



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

February 11, 2009

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

Dear Chair Hanohano:

Subject: H.B. 686 Relating to Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarettes (RIPC)

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. 686, which proposes to extend the RIPC compliance date from September 30, 2009, to September 30, 2010, to establish a special revolving fund with cigarette certification fees to be administered by the SFC.

The special revolving fund shall be expended only for costs associated with the RIPC program and hiring of personnel to administer and accomplish the following:

1. Adopt administrative rules for program implementation, and establish compliance inspections, approved forms, and enforcement procedures and guidelines.
2. Receive, verify, and approve certifications for approximately 1,100 different cigarette brands from manufacturers.
3. Compile a list of the approved brands, verify state tax compliance with the State Department of the Attorney General, and post it on a state website.
4. Review and approve, as needed, alternative test methods or fire standard compliance markings submitted by a manufacturer.

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5. Submit the compliance testing to an accredited laboratory to verify that all performance standards have been met, if needed.

The SFC's staff consists of one part-time employee funded by the State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to which the SFC is administratively attached. That employee is already tasked with other council duties, including application and administration of training grants, adoption of the state fire code, and coordination of meetings, travel, and other daily duties.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.B. 686 to administer this important program, which will reduce the number of fires caused by cigarettes in our state.

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

Sincerely,



KENNETH G. SILVA
Chair

KGS/LR:cn