

Linda Lingle
Governor



Darwin L.D. Ching
Director

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
State Fire Council
830 Punchbowl Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

February 17, 2009

The Honorable Faye Hanohano, Chair
Committee on Public Safety
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 303
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 326
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Hanohano and Rhoads:

Subject: H.B. 685 Relating to the State Fire Council

I am Kenneth G. Silva, Chair of the State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The SFC and the HFD support H.B. 685, which proposes to allow the SFC to hire personnel to accomplish its duties and responsibilities; however, Section 1 of this bill must be amended as follows:

"The purpose of this Act is to allow the state fire council to hire personnel to fulfill its statutory responsibilities."

As written, Section 1 incorrectly states that fireworks license fees will provide funding for the positions. The fees collected from cigarette manufacturers for a reduced ignition propensity cigarette program will be an eventual funding source amounting to approximately \$375,000 triennially.

The SFC, comprised of the four county Fire Chiefs, was created in 1979 to replace the State Fire Marshal's Office, which was a fully-funded state agency.

The Honorable Faye Hanohano, Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
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Under the present organization, the SFC primarily uses county fire department personnel to accomplish council duties, thus depriving county fire departments of the time and services of its members. These duties include amending and adopting the state fire code, pursuing and administering federal grants, and implementing and administering a statewide reduced ignition propensity cigarette program. The SFC's staff consists of only one part-time person funded by the State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to which the SFC is administratively attached. In addition, the SFC is a member of the State Building Code Council and participates in the state building code adoption process; coordinates statewide training and data collection; and corresponds with national organizations on statewide fire issues.

This bill would greatly increase the SFC's productivity and benefit communities and fire departments statewide.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 685.

Should you have any questions, please call HFD Legislative Liaison Lloyd Rogers at 723-7171.

Sincerely,



KENNETH G. SILVA
Chair

KGS/LR:bh

Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Mayor



Robert F. Westerman
Fire Chief

John T. Blalock
Deputy Fire Chief

COUNTY OF KAUAI
Fire Department
Mo'ikeha Building
4444 Rice Street, Suite 295
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawaii 96766

February 17, 2009

The Honorable Faye Hanohano, Chair
Committee on Public Safety
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 303
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 326
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Hanohano and Rhoads:

Subject: H.B. 685 Relating to the State Fire Council

I am Robert F. Westerman, member of the State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Kauai Fire Department (KFD). The SFC and the KFD support H.B. 685, which proposes to allow the SFC to hire personnel to accomplish its duties and responsibilities; however, Section 1 of this bill must be amended as follows:

"The purpose of this Act is to allow the state fire council to hire personnel to fulfill its statutory responsibilities."

As written, Section 1 incorrectly states that fireworks license fees will provide funding for the positions. The fees collected from cigarette manufacturers for a reduced ignition propensity cigarette program will be an eventual funding source amounting to approximately \$375,000 triennially.

The SFC, comprised of the four county Fire Chiefs, was created in 1979 to replace the State Fire Marshal's Office, which was a fully-funded state agency.

Under the present organization, the SFC primarily uses county fire department personnel to accomplish council duties, thus depriving county fire departments of the time and services of its members. These duties include amending and adopting the state fire code, pursuing and administering federal grants, and implementing and administering a statewide reduced ignition propensity cigarette program. The SFC's staff consists of only one part-time person funded by the State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to which the SFC is administratively attached. In addition, the

SFC is a member of the State Building Code Council and participates in the state building code adoption process; coordinates statewide training, data collection; and corresponds with national organizations on statewide fire issues.

This bill would greatly increase the SFC's productivity and benefit communities and fire departments statewide.

The SFC and the KFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 685.

Should you have any questions, please call me at 241-4980.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Westerman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends across the name.

Robert F. Westerman
Fire Chief

RFW/LR:cz

William P. Kenoi
Major



Darryl J. Oliveira
Fire Chief

Glen P. I. Honda
Deputy Fire Chief

County of Hawai'i

FIRE DEPARTMENT

25 Aupuni Street • Suite 103 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
(808) 981-8394 • Fax (808) 981-2037

February 15, 2009

TO : REPRESENTATIVE KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

FROM : DARRYL OLIVEIRA, FIRE CHIEF
HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT : HB 685 RELATING TO STATE FIRE COUNCIL
DATE/TIME OF HEARING: FEBRUARY 18, 2009, 2:00 P.M.
NUMBER OF COPIES REQUESTED: 3 COPIES

I am Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief of the Hawaii Fire Department, and Vice Chair of the State Fire Council. Our department and State Fire Council support HB 685, which creates administrative positions for the State Fire Council to enable it to meet its statutory responsibilities under Chapter 132, Hawaii Revised Statutes, with the following amendment:

Section 1 incorrectly states that fireworks license fees will provide funding for the positions. The fees collected from cigarette manufacturers for a reduced ignition propensity cigarette program will be an eventual funding source amounting to approximately \$375,000 triennially.

If as presently drafted and proposed the fireworks licensing fees are deemed to be the source of revenue for these positions and not the fees from the cigarette program, we could not support this measure, as monies generated from the fireworks licensing fees, as required by statute, funds a fireworks auditor position.

The SFC was created in 1979 to replace the State Fire Marshal's Office, which was a fully funded State agency. Under the present organization, the State Fire Council has had difficulty in amending the State fire code, pursuing and administering Federal grants, and coordinating statewide training, data collection, and other council duties because such work must be performed by county fire department personnel, thus depriving the county fire departments of the services of its members.

If the bill is amended to address the above stated concerns, it would greatly increase the productivity of the State Fire Council and benefit all fire departments statewide.

The Hawaii Fire Department and State Fire Council request your committee's support on the passage of HB 685 with the amendment to change the funding source for the positions to fees collected from cigarette manufacturers for a reduced ignition propensity cigarette program.


DARRYL OLIVEIRA
Fire Chief

DO:lk

