

BILL022(24)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 285

PUBLIC SAFETY (PS)

PUBLIC SAFETY (PS) Meeting

Meeting Date: Jun 27, 2024 @ 01:00 PM

Support: 32

Oppose: 22

I wish to comment: 3

Name: Danial Peart	Email: dpeart@fireworks.com	Zip: 44505
Representing: Phantom Fireworks	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 24, 2024 @ 10:35 AM
Name: Edward Bonollo	Email: edward.bonollo@gmail.com	Zip: 96706
Representing: International Association of Arson Investigators	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 24, 2024 @ 03:10 PM
Name: Tad Trout	Email: anakama@wik.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: TNT Fireworks	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 24, 2024 @ 03:20 PM
Name: Valerie Chang	Email: hicopd@gmail.com	Zip: 96824
Representing: Hawaii COPD Coalition	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 24, 2024 @ 04:59 PM
Name: Cori Weston	Email: cori.weston@gmail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 06:37 AM
Testimony: Aloha Chair Okimoto and members of the Committee. I am writing in strong support of Bill 22 which amends the Fire Code to permit the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks. Honolulu's ban on consumer fireworks has had the unintended consequences of individuals going to the black market to purchase illegal aerial fireworks which pose a much greater safety risk to our community. Bill 22 offers a safer alternative. Many of us have wonderful fun memories of family gatherings to celebrate New Year's Eve and July 4th with consumer fireworks such as the fountains, ground spinners and sparklers. This bill provides a reasonable and safe alternative for families to continue their treasured traditions of celebrating the holidays with safe fireworks and will reduce the demand for illegal fireworks. Bill 22 is also an efficient use of our commendable and much appreciated police and fire fighting resources, already stretched with keeping us safe and their time should not be spent on tracking these consumer non-aerial fireworks enjoyed by families. Mahalo for your		

consideration and support of Bill 22.

Cori Weston, CEO and Founder CCW Associates LLC

Name:

Jeffrey Weston

Email:

jeffrey.weston1@gmail.com

Zip:

96825

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Jun 25, 2024 @
06:44 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Okimoto and members of the Committee. This is submitted in strong support of Bill 22, which amends the Fire code to permit the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks. One of the very special traditions of Hawaii is enjoying consumer fireworks with our friends and families and I have wonderful memories of my children enjoying the fireworks with their cousins at Popo and Gung Gung homes and our aunties gatherings. It has not been the same since the ban on consumer fireworks. The ban has had unintended consequences for our community and drives locals to the black market to purchase illegal aerals which pose a much greater safety risk to the community. Bill 22 offers a safer alternative and provides a reasonable option to our families to continue the life long traditions of celebrating the holidays. Bill 22 will also reduce the demand for illegal fireworks. It's important that we keep our traditions as it is what makes Hawaii special. Thank you for your support. I ask for your favorable consideration in passing this bill. Jeffrey Weston

Name:

Jamie Yamada

Email:

jtakaesu@hotmail.com

Zip:

96825

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Jun 25, 2024 @
10:09 AM

Testimony:

Testimony:

In Oahu, fireworks are deeply embedded in cultural traditions, especially during New Year's Eve and the Fourth of July. These events provide a communal experience that strengthens bonds among residents and connects them with their heritage, particularly within Asian and Pacific Islander communities where fireworks symbolize warding off evil spirits and welcoming prosperity. Legalizing sparklers and fountains would not only preserve these important cultural practices but also enhance them by allowing safer and more regulated participation, thereby enriching the cultural fabric of Oahu County.

Allowing the sale and use of sparklers and fountains would likely lead to a surge in consumer demand, particularly around major celebrations like the Fourth of July and New Year's Eve. Local businesses, including fireworks vendors and general retailers, would benefit from the increased sales, contributing to local economic growth.

The sale of legalized fireworks can generate significant tax revenues. These taxes can be levied on sales, licenses, and permits associated with fireworks. This revenue can be used to fund public services, infrastructure projects, or even community safety programs related to fireworks usage.

Sincerely,

Jamie Yamada

Name: Stephanie Kendrick	Email: skendrick@hawaiianhumane.org	Zip: 96826
Representing: Hawaiian Humane Society	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 11:01 AM

Name: Tina Yamaki	Email: tyamaki@rmhawaii.org	Zip: 96816
Representing: Retail Merchants of Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 12:40 PM

Name: Jodi Nakama	Email: jodi1269@yahoo.com	Zip: 96701
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 12:48 PM

Name: Hawaiian Electric	Email: nancy.bernal@hawaiianelectric.com	Zip: 96840
Representing: Hawaiian Electric	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 02:53 PM

Name: lynne matusow	Email: lynnehi@aol.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 03:02 PM

Testimony:

Shibai. This ill conceived bill is a gift to those who get their jollies off by the setting of fireworks, whenever and wherever

they want. Fireworks which can injure or kill wild and pet animals, children, and adults. I once witnessed a child set light one of these supposedly “harmless” fireworks and a wild pigeon was killed in a driveway in the Downtown area.

