

Linda Lingle
Governor



Nelson B. Befitel
Director

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

March 15, 2006

The Honorable David Y. Ige, Chair
Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs
State Senate
State Capitol, Room 215
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Ige:

Subject: H.B. 1468 Relating to Fireworks

I am Kenneth G. Silva, Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) and Chair of the State Fire Council (SFC). The HFD and the SFC oppose the present language of H.B. 1468, which allows a religious exemption from the \$25 fireworks permit fee.

The following are concerns of the SFC:

1. What are the qualifications of an organized religious entity, and how would the county fire departments verify those qualifications?
2. Can anyone under a seemingly organized religious entity obtain a general excise tax license exemption in order to avoid the fireworks permit fee?
3. Would one permit be issued per event for each organized religious entity, or could any number of members of the organized religious entity be allowed the permit fee waiver?

Without clarification to the language of the present bill, abuse of the exemption may be the outcome, thereby compromising the safety of the general public.

The SFC requests your committee's deferral on the passage of H.B. 1468 until these issues are addressed.