

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

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

**House Committees on Finance**

Thursday, March 28, 2024

3:30 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

**In Support of**

**Senate Bill No. 2085, SD2, HD1, Relating to the State Fire Marshal**

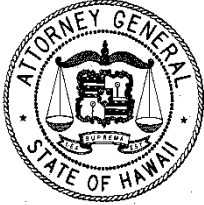
Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Office of the Governor supports S.B. No. 2085, SD2, HD1, Relating to the State Fire Marshal, which re-establishes the Division of the State Fire Marshal within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

The Maui wildfire resulted in unbearable loss of lives, homes, infrastructure, and businesses. This tragic event is a wake-up call that due to climate changes, the risk of catastrophic wildfires, along with other natural disasters in Hawaii has increased.

The Office of the Governor appreciates the Legislature's efforts to continue to address fire prevention in our state. As the only state without a state fire marshal, re-establishing this position would help to support the efforts of the state fire council with a full-time state fire marshal office.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 2085, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**DATE:** Thursday, March 28, 2024                      **TIME:** 3:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 308 and Videoconference

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Jack W. Relf, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments on this bill.

This bill establishes the Office of the State Fire Marshal and provides the mechanism for appointment of the State Fire Marshal for a period of ten years.

The proposed new section 132- (a) in section 2 of the bill provides that the State Fire Marshal shall be appointed by the Governor "without regard to chapters 76 and 89 and shall not be subject to the advice and consent of the senate, to serve for a period of ten years." (Page 2, lines 19-21). If the intent is to exempt the position of the State Fire Marshal from chapter 76 for longer than three years, we recommend amending section 76-16(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to add the position of the State Fire Marshal as a position exempt from chapter 76. (See section 76-16(b)(17)(A), HRS).

Additionally, on page 4, line 13, we recommend adding an "s" to "committee" because the State Fire Council may have more than one state fire council advisory committee. (See section 132-16(c)(1), HRS).

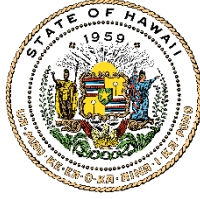
Finally, the bill appropriates funds for the establishment and operation of the Office of the State Fire Marshal, including the establishment of an unspecified number of full-time equivalent administrative staff positions, but does not expressly appropriate funds for the salary of the State Fire Marshal. (See page 5, lines 8-13). If it is the

Legislature's intent to fund this position, to avoid confusion, we recommend amending the bill to expressly allocate funds for the State Fire Marshal's salary.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAI'I | 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  
FINANCE**

**Thursday, March 28, 2024  
3:30 PM**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Via Videoconference**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 2085 SENATE DRAFT 2 HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

Senate Bill 2085 Senate Draft 2 House Draft 1 proposes to re-establish the position of the State Fire Marshal. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive FY2025 Supplemental Budget Request.**

Hawai'i is the only State that lacks a Fire Marshal office. The State Fire Marshal position was disbanded in 1979 and the State Fire Council was established in its place. While the State Fire Council acts as the de facto State Fire Marshal's office, the Office of the Fire Marshal should be reestablished to increase the oversight and coordination of the State and county fire services. Currently, the State Fire Council members can only meet on a quarterly basis due to the high demand of their leadership positions within their fire respective services. The bulk of the work at the State Fire Council is to establish the State's fire code. A full-time State Fire Marshal's office will be able to provide critical input and oversight to the State's fire code, standardize training requirements for county fire departments, provide fire investigations to determine fire origin and cause, as well as provide and coordinate public education and awareness on fire safety. The State Fire Marshal's office could also potentially house a statewide fire aviation division that could provide aerial fire suppression resources and medical transport across the state.

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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

March 27, 2024

To: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair,  
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Date: Thursday, March 28, 2024  
Time: 3:30 p.m.  
Place: Conference Room 308, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: S.B. 2085, S.D. 2, H.D. 2, RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

The DLIR **supports** this measure to re-establish the Office of the State Fire Marshal within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Currently, the State Fire Council is administratively attached to the department through a Memorandum of Agreement between the DLIR and the City and County of Honolulu. The DLIR is unaware as to why the State Fire Council is administratively attached to the department. The DLIR supports the appointment of the State Fire Marshall by the Governor and attaching the Office of the State Fire Marshal to the DLIR at this time, but suggests further research and recommendations be derived for the appropriate, permanent placement of this office and this function within the Executive Branch.