You need to listen to HFD and kill this bill, now. HFD is supposed to fight fires, protect us, and you should not make their job more difficult.

These wares also add smoke, making the air harder to breathe. There are at least 100,000 estimated/confirmed cases of COPD, with more suffering from asthma, who will be adversely affected by the approval of this measure. Some will end up in emergency rooms, with medical costs rising. People’s health, and that of their pets, is more important than the excuse of cultural history.

All too often you see those suffering from lung ailments using their emergency inhalers in the streets.

Anyone who believes that passage of this bill will result in fewer illegal aerals and other fireworks being used year-round is delusional.

The only legal fireworks should be those run by the professionals. The amateurs should stay out of it.

Please end this idiocy and vote no.

Name: Nandita Sharma	Email: nanditaranisharma@gmail.com	Zip: 96744
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 03:08 PM

Testimony:

I strongly oppose this measure as illegal fireworks continue to terrorize pets and people alike. Rather than liberalizing fireworks restrictions now, I would like you to show that the City Council is finally serious about keeping explosives out of our communities. Law enforcement must protect the people and animals of O’ahu from the noise and air pollution that wreak havoc on our most vulnerable populations.

Name: Deborah Bukala	Email: 808debi@gmail.com	Zip: 96712
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 03:13 PM

Testimony:

I oppose bill 22. In relation to the fire code.

As a senior with PTSD i firmly oppose any fireworks in Hawaii .

Name:

Melanie Kim

Email:

Feisty9267@yahoo.com

Zip:

96915

Representing:

Self

Position:

Oppose

Submitted:

Jun 25, 2024 @
07:57 PM

Testimony:

I oppose Bill 22. As a healthcare worker who works at the hospital that has the only Burn Center for the state of Hawaii, I have seen the that impact that illegal fireworks have on human life. These people sustain severe burns that are so severe that they require high-dose pain medication and sedation so that staff can clean the necrotic tissue burned tissue to prevent infection. These people lose limbs, lose their sight, lose their life. That's the physical harm. The emotional and financial harm is also there. Many are depressed because of the life altering change that happens after lighting up a firework. Many of them are providers for their family and are no longer able to work. I support celebrating our holidays, but I always value safety. I hope the public safety Council does too.

Name:

Susan Eubank

Email:

tigerlily@hawaii.rr.com

Zip:

96815

Representing:

Self

Position:

Oppose

Submitted:

Jun 25, 2024 @
08:00 PM

Testimony:

I oppose Bill 022/24.

Fireworks, illegal or otherwise, are a danger to humans, animals, structures and nature. Not to mention the terrible pollution from smoke and debris they cause. Too many tragedies and destruction from fireworks..the fires they can start, injuries, all in the name of "celebrating" events with these fireworks! Something has to be done to stop the flow of illegal fireworks into our state, as well as stopping their use, PERIOD!

Susan Eubank

Name:

Bonnie Gollero

Email:

gb_gb808@yahoo.com

Zip:

96816

Representing:

Self

Position:

Oppose

Submitted:

Jun 25, 2024 @
08:01 PM

Testimony:

The Department of Law Enforcement's Illegal Fireworks Task Force did a great job in reducing the number of illegal bombs

going off this year. It was a tremendous relief not to have to suffer through another traumatic year of constant bombardment that begins after Thanksgiving, and is still heard through Valentine's Day. State and federal agencies worked together to interdict more than 40 tons of illegal explosives before they could pose a danger. I have neighbors who have died, had their house burned down, or been severely injured by fireworks. Rather than liberalizing fireworks restrictions now, our government needs to show that it is finally serious about keeping explosives permanently out of our communities. Let's continue to support the task force in intercepting as many illegal shipments possible so we can finally enjoy a quiet New Year. Law enforcement must protect the people and animals of O'ahu from the noise and air pollution that wreak havoc in our communities, especially on our most vulnerable populations. Fireworks are a fire hazard that puts the public safety at risk.

Name: Marian Hussenbux	Email: mhussenbux@btinternet.com	Zip: 00000
Representing: Animal Interfaith Alliance	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Jun 25, 2024 @ 08:25 PM

Testimony:

Bill 22, Relating to the Fire Code, would allow for the sale of consumer fireworks leading up to the holidays of New Years Eve, Chinese New Year and July 4th.

Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain joins with our colleagues in Hawaiian Humane to oppose this measure as illegal fireworks continue to terrorise companion animals and vulnerable people alike.

