



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
[www.hawaii.gov/labor](http://www.hawaii.gov/labor)  
Phone: (808) 586-8842 / Fax: (808) 586-9099  
Email: [dlir.director@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.director@hawaii.gov)

March 2, 2011

The Honorable Henry Aquino, Chair  
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 419  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Aquino:

Subject: H.R. 47/H.C.R. 54 Requesting the State Building Code Council to Adopt the Requirement that Automatic Fire Sprinklers be Installed in New One- and Two-Family Dwellings

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.R. 47/H.C.R. 54 and offer the following comments:

1. Home fire sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce heat, flames, and smoke from a fire, giving residents valuable time to escape. The risk of dying decreases by 80% when sprinklers are present. Installing home fire sprinklers significantly reduces property loss in the event of fire and homeowner insurance premiums and supports local fire service efforts. By requiring these life-saving devices in new homes, residents can enjoy the same level of safety found in offices, schools, apartments, and public buildings.
2. Beyond the life safety benefits of home sprinklers, there are other incentives for jurisdictions that mandate sprinklers in new homes. By mandating sprinkler requirements, cities can reduce the strain on fire service personnel, limit property damage, and help conserve municipal water resources (fire fighting hoses use more than eight times the amount of water used by automatic fire sprinklers). The most economical time to install fire sprinklers is during new construction. The Fire Protection Research Foundation recently issued a Home Fire Sprinkler Cost Assessment report, which revealed that the cost of

The Honorable Henry Aquino, Chair  
Page 2  
March 2, 2011

installing home fire sprinklers averages \$1.61 per square foot for new construction. The Hawaii State Building Code Council is researching the sprinkler installation cost for Hawaii homes.

3. Home fire sprinkler systems are much like home plumbing systems. When installed and maintained properly, there is a low risk of leaks. Over the last 50 years, records indicate the likelihood of leaks from automatic sprinkler systems is remote. Each sprinkler is designed and calibrated to activate only when it senses a significant heat change. In the event of a fire, only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate and spray water directly on the fire, thereby leaving the rest of the house dry and secure. Ninety percent of the time, just one sprinkler operates to control the fire.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's support on the passage of H.R. 47/  
H.C.R. 54.

Should you have any questions, please call SFC Administrator Socrates Bratakos at 723-7151.

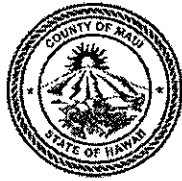
Sincerely,



KENNETH G. SILVA  
Chair

KGS/LR:cn

ALAN M. ARAKAWA  
MAYOR



JEFFREY A. MURRAY  
CHIEF

ROBERT M. SHIMADA  
DEPUTY CHIEF

**COUNTY OF MAUI**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

200 DAIRY ROAD  
KAHULUI, MAUI, HAWAII 96732  
(808) 270-7561  
FAX (808) 270-7919  
EMAIL: fire.dept@mauicounty.gov

March 2, 2011

The Honorable Henry Aquino, Chair  
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 419  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Aquino:

Subject: H.R. 47/HCR 54

I am Jeffrey A. Murray, Fire Chief of the County of Maui, Department of Fire & Public Safety (MFD) and a member of the State Fire Council (SFC). The MFD and the SFC support H.R. 47/HCR 54 and offer the following comments:

Home fire sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce heat, flames, and smoke from a fire, giving residents valuable time to get out safely. The risk of dying decreases by about 80% when sprinklers are present. Installing home fire sprinklers can help residents: significantly reduce property loss in the event of fire, cut homeowner insurance premiums, and help support local fire service efforts. By requiring these life-saving devices in new homes you are ensuring that a large number of residents can enjoy the same level of safety found in many offices, schools, apartments, and public buildings.

Beyond the life safety benefits of home sprinklers, there are other incentives for jurisdictions that mandate sprinklers in new homes. By mandating sprinkler requirements, cities and towns can reduce the strain on fire service personnel, limit damage to property, and help conserve municipal water resources by reducing the amount of water needed to fight fires (fire-fighting hoses use more than eight times the amount of water used by automatic fire sprinklers). The most economical time to install fire sprinklers is in new construction.