The DLIR defers to other agencies with subject matter expertise on the duties, responsibilities, and resources necessary to carryout the mission of the proposed Office of the State Fire Marshal.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA  
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
[www.labor.hawaii.gov](http://www.labor.hawaii.gov)

March 26, 2024

The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 306  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Yamashita:

Subject: Senate Bill (SB) 2085, Senate Draft (SD) 2, House Draft (HD) 1, Relating to the State Fire Marshal

I am Kazuo Todd, Chair of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC). The SFC supports SB 2085, SD2, HD1, which re-establishes the position of the State Fire Marshal.

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, State of Hawaii, a representative from the Hawaii State Aircraft Fire Fighting Unit (ARFF); and 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 functions are to adopt a state fire code, administer the requirements for reduced ignition propensity cigarettes, and serve as a focal point for federal grants. 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. The SFC promotes the standardization of fire service reporting, training, sharing of technology, resources, and best management practices.

The SFC is limited in the actions it can take because it has a relatively small budget and is staffed with only a few part-time employees. The re-establishment of the State Fire Marshal will create a permanent, full-time position to address fire service issues that occur statewide. This can include statewide enforcement of the fire code, for both state buildings and wildland fire areas, in light of the August 2023 Lahaina fires.

The SFC recommends that the State Fire Marshal be established under the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and that language regarding the duties of the State Fire Marshal should be as follows:

**"§132- State fire marshal; establishment; appointment; powers; duties; responsibilities.** (a) There is established within the department of labor and industrial relations a state fire marshal who shall be appointed by the state fire council, without regard to chapter 76. The appointment shall not be subject to the advice and consent of the senate. In the event of a vacancy, the state fire council shall meet expeditiously to select and appoint a new state fire marshal to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

(b) The state fire marshal shall have the same powers and authority as county fire chiefs under sections 132D-4, 132D-16.6, and 132D-16.7, and this chapter.

(c) The duties of the state fire marshal shall include but not be limited to:

(1) Annually review and assess fire risks statewide, consider the emergency resources available for fire response, and work to address gaps in coverage. This involves coordinating fire protection efforts, facilitating interagency MOU/MOAs, and potentially assisting in grants or other funding means to help local agencies enhance the overall fire safety and response capabilities within the state.

(2) Assist and/or lead in the investigation of fires upon request from county agencies to determine cause and origin, and maintain a comprehensive record of all fires within the State, including causes and circumstances.

(3) Assist in the training and certification of fire investigators and inspectors, ensuring they possess the requisite skills and knowledge. Support local agencies with training programs and resources necessary for conducting detailed investigations, enforcing fire codes, and promoting fire safety within their jurisdictions.

(4) Coordinate with local agencies to enhance public education and awareness programs on fire safety, assessing the need for and potentially developing a comprehensive statewide public fire safety messaging program.

(5) Collaborate with the State Fire Council on fire service matters within the State.

(6) Propose amendments to the State Fire Code for consideration and adoption by the State Fire Council.

(7) Conduct or arrange for inspections of state buildings and facilities for fire safety compliance.

The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair

Page 3

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(8) Coordinate state-level fire protection training and support the establishment of training facilities and programs, including statewide standardization of certification and training levels for firefighters.

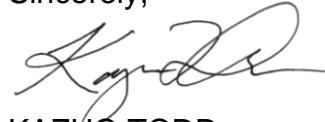
(9) Perform additional duties as assigned or delegated by the State Fire Council.

(10) Prepare an annual report summarizing assessments and reviews conducted under subsection (c)(1) through (9). This report shall be submitted to the Governor and the State Fire Council no later than November 30 of each calendar year.

This bill will allow the SFC and State Fire Marshal to more properly serve as 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 SB 2085, SD2, HD1, with proposed deletions and amendments.

Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Gary Lum at 723-7169 or [glum@honolulu.gov](mailto:glum@honolulu.gov).

Sincerely,



KAZUO TODD  
Chair

KT/GL



Council Chair  
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair  
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore  
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers  
Tom Cook  
Gabe Johnson  
Tamara Paltin  
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez  
Shane M. Sinenci  
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



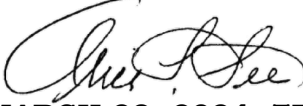
Director of Council Services  
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services  
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

March 27, 2024

TO: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
and Members of the House Committee on Finance

FROM: Alice L. Lee  
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 28, 2024; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2085,  
SD2, HD1, RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

I **support** this measure to reestablish the State Fire Marshal position.

