

William P. Kenoi
Mayor



William T. Takaba
Managing Director

Walter K.M. Lau
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 75-5722 Hanama Place, Suite 102 • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 327-3602 • Fax (808) 326-5663

February 2, 2010

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
And Members of the House Committee on Health
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 329
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

RE: Testimony in Support of House Bill No. 2170, Relating to Vital Statistics

Aloha,

The County of Hawai'i strongly supports House Bill 2170, relating to vital statistics, requiring the Director of the Department of Health to provide a list of all reported deaths to the real property assessment division of each county monthly and free of charge.

The County of Hawai'i Department of Finance, Real Property Tax Division is tasked with assessing real property and maintaining current ownership records for Ad Valorem tax purposes. The real property tax divisions must maintain current information on the owners of all real property to insure fair and equitable assessments. Maintaining the correct status of each owner is critical, but transfer of data has been lacking for several years. This makes the task of the real property divisions very difficult, and limits the accuracy of the information. The lack of up-to-date data often results in required adjustments to tax amounts, and causes undue hardship for taxpayers.

Other jurisdictions have similar mechanisms in place requiring the rapid and accurate transfer of this data regularly because they recognize the vital nature of this link.

We urge the committee to pass this bill to give the counties the means to administer real property tax programs in a timely, cost effective manner, and to eliminate costly adjustments to taxpayers. Implementation should not be difficult since the Department of Health already provides this list to the County Clerks for election purposes.

Aloha,

William P. Kenoi
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FISCAL SERVICES
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

REAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENT DIVISION
33 SOUTH KING STREET, #101 * HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-3799 * FAX (808) 768-5540
WWW.HONOLULU.GOV

MUFI HANNEMANN
MAYOR



RIX MAURER III
DIRECTOR

MARK K. OTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

GARY T. KUOKAWA
ADMINISTRATOR

February 2, 2010

Honorable Ryan I. Yamane
Chair, Committee on Health
House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 329
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Proposed HB2170 - Relating to Vital Statistics

The City and County of Honolulu supports HB2170, which would require the department of health, within six weeks of the last day of each month and at no charge, to provide each county's real property assessment division a list of all persons age eighteen and older whose deaths were recorded by the department during the previous month.

Under existing law, only the county clerks of each county are provided with a list of citizens of voting age or older whose deaths have been recorded in the department, for purposes of removing the name of any registered voter from the general county register. The county clerks are precluded by the State from sharing the list with any other county agencies or using it for any other purpose.

One additional change that we are requesting is to include the following or similar language in the proposed bill: "If the reported information of a deceased citizen matches the information of more than one taxpayer on a county's property assessment database and that county's real property assessment division notifies the department of health of that problem, the department of health shall provide the full social security number of that deceased taxpayer."

We respectfully urge your approval of this proposed amendment and thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Sincerely,


Gary T. Kurokawa
Administrator
Real Property Assessment Division

Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Mayor

Gary K. Heu
Administrative Assistant



Wallace Rezentes, Jr.
Director

Belma Baris
Deputy Director

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Real Property Assessment Division
County of Kaua'i, State of Hawai'i
4444 Rice Street, Suite A-454, Lihu'e, Hawai'i 96766
TEL (808) 241-4224 FAX (808) 241-6252

February 2, 2010

Honorable Ryan I. Yamane
Chair, Committee on Health
House of Representatives
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 329
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Yamane and Members:

RE: Proposed HB 2170 Relating to Vital Statistics

I submit this testimony as the Real Property Administrator for the County of Kaua'i in support of HB 2170, which would require the department of health, within six weeks of the last day of each month and at no charge, to provide each counties real property assessment division a list of all persons age eighteen and older whose deaths were recorded by the department during the previous month.

Under existing law, only the county clerks of each county are provided with a list of citizens of voting age or older whose deaths have been recorded in the department, for purposes of removing the name of any registered voter from the general county register. The county clerks are precluded by the State from sharing the list with any other county agencies or using it for any other purpose.

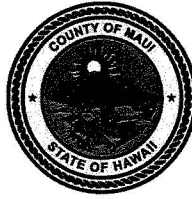
One additional change that we are requesting is to include an amendment to the proposed bill to incorporate the following language: "If the reported information of a deceased citizen matches the information of more than one taxpayer on a county's property assessment database, that county's real property division notifies the department of health of that problem, the department of health shall provide the full social security number of that deceased taxpayer."

We respectfully urge your approval of this proposed amendment and thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter before you.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Herring
Real Property Administrator
County of Kauai

CHARMAINE TAVARES
Mayor



KALBERT K. YOUNG
Director of Finance

AGNES M. HAYASHI
Deputy Director of Finance

SCOTT K. TERUYA
Administrator

GERY MADRIAGA
Assistant Administrator

COUNTY OF MAUI
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
REAL PROPERTY TAX DIVISION

70 E. KAAHUMANU AVENUE, SUITE A-16, KAHULUI, MAUI, HAWAII 96732
Assessment: (808) 270-7297 | Billing and Collection: (808) 270-7697 | Fax: (808) 270-7884
www.mauipropertytax.com

February 1, 2010

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Honorable Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Honorable Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

County of Maui, Department of Finance, Real Property Tax Division
Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Support of HB 2170, Relating to Vital Statistics

The County of Maui, Real Property Tax Division supports HB 2170, relating to vital statistics, which would provide each county's Real Property Tax Division with a monthly list of recorded deaths in its county from the State Department of Health (DOH) within six weeks after the end of the month and free of charge.

Obtaining the list of death certificates in a timely manner enables the Counties to promptly maintain their ownership records, update exemptions, audit circuit breaker applications and bill current taxpayers. Under existing law, the DOH is only required to furnish the county clerk of each county a list of names of all citizens of voting age or over whose deaths have been recorded in the department during each month.

For the years leading up to 2005, the DOH was providing the County of Maui Real Property Tax Division with the list of death certificates. We were informed that the DOH was no longer required to provide this information to the assessment offices and has caused hardship to affected taxpayers. When deaths are not reported to our office in a timely manner, exemptions are removed after the fact, and recalculations of taxes are made for all of the years the exemption should not have been granted. Many times when our office is not notified of a death, tax bills will be sent to an outdated mailing address resulting in non-payment of taxes, adding penalty and interest; and this may lead a parcel into tax sale foreclosure proceedings.

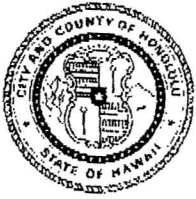
In addition to the proposed bill, we request that additional language be added to the end of Section 2, §338-4 to include: "If the reported information of a deceased citizen matches the information of more than one taxpayer on the county Real Property Tax Division's database and that county's administrator notifies the Department of Health of that problem, the Department of Health shall provide the full social security number of that deceased taxpayer."

We urge you to pass this important amendment and give the Counties the means to maintain their records in a timely manner for the public's best interest. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott K. Teruya", is written over a printed name.

Scott K. Teruya
Real Property Tax Division Administrator



BERNICE K.N. MAU
City Clerk

ELECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
930 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 100
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3077
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-3800

Comments on HB 2170
Relating to Vital Statistics

Committee on Health
Room 329
February 2, 2009
10:00 a.m.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members:

The Office of the City Clerk takes no position on the matter of whether death information should be reported to the County Real Property Taxation Offices.

However, our primary concern is that any amendments to HRS 338-4 not restrict or limit the Department of Health from reporting the deceased person's entire social security number (in addition to the other information currently reported) to the County Clerks for maintaining the voter registry.

Obtaining the complete personal information for the deceased increases the likelihood of accurately identifying the record that should be removed from the voter registry.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.