

Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Mayor



Robert F. Westerman
Fire Chief

Nadine K. Nakamura
Managing Director

KAUA'I FIRE DEPARTMENT
County of Kaua'i, State of Hawai'i
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February 4, 2016

The Honorable Mark M Nakashima, Chair
Committee on Labor and Public
Employment
Conference Room 309
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Nakashima:

Subject: H.B. 1860 Relating to Counties

I am Robert Westerman, Fire Chief of the Kauai Fire Department (KFD). The KFD **is not** in support of HB1860. Due to the fact that the Ocean Safety Officers are extremely busy in their duties providing education, rescuing people in our county beach parks, state beach parks and other beach areas. They are busy providing a safe environment for our visitors and Kama'āina.

The Ocean Safety Officers are not educated on the laws governing the state as it relates to the beach and near shore areas. They do not have enforcement authority, therefore, they could not ticket individuals for violations that may occur and their duties are limited to their areas of responsibility on a daily basis. To remove them from their responsible area is dangerous and creates a liability that is not acceptable.

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

Sincerely,

Robert Westerman
Fire Chief, County of Kaua'i

RFW/dag

RFW/dag



HAWAIIAN LIFEGUARD ASSOCIATION

February 4, 2016

LATE

The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair,
The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalohe, Vice Chair,
and Members
Committee on Labor and Public Employment
House of Representatives
The Twenty-Eighth Legislature
Regular Session of 2016

Dear Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Keohokaloha, and Members,

RE: HB 1860 RELATING TO THE COUNTIES

The Hawaiian Lifeguard Association (HLA) is the non profit organization that supports the efforts of the counties' 450 professional ocean safety officers in their efforts to reduce drownings and aquatic injury in the State of Hawaii through public education and prevention programs.

As you may know, professional water safety officers in Hawaii are employed by the respective counties (the State of Hawaii does not have a lifeguard service), and are tasked with protecting the millions of visitors and residents who frequent our world famous beaches and the ocean waters adjacent to them. Lifeguards are highly trained and experienced professionals who are the front line of public safety at our beaches. One only has to recall the activities during the past month that included search and rescue operations following the military helicopter incident over ocean waters off Haleiwa, and the prevention and rescue responses during the huge surf that all islands experienced during the past two weeks.

Lifeguards in Hawaii are recognized both nationally and internationally as leaders in the aquatic safety profession. Hawaiian lifeguards pioneered the use of personal watercraft (jet skis) in big surf and have shared their expertise by training other lifeguards and military personnel around the world.


The Hawaiian Lifeguard Association strongly opposes HB 1860, as it proposes to increase the responsibilities of our ocean lifeguards by adding enforcement duties to their already extremely challenging job requirements. The State of Hawaii, DLNR's Division of Conservation and Enforcement (DOCARE) is currently tasked with enforcing the rules and regulations described in HB 1860.

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The HLA recommends that the legislature consider providing more funding to the DLNR to adequately provide for the enforcement of rules and regulations promulgated by the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph S. Goto", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ralph S. Goto
For the Board of Directors



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

LATE

The Twenty-Eighth Legislature, State of Hawaii
Hawaii State House of Representatives
Committee on Labor and Public Employment

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association
February 5, 2016

H.B. 1860 – RELATING TO COUNTIES

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO opposes H.B. 1860, which would allow county lifeguards to enforce state laws, rules and regulations in the near shore zone. The bill claims that the state has insufficient staff to regularly provide enforcement of state laws in this zone. However, the counties have limited resources in terms of equipment and staffing to perform this function.

The answer to this problem is to provide additional personnel within the Department of Land and Natural Resources to enforce state laws, not to require the counties to assume these responsibilities that are more appropriately assigned to the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to H.B. 1860.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director