

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protections
Tuesday, January 31, 2023
9:05 a.m.
Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

On the following measure:
S.B. 157, RELATING TO CEMETERIES

Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

My name is Chelsea Fukunaga, and I am the Executive Officer of the Cemetery and Pre-Need Funeral Authority Program. The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) repeal the exemption granted to churches by Act 22, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020, relating to bonding requirements and fee requirements for licenses, renewals, and reinstatements of licenses applicable to cemeteries and funeral trusts; (2) clarify that the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs shall exempt any cemetery authority from the bonding requirement and the fee requirements for licenses, renewal, and reinstatement upon proof satisfactory to the Director that the cemetery authority does not sell for financial profit; and (3) have the effective date of this measure retroactive to September 15, 2020.

Recognizing the desire for churches to provide continuum of spiritual care into the afterlife for their parishioners at their place of worship, Governor Ige signed House Bill No. 2202, H.D. 1, S.D.1 into law on September 15, 2020 (Act 22). Act 22, Session

Laws of Hawaii 2020 (Act 22) codified the Department's practice of exempting any cemetery authority from HRS chapter 441 requirements, provided that the entity does not sell for financial profit. Act 22 allows exempt cemetery authorities to continue to provide burials to their community based upon goodwill, rather than operate the cemetery as a business. Cemeteries that are currently exempt from the licensing laws would have difficulty complying with the licensing requirements of HRS chapter 441. In addition, the lines struck through on page 3, lines 6 to 8, gives the Director the authority to impose requirements of HRS chapter 441 upon exempt cemetery authorities, including churches. This authority must be retained as it is essential to protect consumers. We request the following to clarify the Director's authority on page 3, lines 1 to 8:

§441-22.1 Exemption. (a) The director shall exempt any cemetery authority or church from the provisions of this chapter upon proof satisfactory to the director that the cemetery authority does not sell for financial profit; provided that a cemetery authority exempted under this section shall be required to comply with any provision of this chapter upon order by the director.

As a compromise to repealing Act 22, we request that HRS section 441-21.1(b) be retained in its entirety and to clarify that the exemption is limited to members of the church, which would be consistent with the intent of Act 22 to preserve the continuum of spiritual care for church members into the afterlife.

Lastly, the Department has concerns with the retroactive effective date on page 4, lines 15 and 16 because contracts entered into after September 15, 2020, may be subject to challenge. Thus, we request that the retroactive effective date be stricken.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



January 30, 2023

To: The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole
Chair, The Hawai'i State Senate Committee on Commerce & Consumer
Protection

&

The Honorable Members of the Hawai'i State Senate Committee on
Commerce & Consumer & Protection

From: Kekoa McClellan on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church, Hawai'i.

Opposition to SB157, Relating to Cemeteries

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Honorable members of the Hawai'i State Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection. Please accept this testimony in **opposition to SB157**, which would harm nonprofit religious organizations throughout our State.

Our opposition for SB157 is based on a desire and commitment to care for the afterlife needs of our faith serving communities and their families, at an affordable cost. In 2020, a common sense exemption was provided for nonprofit religious organizations in our State that removed the administrative and economic burdens relating to Cemetery Authorities.

This exemption addressed our community's desire and commitment to care for the afterlife needs of deceased members and their members' families by amending the law regarding Cemetery and Funeral Trusts to allow religious institutions to feasibly construct and properly manage a columbarium within their property or place of worship, by providing niches to its members for an affordable fee. At the time Hawai'i was one of the only states that did not exempt religious institutions from charging a fee to help manage the costs of having a columbarium on their property. The primary goals of this exemption were to make it more affordable for local families and their respective religious institutions to provide a continuum of spiritual care for their loved ones and parishioners, allowing multi-generational families to be buried together and cared for in their chosen place of worship, while helping to prevent local families from incurring financial and emotional hardship when they are faced with limited, high cost options in burying and carrying for their loved ones in their afterlife.

On behalf of the Roman Catholic Church in Hawai'i, which currently serves 230,000 Catholics in Hawai'i, or close to 16 percent of our State's total population, we ask for your support in preserving this exemption for nonprofit religious organizations and **we urge your opposition to SB157, which would remove this exemption.**

Since this exemption went into effect, the Bishop's office has had early successes in establishing a parish based columbarium program - notably with the blessing of the first set of niches at St. Ann's in Kaneohe, where we have already laid to rest members of the St. Ann's community. Several other parish based programs are in varying stages, and the Bishop's office continues to work with our parishioners to put together programs that fit the needs and budget of catholic communities across the State.

