY ROAD
KAHULUI, MAUI, HAWAII 96732
www.mauicounty.gov

February 7, 2024

The Honorable David Tarnas, Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 442
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Tarnas,

SUBJECT: HOUSE BILL (HB) 1886 RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION

I am Bradford K. Ventura, member of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Maui Fire Department. The SFC supports HB 1886, which authorizes the use of the reduced ignition propensity cigarette program special fund to support the State Fire Council and its program and activities, including the hiring of administrative personnel.

The SFC was established by the Hawaii State (State) Legislature in 1979 to replace the State Fire Marshal's office. It is currently comprised of the four county Fire Chief, State of Hawaii, a representative from the Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DOFAW), and is administratively attached to the State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR).

In accordance with Hawaii Revised Statutes §132, the SFC's primary mission is to develop and support a comprehensive fire service emergency management network for the protection of life, property, and the environment for the State. The SFC promotes the standardization of fire service reporting, training, sharing of technology, resources, and best management practices. The SFC may advise and assist the county fire departments where appropriate; prescribe standard procedures and forms related to inspections, investigations, and reporting of fires; and advise the Governor and State Legislature on issues relating to fire prevention and protection and life safety.

On July 6, 2008, during the 24th Hawaii State Legislature Regular Session, Act 218 was passed, and Hawaii became the 36th state requiring only RIPC be sold in Hawaii. This law took effect on September 30, 2009. More than 700 brand/style cigarettes were certified by the SFC as being RIPC-compliant. A \$375 fee was also attached for each brand/style cigarettes that was certified for sale in our state. Almost \$660,000 in RIPC certification fees were collected before an RIPC Program Specialist was hired on January 16, 2014.

The Honorable David Tarnas, Chair

Page 2

February 7, 2024

Since then, a plan has been formulated and instituted to properly administer Hawaii's RIPC law. Besides paying for the RIPC Program Specialist's salary, funds from the RIPC Special Fund has been used to defray office expenses, field inspections, and random independent testing by certified laboratories.

At the end of fiscal year 2023, there was approximately \$500,000 in the RIPC special fund. The SFC envisions excess RIPC funds could be used to help assess Hawaii's urban, suburban, rural, and wildland fire risk and develop mitigation strategies.

The bill will allow the SFC to fulfill its mission with existing revenue to properly support the educational programs and training for a comprehensive fire service emergency management network for the protection of life, property, and the environment for the State. The SFC urges the committee's approval of HB 1886.

If you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Gary Lum at (808) 723- 7169 or glum@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,



BRADFORD K. VENTURA
Fire Chief

**HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT
KA 'OIHANA KINAI AHI O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

636 SOUTH STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 723-7139 • FAX: (808) 723-7111 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



SHELDON K. HAO
FIRE CHIEF
LUNA NUI KINAI AHI

JASON SAMALA
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF
HOPE LUNA NUI KINAI AHI

February 7, 2024

The Honorable David Tarnas, Chair
Committee on Judiciary and
Hawaiian Affairs
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 442
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Tarnas:

Subject: House Bill (HB) 1886 Relating to Fire Protection

I am Sheldon K. Hao, Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The HFD supports HB 1886, which authorizes the use of the reduced ignition propensity cigarette (RIPC) program Special Fund to support the State Fire Council (SFC) and its programs and activities, including the hiring of administrative personnel.

The SFC was established by the Hawaii State (State) legislature in 1979 to replace the State Fire Marshal's office. It is currently comprised of the four county Fire Chiefs and representatives from the State Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting Unit and the Department of Land and Natural Resources' Division of Forestry and Wildlife and administratively attached to the State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

In accordance with Hawaii Revised Statutes §132, the SFC's primary mission is to develop and support a comprehensive fire service emergency management network for the protection of life, property, and the environment for the State. The SFC promotes the standardization of fire service reporting, training, technology sharing, resources, and best management practices. The SFC may advise and assist the county fire departments where appropriate; prescribe standard procedures and forms related to inspections, investigations, and reporting of fires; and advise the Governor and State legislature on issues relating to fire prevention and protection and life safety.

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The Honorable David Tarnas, Chair
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February 7, 2024

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Since then, a plan has been formulated and instituted to properly administer Hawaii's RIPC law. Besides paying for the RIPC Program Specialist's salary, funds from the RIPC Special Fund has been used to defray office expenses, field inspections, and random independent testing by certified laboratories.

At the end of fiscal year 2023, there was approximately \$500,000 in the RIPC Special Fund. The SFC envisions excess RIPC funds could be used to help assess Hawaii's urban, suburban, rural, and wildland fire risk and develop mitigation strategies.

This bill will allow the SFC to fulfill its mission with existing revenue to properly support the educational programs and training for a comprehensive fire service emergency management network for the protection of life, property, and the environment for the State.

The HFD urges your committee's approval of HB 1886.

Should you have questions, please contact Administrative Specialist Gary Lum at 723-7169 or glum@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,

SHELDON K. HAO
Fire Chief

SKH/GL:cn

The Honorable David Tarnas, Chair
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