The Honorable Henry Aquino, Chair

Page 2

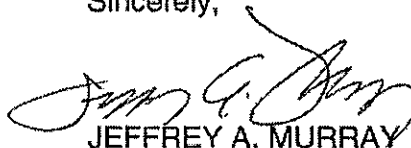
March 2, 2011

Home fire sprinkler systems are much like home plumbing systems – when installed and maintained properly, there is a very low risk of leaks. Each individual sprinkler is designed and calibrated to activate only when it senses a significant heat change, directing water to the area of the fire. Over the last 50 years, records indicate the likelihood of leaks from automatic sprinkler systems is very remote. In the event of a fire, only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water directly on the fire, leaving the rest of the house dry and secure. Ninety percent of the time, just one sprinkler operates.

The MFD and the SFC urge your committees' support on the passage of H.R. 47/HCR 54.

Should you have any questions, please call SFC Administrator Socrates Bratakos at 723-7151.

Sincerely,



JEFFREY A. MURRAY  
Fire Chief

**Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.**  
Mayor



**Robert F. Westerman**  
Fire Chief

**Gary K. Heu**  
Managing Director

**John T. Blalock**  
Deputy Fire Chief

**KAUA'I FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**County of Kaua'i, State of Hawai'i**  
3083 Akahi Street, Suite 101, Līhu'e, Hawai'i 96766  
TEL (808) 241-4980 FAX (808) 241-6508

March 2, 2011

The Honorable Henry Aquino, Chair  
Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 419  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Aquino:

**Subject: H.R. 47/HCR 54**

I am Robert F. Westerman, Fire Chief of the Kauai Fire Department (KFD) and a member of the State Fire Council (SFC). The SFC and the KFD support H.R. 47/HCR 54 and offer the following comments:

Home fire sprinkler systems respond quickly to reduce heat, flames, and smoke from a fire, giving residents valuable time to get out safely. The risk of dying decreases by about 80% when sprinklers are present. Installing home fire sprinklers can help residents: significantly reduce property loss in the event of fire, cut homeowner insurance premiums, and help support local fire service efforts. By requiring these life-saving devices in new homes you are ensuring that a large number of residents can enjoy the same level of safety found in many offices, schools, apartments, and public buildings.

Beyond the life safety benefits of home sprinklers, there are other incentives for jurisdictions that mandate sprinklers in new homes. By mandating sprinkler requirements, cities and towns can reduce the strain on fire service personnel, limit damage to property, and help conserve municipal water resources by reducing the amount of water needed to fight fires (fire-fighting hoses use more than eight times the

The Honorable Henry Aquino, Chair  
Page 2  
March 2, 2011

amount of water used by automatic fire sprinklers). The most economical time to install fire sprinklers is in new construction.

Home fire sprinkler systems are much like home plumbing systems – when installed and maintained properly, there is a very low risk of leaks. Each individual sprinkler is designed and calibrated to activate only when it senses a significant heat change, directing water to the area of the fire. Over the last 50 years, records indicate the likelihood of leaks from automatic sprinkler systems is very remote. In the event of a fire, only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water directly on the fire, leaving the rest of the house dry and secure. Ninety percent of the time, just one sprinkler operates.

The SFC and the KFD urge your committees' support on the passage of H.R. 47/HCR 54.

Please call me at (808) 241-4980 should you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Westerman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Westerman" clearly legible.

Robert Westerman  
Fire Chief, County of Kaua'i

RFW/eld

# **BIA-HAWAII**

**BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**

March 3, 2011

Representative Henry Aquino, Chair  
Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs  
State Capitol, Room 309  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**RE: HR 47 and HCR 54 REQUESTING THE STATE BUILDING CODE  
COUNCIL TO ADOPT THE REQUIREMENT THAT AUTOMATIC  
FIRE SPRINKLERS BE INSTALLED IN NEW ONE- AND TWO  
FAMILY DWELLINGS.**

Chair Aquino and Members of the Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs:

I am Karen Nakamura, Chief Executive Officer of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii.