This important exemption extends beyond our Catholic communities. Faith-based organizations such as Hawai'i's Buddhist communities who currently have temple-based columbaria offered to those who pay a monthly membership fee, the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai'i whose St. Peter's Parish in Honolulu maintains a beautiful columbarium program for their members, and any nonprofit religious organization seeking to provide this ministry to their members will be harmed by the passage of SB157.

Mahalo for your time and consideration of this testimony in opposition to SB157. I will be available for your committee's questions on this measure.

Me ka ha'aha'a,



Kekoa McClellan
Principal
The McClellan Group, LLC
Kekoa.McClellan@gmail.com
1.808.393.7937





**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:
S.B. NO. 157, RELATING TO CEMETERIES.

BEFORE THE:
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

DATE: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 **TIME:** 9:05 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 229

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General or
Bryan C. Yee or James C. Paige, Deputy Attorneys General

Chair Keohokalole and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

The bill repeals Act 22, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020 (Act 22), which amended section 441-22.1, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), by, among other things, exempting churches from laws governing cemetery and funeral trusts. The bill is retroactive to September 15, 2020, the effective date of Act 22.

The Department recommends that the bill be amended to replace its retroactive effective date of September 15, 2020, with an effective date that is upon approval or some other appropriate future date.

The bill's retroactive effective date could potentially give rise to litigation brought by entities that relied upon Act 22 while Act 22 was in effect. See, e.g., Allen v. City and County of Honolulu, 58 Haw. 432, 571 P.2d 328 (1977). Although the Department is not opining that any theoretical lawsuit would have merit, the risk of litigation arising from an entity's reliance upon Act 22's exemption would be eliminated by deleting the retroactive effective date of the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII
DIOCESE OF HONOLULU
WITNESS TO JESUS

Testimony on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii
Most Reverend Larry Silva, Bishop of the Diocese of Honolulu
Prepared for the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
in Opposition of SB157
Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 9:05am in Room 229

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Honorable Members,

Peace be with you!

Thank you for your time. I ask that you please not pass SB 157. Repealing the Cemetery Authority exemption for non-profit religious organizations in Hawaii would have a significant detrimental impact to those we serve. The passage of SB157 would repeal Act 022 (20) and churches throughout the state would no longer be allowed to continue this work of mercy without great administrative and costly burdens to our churches.

On Sept. 15, 2020, Gov. David Ige signed into law Act 022 (20), which allows religious institutions in Hawaii to build and maintain on their property columbaria, structures such as a wall, room or building for the keeping of cremated remains. Act 022 (20) has allowed our faith communities throughout the State of Hawaii to provide end-of-life needs for local families. The hundreds of local churches throughout the State have been given the opportunity to utilize this exemption to provide a continuum of care for their members and the families of deceased loved ones and to do so in their places of worship for grieving families. Our churches were given this opportunity to return to the work of mercy of burying the dead and we are very grateful to all of you.

Further, Act 022 (20) has had no financial impact on the State's budget. It has created jobs for churches engaged in this activity. It has allowed the churches to provide for the needs of our deceased loved ones, which became a heightened concern during the pandemic and it was supported by this very Legislature in 2020.

One of the most important functions of non-profit religious organizations is to provide spiritual care for our members, not only in this life, but in the life to come. We appreciate your support to oppose SB157 so that we may continue to provide this service to our deceased members and their families.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Larry Silva

Most Reverend Larry Silva
Bishop of Honolulu

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 7:34:32 AM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Secor	Testifying for Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii

Very Reverend Msgr. Gary Secor, Vicar General of the Diocese of Honolulu

Prepared for the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection in Opposition of SB157

Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 9:05am in Room 229

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Honorable Members,

As the Vicar General of the Diocese of Honolulu, I am opposed to SB 157. As Moderator of the Curia, I am responsible for the day-to-day operations of our Diocese. I am a graduate of Maryknoll High School and have been a priest in Hawaii for over 40 years serving in various parishes throughout the State of Hawaii, most recently as the pastor of the Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Downtown, Honolulu. SB 157 if passed would stop the church from being able to continue to provide for our faithful a proper resting place in their place of worship at our 65 parishes throughout Hawaii, especially on the neighbor islands.