I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. This common-sense proposal will provide dedicated support for wildfire prevention and allow Hawai'i the same protections that already exist in every other state in the nation.
2. A State Fire Marshal would coordinate statewide fire-protection efforts, work with State and county officials to enforce the State Fire Code, and mitigate wildfire risks.
3. The August 2023 wildfires resulted in devastating impacts to the lives, property, safety, and security of the people of Maui and reestablishing this position would be a reasonable and cost-effective step toward protecting Hawai'i's residents and visitors from fire loss.

Thank you for your consideration.

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**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

March 27, 2024

The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 306  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Yamashita:

Subject: Senate Bill (SB) 2085, Senate Draft (SD) 2, House Draft (HD) 1 Relating to the State Fire Marshal

I am Sheldon K. Hao, Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The HFD supports SB 2085, SD 2, HD 1, which reestablishes the position of the State Fire Marshal.

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, a representative each from the State Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting Unit and Department of Land and Natural Resources' Division of Forestry and Wildlife, 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 functions are to adopt a state fire code, administer the requirements for reduced ignition propensity cigarettes, and serve as a focal point for federal grants. 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. The SFC promotes the standardization of fire service reporting, training, sharing of technology, resources, and best management practices.

The SFC is limited in the actions it can take, as it has a relatively small budget and is staffed with only a few part-time employees. The reestablishment of the State Fire Marshal will create a permanent, full-time position to address fire service issues that occur statewide. This can include statewide enforcement of the fire code for state buildings and wildland fire areas in light of the August 2023 Lahaina fires.

The HFD recommends that the State Fire Marshal be established under the DLIR and language regarding its duties should be as follows:

**"§132- State fire marshal; establishment; appointment; powers; duties; responsibilities.**

(a) There is established within the department of labor and industrial relations a state fire marshal who shall be appointed by the state fire council, without regard to chapter 76. The appointment shall not be subject to the advice and consent of the senate. In the event of a vacancy, the state fire council shall meet expeditiously to select and appoint a new state fire marshal to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

(b) The state fire marshal shall have the same powers and authority as county fire chiefs under sections 132D-4, 132D-16.6, and 132D-16.7, and this chapter.

(c) The duties of the state fire marshal shall include but not be limited to:

(1) Annually review and assess fire risks statewide, consider the emergency resources available for fire response, and work to address gaps in coverage. This involves coordinating fire protection efforts, facilitating interagency MOU/MOAs, and potentially assisting in grants or other funding means to help local agencies enhance the overall fire safety and response capabilities within the state.

(2) Assist and/or lead in the investigation of fires upon request from county agencies to determine cause and origin, and maintain a comprehensive record of all fires within the State, including causes and circumstances.

(3) Assist in the training and certification of fire investigators and inspectors, ensuring they possess the requisite skills and knowledge. Support local agencies with training programs and resources necessary for conducting detailed investigations, enforcing fire codes, and promoting fire safety within their jurisdictions.

(4) Coordinate with local agencies to enhance public education and awareness programs on fire safety, assessing the need for and potentially developing a comprehensive statewide public fire safety messaging program.

(5) Collaborate with the State Fire Council on fire service matters within the State.

The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair

Page 3

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(6) Propose amendments to the State Fire Code for consideration and adoption by the State Fire Council.

(7) Conduct or arrange for inspections of state buildings and facilities for fire safety compliance.

(8) Coordinate state-level fire protection training and support the establishment of training facilities and programs, including statewide standardization of certification and training levels for firefighters.

(9) Perform additional duties as assigned or delegated by the State Fire Council.

(10) Prepare an annual report summarizing assessments and reviews conducted under subsection (c) (1) through (9). This report shall be submitted to the Governor and the State Fire Council no later than November 30 of each calendar year.

This bill will allow the SFC and State Fire Marshal to more properly serve as 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 SB 2085, SD 2, HD 1 with proposed deletions and amendments.

Should you have questions, please contact Administrative Specialist Gary Lum at 723-7169 or [glum@honolulu.gov](mailto:glum@honolulu.gov).

Sincerely,

SHELDON K. HAO  
Fire Chief

SKH/GL:cn



## TESTIMONY FROM THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAI'I

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: FIN

MARCH 28, 2024

SB 2085, SD2, HD1, RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i **supports** SB 2085, SD2, HD1, relating to the state fire marshal. Pursuant to the “Public Safety and Disaster and Emergency Preparedness” section of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i platform, the party supports “policy that protects the people of Hawai'i and their property against natural and man-made disasters,” and “believes that climate change is real, affirms human activity as its primary cause and main driver, and supports emergency preparedness and planning efforts to mitigate its impacts.”

