

To: Senate Sergeant-at-Arms  
Hawaii State Legislature  
Tel. 586-6659

Re: Testimony for Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs  
In support of SCR 7  
Thursday, March 2, 2006 hearing  
Conference Room 225 @ 3:30 p.m.

Please provide 35 copies to Senator David Y. Ige, Chair  
Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

### **MAKIKI COMMUNITY LIBRARY NEEDS YOUR HELP**


Makiki Community Library has operated for 28 years with a volunteer board and a handful of dedicated and caring volunteers, mostly retired librarians and members of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

For years, Makiki Library has doubled as a reading room/community center that addresses the growing needs posed by a surrounding community of residents, often immigrants from Micronesia, who use the park and who would benefit from more than simply having a place for sports activities or hanging out. The volunteer library board wants to attract as many people as possible by opening a computer lab for seniors, youth and families.

In December 2005, the city started work to make the building usable, with working windows, an ADA-compliant elevator and ground-floor bathroom. However, the \$1.7 million the city will spend will only address the bare structural necessity of having a "legal" building. Much more is needed to convert this empty shell into a fully functional community center. In this densely populated neighborhood, crime and vandalism are constant concerns. Before construction started, vandalism reduced the building to a ghetto. It is hoped that vandalism will be reduced with added usage of the library facility. The facility and programs can only be added if the building is user friendly, safe and with enough resources to operate and to accommodate the needs of the over populated Makiki.

It is difficult not to be shocked that the governor would not release the \$4.5 million in state money, already appropriated by the Legislature, to transform this historic shell into a much-needed community center. Other communities have received state monies for such projects. Why not Makiki?

As Vice President of the Board of the Friends of Makiki Community Library, I urge approval of SCR 7.

  
*Norma K. Koenig, MA, MPH, CVM*  
*Vice president, Makiki Community Library Board*