On Sept. 15, 2020, Gov. David Ige signed into law Act 022 (20), which allows religious institutions in Hawaii to build and maintain on their property columbaria, structures such as a wall, room or building for the keeping of cremated remains. Catholic churches have been honoring the dead for centuries with parish cemeteries. Act 022 (20) has allowed the church an opportunity to return to the work of mercy of burying the dead and to do it the right way. Not too many people know that the common practice of scattering ashes is against church law. The columbaria serve the very important need of offering perpetual care.

Act 022 (20) has allowed the Catholic Church to build its first columbaria at St. Ann Parish in Kaneohe and completed in October, 2022. St. Ann's columbarium has 60 niches on the outside left wall of the church and hopes to build more as the need arises. Each niche has a 12-inch square granite slab covering it. The interior space, a cube with 11 7/8-inch dimensions, lined in stainless steel, can hold, at most, two moderately-sized urns. Placement in the parish

columbarium is reserved for the members of the parish and their families. Parishioners of this parish have overwhelmingly supported the construction of the columbaria at the church allowing families with strong-multigenerational connections to the parish to continuing those ties after death, of “having a forever home” at their parish. It is a great thing to be given the opportunity to keep these mortal remains at the church. It is a place of hope and comfort for the living, and the source of prayers offered continually for the dead at their own parish.

Please do not pass Senate Bill 157. Doing so will hurt the faith community of caring for our faithful in their afterlife. This would apply to all faith communities in the State not just the Catholic Church. On behalf of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii, I respectfully encourage you to not support the passage of this bill.

With gratitude,

Very Reverend Monsignor Gary Secor

Vicar General

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 8:53:27 AM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Casey Peterson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and Honorable Members,

My name is Casey Peterson, thank you for your time. I am the Business Office Coordinator, a parishioner, and also an owner of a niche at St. Ann Church. I humbly ask that you do not pass SB157. St. Ann Church was the first church to have a columbarium on its grounds. Due to my job position and being a parishioner, I have seen firsthand all of the good that it has brought to St. Ann and its parishioners.

As the Business Office Coordinator I work with Hawaii Catholic Cemeteries. They have helped St. Ann Church give our deceased parishioners and their families a peaceful end-of-life need right at their home parish. They have allowed St. Ann Church to have a safe and peaceful place for parishioners to visit their loved ones. Due to the columbarium being on church grounds parishioners can see, pray, and spend time with their family and friends every Sunday when they come to mass.

As a long time parishioner and owner of a niche, I couldn't think of a more perfect place that I would like to lay at rest at the end of my life and here is why. My family has been parishioners at St. Ann since the 1960's. My siblings and I went to St. Ann School back in the 1990's. I have had all of my Catholic Sacraments from baptism to marriage all held at St. Ann Church. I have such a connection and love for St. Ann that when the opportunity came to buy a niche it was a no brainer and jumped at the chance. I know that all the parishioners that have purchased a niche feel the exact same way as I do. Therefore, please do not take this opportunity away from others and do not pass SB157.

Mahalo,

Casey Peterson

Mark J. Andrews
20 Foster Place
Kula, Hawaii 96790
Phone: (808) 878-6679
Fax: (808) 878-3059
mark.andrews10@aol.com

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection in Support of SB 157.
January 31, 2023

Chairperson Jarrett Keohokaole and Honorable Members.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 157. I apologize for not personally being present but travel to Oahu at a moment's notice is difficult and I have a standing appointment on Tuesday mornings to count the collection funds from Kula Catholic Church's Sunday Masses.

For well over a year now I have communicated with the Diocese of Honolulu (the diocese) regarding the implementation of their columbaria program under Act 22 (2020) but have received no reliable answers to my questions. This program designates Catholic Funeral and Cemetery Services (CFCS) a Oakland non-profit as the sole source provider of building columbaria by Catholic parishes in the State of Hawaii. To date their only action in response to my inquiries has been to call the pastor of our parish and have me removed as the chairperson of the cemetery committee.