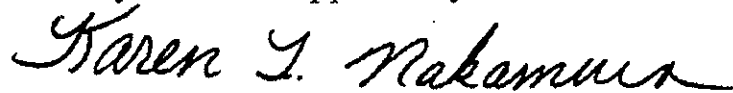
BIA-Hawaii wishes to comment on HR 47 and HCR 54 Requesting the State Building Code Council to Adopt the Requirement that Automatic Fire Sprinklers Be Installed in New One- and Two-Family Dwellings. While we can appreciate the desire of the Legislature to move quickly on implementing the installation of fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family dwellings, we would like to note that a mechanism of the State Building Code Council is already in operation to review this proposal by the establishment of an Investigative Committee on Sprinkler Requirements and a subcommittee on Sprinklers that is chaired by Tim Hiu of the City's Building Department. The subcommittee will continue the work of identifying best practices, costs, options, etc and we anticipate that this process will take all this year and potentially longer to complete (according to a note from Fire Battalion Chief Socrates Bratakos who chairs the other subcommittee on water infrastructure)

On February 8, 2011, the Investigative Committee on Sprinkler Requirements made a recommendation to the State Building Code Council and its Investigative Committee for the International Residential Code (IRC) to amend the date for implementation from January 2011 to January 2014. (Also in a note from Socrates Bratakos).

As you can see, there is a deliberative process already in motion to continue the work of the Investigative Committee on Sprinklers. We believe this process should continue and not stopped by immediate adoption of the Fire Sprinkler mandate for new one- and two-family dwellings. There is also a cost factor to be considered should this be mandated. Those additional costs would further postpone the decision and the ability of people to purchase a home.

We hope that our comments are helpful in your deliberations.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karen I. Nakamura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Chief Executive Officer  
BIA-Hawaii



Testimony of C. Mike Kido  
External Affairs  
The Pacific Resource Partnership

House Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs  
Representative Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair  
Representative Ty Cullen, Vice Chair

House Committee on Transportation  
Representative Joseph M. Souki, Chair  
Representative Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair

HR 47/HCR 54 – REQUESTING THE STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL TO ADOPT  
THE REQUIREMENT THAT AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLERS BE INSTALLED IN NEW  
ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY DWELLINGS

Thursday, March 3, 2011

11:00 am

Conference Room 309

Aloha Chair Aquino, Chair Souki and Members of the Committees:

My name is C. Mike Kido, External Affairs of the Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP), a labor-management consortium representing over 240 signatory contractors and the Hawaii Carpenters Union.

PRP supports the intent and purpose of HR 47/ HCR 54 – Requesting the State Building Code Council to Adopt the Requirement that Automatic Fire Sprinklers Be Installed in New One- and Two-Family Dwellings, but we must continue to articulate our concern of the mandate on Hawaii's affordable housing market and wish to both committees to take that concern into account as you deliberate on this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views with you and we respectfully ask for your careful consideration on HR 47/ HCR 54.

## PBMtestimony

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2011 1:38 AM  
**To:** PBMtestimony  
**Cc:** web@cartoonistforchrist.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR54 on 3/3/2011 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for PBM 3/3/2011 11:00:00 AM HCR54

Conference room: 309  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Lee McIntosh  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [web@cartoonistforchrist.org](mailto:web@cartoonistforchrist.org)  
Submitted on: 3/2/2011

### Comments:

Mr. Chairs and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs and the Committee on Transportation:

Aloha, my name is Lee McIntosh. I live in Kau on the Big Island. I am not in favor of HCR 54, which makes fire sprinkler systems mandatory in new homes. The major flaw in this bill is the assumption that all homes in Hawaii have access to water, which is not true on the Big Island. In fact, a majority of homes do not have access to County water on the Big Island. This will also increase the cost of a new home at a time when the economy is bad, create unnecessary maintenance problems for new home owners, and cause extensive water damage for small fires or false triggers. It is better to build homes with materials that are fireproof or designed to slow the spread of fire. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HCR 54.