Last year, we witnessed the impact of the climate emergency on our shores. On August 8, 2023, wildfires swept across Maui and killed at least 100 people, making it one of the nation's deadliest natural disasters. The spread of the fires has been attributed to climate change conditions, such as unusually dry landscapes and the confluence of a strong high-pressure system to the north and Hurricane Dora to the south.

The wildfires destroyed over 2,200 structures, including numerous residential buildings, historic landmarks, and school facilities. In September 2023, a report from the United States Department of Commerce estimated

the total economic damage of the wildfires to be roughly \$5.5 billion. According to a report issued by the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization on September 22, 2023, the unemployment rate on Maui was expected to soar above 11 percent by the end of 2023 and remain above 4 percent through 2026. A total of 10,448 new claims for unemployment in Maui County were filed in the four weeks following the wildfires, about 9,900 more than the preceding four weeks. Displaced families and workers who lost their jobs are still attempting to recover from the disaster, with a full recovery expected to take many years to achieve.

**Accordingly, we must do all we can to prevent tragedies like this from recurring on our shores, including by re-establishing the position of the state fire marshal to help mitigate future emergencies.** The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency released an updated State Hazard Mitigation Plan last November, in which the state's wildfire risk level soared 74 percent to 6.6 from its prior level of 3.8 in the 2018 draft of the report.

The updated hazard mitigation plan contains statistics on how many people by county are at risk from wildfire hazards. For Honolulu, 427,293 people could potentially be affected by wildfires, which was listed as the highest risk with a risk factor of 5.7. Maui County also has wildfires as its highest emergency risk with a score of 5.8 and 81,424 people at risk. On Kaua'i, wildfires carry a 5.6 risk level and threaten 27,604 people. Hawai'i Island has a wildfire risk score of 4.6 and 32,080 people at risk.

Wildfires are now designated as the top hazard in the state according to the updated HIEMA report. It is incumbent upon policymakers to respond with urgency to keep our communities safe.

Mahalo nui loa,

**Kris Coffield**  
*Co-Chair, Legislative Committee*  
(808) 679-7454  
kriscoffield@gmail.com

**Abby Simmons**  
*Co-Chair, Legislative Committee*  
(808) 352-6818  
abbyalana808@gmail.com



**Hawaiian  
Electric**

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**SB 2085 SD2, HD1  
Relating to the State Fire Marshal**

Thursday, March 28, 2024  
3:30 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Jimmy D. Alberts  
Senior Vice President & Chief Operations Officer  
Hawaiian Electric

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jimmy D. Alberts and I am testifying on behalf of Hawaiian Electric in **support** of SB 2085 SD2, HD1, Relating to the State Fire Marshal.

Hawaiian Electric supports the re-establishment of a State Fire Marshal in Hawai'i. With climate change increasing the likelihood and impact of wildfires within the State, State and county agencies must work hand-in-hand to mitigate wildfire risk. Among other duties, the State Fire Marshal would help coordinate with county fire departments and other agencies in promoting fire safety and the efficient deployment of fire operations in the State, assist in the investigation of fires when requested by a county, conduct trainings and certifications, maintain records of fires in the State, and provide and coordinate public education and awareness of fire safety. A position overseeing coordination and collaboration of the individual county fire departments will aid in both prevention of and response to wildfires, as the community continues to work together toward a safer and more resilient Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 2085 SD2, HD1.



# MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 308  
Thursday, March 28, 2024 AT 3:30 P.M.

To The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Finance

## COMMENTS ON SB2085 SD2 RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **COMMENTS ON SB2085 SD2.**

The Chamber notes that during the wildfires of August 8, 2023, the resources of the Maui Fire Department (MFD) and the companies that assist the MFD were severely taxed. On the morning of August 9, we reached out to Lieutenant Governor Luke to ask that additional firefighters be brought in and for military assistance as it was too windy for the helicopters to fly and we needed additional manpower to help put out the multiple wildfires and prevent them from spreading. The County of Maui relies on companies outside of the county government to assist in wildfires. These companies have the appropriate equipment and personnel to operate them, that the MFD lacks. This equipment includes helicopters used to drop water/retardant on the fires. We also note that fighting wildfires in mountainous or inaccessible terrain is beyond the normal capabilities of county fire departments.

We note that a State Fire Marshal position is already included in SB2356, along with a corps of elite firefighters. Given that there are many bills looking to add new positions within the state, we feel it is important to see how these compare in an overall comprehensive wildfire preparedness plan and combine them, where possible.

The Chamber looks forward to continued discussions on this and other related bills to find the best possible solutions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer **COMMENTS ON SB2085 SD2.**

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.