I believe the current actions by the Diocese of Honolulu are in serious conflict with the intent and possibly the actual wording of Act 22 (2020). The Department of Consumer Protection's responsibility to ensure that all cemetery authorities comply with any provisions of Act 22 are seriously compromised by the diocese contracting with an out-of-state non-profit to implement their columbaria program. If these actions by the diocese are allowed to continue it will create and opportunity for other non-profits exempt from HRS Chapter 441-22.1 under Act 22 (2020) to contract with out-of-state entities to create very profitable mortuary services. I do not believe this was the intent of the Legislature.

The Diocese has announced in the Catholic Herald of October 12, 2022 that they intend to charge at least \$6,400 to \$10,200 per niche. The diocese has previously denied the Kula Catholic Parish the right to build a 40-niche columbarium built by a well-known Canadian Company which would be delivered to our current cemetery for \$20,000. This is a cost of \$500 per niche. This same columbarium would cost our parishioners \$400,000 (at \$10,000 per niche) under the diocese's program. The cost difference certainly indicates that there is a profit here, which is prohibited under Act 20 (2020). Unfortunately, this is difficult to determine since the recipient of these funds is an out-of-state entity.

Act 22 (2020) does provide welcome relief from the provisions of HRS Chapter 441.22.1 to the parishioners of the Hawaii Catholic Church. But these benefits are realized only if Act 22 is implemented as intended. The current program of the diocese will increase the cost of interment on parish grounds by 200%. To make matters worse this excessive cost to parishioners is sent out-of-state and may limit parishioners' current ability to control use of their parish property.

Please ask the following questions of the persons from the Diocese of Honolulu as I have asked them but received no acceptable response.

1. How is there “no profit” when the Kula Maui Parish can purchase a 40-unit columbarium for \$20,000 but the same columbarium would cost \$400,000 under the Diocese’s plan?
2. The Diocese plan has 75% of the cost per niche going to Catholic Funeral and Cemetery Services (CFCS) an out-of-state non-profit. How is this fair to Hawaii’s Catholic parishioners?
3. Who will have the authority to determine who is eligible to be interred in the columbarium in the parish where the columbarium is built by CFCS?
4. If the Diocese of Honolulu is concerned about “consistency and quality of construction” why does it not use local engineering firms who are familiar with building columbaria in Hawaii to assist in these areas? Allowing the sole source contractor to determine these things is a conflict.
5. Was there ever a written report from the Diocese’s Cemetery Task Force?
6. Who was Act 22 (2020) written to benefit? Prior to becoming bishop of Hawaii Bishop Silva was Vicar General of the Diocese of Oakland. Robert Seeling the CEO and founder of CFCS (a Oakland non-profit under the Diocese of Oakland) has been a friend of Bishop Silva for over 15 years. The primary consultant for the Diocese of Honolulu’s Cemetery task force to write the law that has become Act 22 was also a consultant for CFCS.
7. Is DCCA concerned about an in-state Cemetery Authority contracting with an out-of-state contractor to administer their program? Does this cause DCCA problems with over-sight?
8. Bishop Silva and others testifying on behalf of the Diocese of Honolulu emphasized that Act 22 was necessary for the church to lower cost to the parishioners. By allowing CFCS to be a sole provider of services the Diocese’s action have considerably raised the cost of interment.

Please give Senate Bill 157 your serious consideration

I was born into the Kula Catholic Parish over 70 years ago, have chaired most church committees and have been an active member in activities of the parish. I also served 11 years (1979-1990) in the Hawaii State Legislature representing Up-Country Maui.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on SB 157,

Mark J. Andrews

LATE

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 11:08:04 AM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deacon Chris Ribucan	Testifying for Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly opposed to SB157. If passed our faith communities will no longer be able to care for our deceased brothers and sisters at our place of worship without significant burden and hardship on our churches. Please do not let this bill pass for the sake of our kupuna and our faith communities.

Deacon Chris Ribucan



"Empowering young adults to follow Christ through spiritual, social, and service paths"

LATE

January 30th, 2023

Testimony in Opposition of SB157

Prepared for the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 9:05am in Room 229

Aloha mai kākou e Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Honorable Members,

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration. As the President of EPIC Ministry 501(c)(3) I ask that you please not pass SB157. If SB157 were to be passed it would stop faith communities throughout the state from being able to continue to provide their faithful a proper resting place in their place of worship and would also not allow the families of the deceased to grieve in their places of worship

In September of 2020, Governor David Ige signed into law Act 022 (20), which allows religious institutions in Hawaii to build and maintain on their property columbaria, structures such as a wall, room or building for the keeping of cremated remains. This essential law has allowed faith communities to care for their faithful, even after death, and has allowed the faithful to abide by the ecclesiastical laws set by their various churches. For example, the Canon law of the Catholic Church does not allow for the scattering of ashes. Act 022 (20) has allowed catholics to bury their loved ones and to do it with respect to the law of the Church.

Please do not pass Senate Bill 157. Doing so will hurt faith communities in caring for their deceased faithful and providing essential pastoral care for the families of the deceased. As an active member in the Catholic church, as someone that has studied the necessity of the proper care of the families of the deceased while earning my Masters in Pastoral Theology at Chaminade University, and as the President of EPIC Ministry 501(c)(3) I respectfully ask that you do not support the passage of this bill.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dallas Carter Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Dallas Carter Jr.

President, Board of Directors

LATE

January 30, 2023

Subject: **Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
in Opposition of SB157
Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 9:05am in Room 229**

Dear Chair Keohokalole & Vice Chair Fukunaga and Honorable Members,

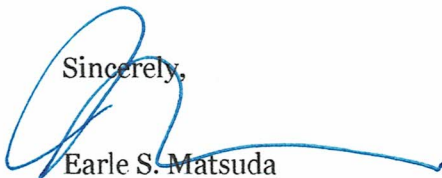
We ask that you please **not pass SB 157**. Repealing the Cemetery Authority exemption for non-profit religious organizations in Hawaii would have a significant detrimental impact on many residents of Hawaii. The passage of SB157 would repeal Act 022 (20) and churches throughout the state would no longer be allowed to continue this work of mercy without great administrative and costly burdens to our churches and parishioners.

On Sept. 15, 2020, Gov. David Ige signed into law Act 022 (20), which allows religious institutions in Hawaii to build and maintain on their property columbaria, structures such as a wall, room or building for the keeping of cremated remains. Act 022 (20) has allowed faith communities throughout the State of Hawaii to provide end-of-life needs for local families. The hundreds of local churches throughout the State have been given the opportunity to utilize this exemption to provide a continuum of care for their members and the families of deceased loved ones and to do so in their places of worship for grieving families. Our churches were given this opportunity to return to the work of mercy of burying the dead and we are very grateful to all of you.

Further, Act 022 (20) **has had no financial impact on the State's budget**. It has created jobs for churches engaged in this activity and provide added tax revenue for the state. It has allowed the churches to provide for the needs of our deceased loved ones, which became a greater concern during the pandemic and was supported by this very Legislature in 2020.

We truly appreciate your support to oppose SB157 so that churches may continue to provide this tremendous service to our deceased members and their families.

Sincerely,



Earle S. Matsuda



Valerie Y. Matsuda

3028a Waipuna Rise
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Testimony on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii
Prepared for the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection in Opposition of SB 157
Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 9:05am in Room 229

Dear Chair, Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Honorable Members,

As a Catholic I am opposed to SB 157, if SB 157 pass it would stop the church from being able to continue to provide services and ministers for our faithful a proper resting place of worship.

Our Diocese has built its first columbaria at St. Ann Parish in Kaneohe, I was very blessed to be present at the blessing of our columbaria, it is a very beautiful resting place for our loved ones.

Please, please do not pass Senate Bill 157 it will hurt the faithful community of caring for our faithful in their afterlife. All this apply to all faith communities in the State not just Catholic Church.

Very Respectfully,

Onolata Fualau-Soon

LATE

LATE

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 11:34:53 AM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Garry Dixon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am firmly aganst SB157. Passage of this bill will incur additional expenses on our churches and our kupuna. Please do ot pass SB157.

LATE

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 12:18:41 PM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Lamosao	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly opposed to SB157. If passed our faith communities will no longer be able to care for our deceased brothers and sisters at our place of worship without significant burden and hardship on our churches. Please do not let this bill pass for the sake of our kupuna and our faith communities.

LATE

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 12:24:52 PM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marvin Choy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly opposed to SB157. If passed our faith communities will no longer be able to care for our deceased brothers and sisters at our place of worship without significant burden and hardship on our churches.

LATE

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
SB157

Tuesday, January 31, 2023, at 9:05 a.m. In Room 415

Dear Chair Keohokaole and Honorable Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 157 (SB157). My name is Lisa Sakamoto and I was raised in Kaneohe where I attended St. Ann School before graduating from Maryknoll High School. Our family (my mother, father, husband, and two boys) currently reside in the Ainakoa area and are parishioners of Mary Star of the Sea Church.

I am in strong opposition to SB 157.

I write to you today primarily as a caregiver to my mother (age 94) and my father (age 90). I have had several conversations with my parents about their after-life care. They did not plan ahead and do not have any burial plots or niches so we are struggling to determine what would be the best option for our family.

When passed, Act 22 (2020) gave our family a sense of peace knowing that our parish will be allowed to build a columbaria on church grounds, something my parents would welcome as part of their after-life care. For my family, it would allow us to be able to attend Mass on Sundays and then visit with them weekly either before or after Mass. When it is time for my husband and I to leave this earth, we would like to be able to be with my parents and my two sons could continue the tradition of visiting all of us in one place and not only just during the holidays or our birthdays! Most importantly it would provide my family with an affordable option for after-life care in our place of worship.

Please do not pass Senate Bill 157. In doing so, all the good work that has begun to provide our faith community a resting place in their place of worship will be gone and will especially impact our kupuna. My mother and father are relieved they now know where their resting place will be when it is their time. Don't take that away from them and our faith communities.

LATE

Prepared for the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
in Opposition of SB157
Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 9:05am in Room 229

I am writing to let you know that I am strongly opposed to SB157. If passed our faith communities, especially here at St. Ann's Church in Kaneohe, will no longer be able to care for our deceased brothers and sisters at our place of worship without significant burden and hardship on our churches. Please do not let this bill pass for the sake of our kupuna, families and our faith communities.

With gratitude,



Lesley Noguchi
St. Ann Parishioner, Kaneohe

LATE

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 12:27:31 PM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Evelyn Miyashiro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am **strongly opposed** to SB157. If this bill passes faith communities will no longer be able to provide for their deceased brothers and sisters at their place of worship without significant burden and hardship to our churches. Please do not let this bill pass for the sake of our faith communities and elderly.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Evelyn

LATE

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 12:37:08 PM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Esther Gefroh	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern:

Please enter my opposition to SB157 relating to cemeteries. The repeal of this would detrimentally affect the Catholic Church's ability to perform the act of mercy of burying the dead.

Thank you for your kind consideration

LATE

SB-157

Submitted on: 1/30/2023 1:05:31 PM

Testimony for CPN on 1/31/2023 9:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Browning	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony on behalf of Michael Browning

Prepared for the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection in Opposition of SB157

Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 9:05am in Room 229

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Honorable Members,

I am a resident of Mililani and a long-time parishioner at St John Apostle and Evangelist Church which is part of the Roman Catholic Church in the Diocese of Honolulu. When Act 022 (20) was signed into law, many of us were joyful as we could now plan on how we could return to the work of mercy of burying the dead and provide a continuum of spiritual care for our loved ones. Many of our mourning families have taken to the practice of scattering of ashes for economic reasons albeit against church law. As such we formed a committee to look into the viability of installing a columbaria on our church grounds similar to what has been completed in October 2022, at St Ann's Parish in Kaneohe. The response to our initial survey was very favorable.

Personally, my wife and I have already arranged for and have prepaid services for our immediate family (ourselves, our parents, and our children) at a local cemetery which is owned by a mainland private firm. When I compared the cost that we originally paid versus the projected price of being interred at our local church, the cost savings would be substantial. From my own personal experience, this is contrary to what is being stated in SB157. I am opposed to SB157 and believe that by having more options for the families of deceased loved ones and having it at their place of worship, affordability will happen.

Sincerely,

Michael Browning

LATE

Prepared for the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection in Opposition of SB157

January 30, 2023

RE: Oppose bill SB 157

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Honorable Members,

Thank you for your time and this opportunity to voice out my opinion. Please do not pass SB 157.

Our our dear Bishop Larry Silva stated, "One of the most important functions of non-profit religious organizations is to provide spiritual care for our members, not only in this life, but in the life to come."

Respectfully Yours,

Ricardo P. Goce