We are informed that the city banned all consumer fireworks except firecrackers in 2010 in response to house fires and loss of life. The ban also was intended to reduce the sheer volume of fireworks coming into the state, which was cited as making it impossible to spot the illegal explosives. The lack of a concerted effort by law enforcement has hampered progress in the past 14 years, but we are glad to read that that is changing. State and federal agencies have worked together to interdict more than 40 tons of illegal explosives before they could pose a danger.

Rather than liberalizing fireworks restrictions now, your government needs to show that it is finally serious about keeping explosives out of your communities.

Law enforcement must protect the people and animals of O'ahu from the noise and air pollution that wreak havoc on your most vulnerable populations, such as older people and veterans.

We beg to oppose Bill 22.

Name: STEPHANIE MCLAUGHLIN	Email: smclaughlin808@gmail.com	Zip: 96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Oppose	Jun 25, 2024 @ 09:12 PM
Testimony: I strongly oppose Bill 22 relating to the fire code. Please do not allow fireworks to be sold to the public. For the past 30 years, fireworks in residential areas have scared my canine family members and create respiratory and breathing problems for me and my family. If people want to enjoy fireworks, they can attend public events that ensure that safety measures are taken to prevent injury.		
Name: Jennifer Chiwa	Email: jennifer.chiwa@gmail.com	Zip: 96814-1808
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 02:15 AM
Testimony: Aloha Members of the Committee on Public Safety. Please oppose Bill 22. I support keeping the fire code as is and strongly restrictive. Please support those in law enforcement, fire fighting, emergency management and the medical field who testify repeatedly for strong restrictions on fireworks for the health and safety of the people and animals of Hawaii. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.		
Name: Wayne Niide	Email: niidew@aol.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 03:57 AM
Testimony: Respectfully submitted: I am in opposition to Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code." In just a few months, state and federal agencies worked together to interdict more than 40 tons of illegal explosives before they could pose a danger. Rather than liberalizing fireworks restrictions now, our government needs to show that it is finally serious about keeping explosives out of our communities. Law enforcement must protect the people and animals of O'ahu from the noise and air pollution that wreak havoc on our most vulnerable populations.		
Name:	Email:	Zip:

Noelle Izumi	noelleizumi@gmail.com	96813
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 06:54 AM
Testimony: I am in opposition to Bill 22 relating to the fire code. Being a pet owner for over 10yrs, I have had anxiety and frustration with fireworks being used and abused during times of big celebrations or throughout the year in the neighborhood. I have tried everything from closing all the doors and windows to driving around to sedating my dogs to calm them down. Every year I am forced to come up with finding a solution to calm my pets from the fireworks sounds. As they get older, last year has been by far the worst with having them peeing on their person and throughout the house with fear. They constantly shake in fear and do not go outside until a few days after the fireworks have stopped. The big explosions shake our home and our hearts. I have asked my neighbors in the past to stop popping fireworks as my 94yr old grandmother gets startling and in fear of her having a heart attack. Something needs to be done. I ask that you please help us, our kupuna and our pets feel safe in our communities.		
Name: Sean Johnston	Email: seanjohn1997@yahoo.com	Zip: 96797
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 06:59 AM
Testimony: My name is Sean Johnston, and I'm in support of Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to allow the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks. I have fond memories of celebrating New Year's Eve and July 4th with family and friends, always looking forward to playing with sparklers and other fireworks. It was a cherished tradition. I would like my son and daughter to experience the same joy, and I would provide proper parental supervision, just as my parents did for me when I was a child. Since the ban on consumer fireworks was enacted, many neighborhoods on Oahu have seen an increase in illegal aerial fireworks. Bill 22 offers a safer alternative. Families on Oahu should be able to continue the tradition of celebrating holidays with fireworks, just like those on the neighbor islands. My family and I urge you to pass Bill 22. Thank you.		
Name: Noelle Izumi	Email: noelleizumi@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 07:00 AM
Testimony:		

I am in opposition to Bill 22 relating to the fire code. Being a pet owner for over 10yrs, I have had anxiety and frustration with fireworks being used and abused during times of big celebrations or throughout the year in the neighborhood. I have tried everything from closing all the doors and windows to driving around to sedating my dogs to calm them down. Every year I am forced to come up with finding a solution to calm my pets from the fireworks sounds. As they get older, last year has been by far the worst with having them peeing on their person and throughout the house with fear. They constantly shake in fear and do not go outside until a few days after the fireworks have stopped. The big explosions shake our home and our hearts. I have asked my neighbors in the past to stop popping fireworks as my 94yr old grandmother gets startling and in fear of her having a heart attack.

Something needs to be done. I ask that you please help us, our kupuna and our pets feel safe in our communities.

Name: Bill Dixon	Email: bill.r.dixon@gmail.com	Zip: 96744
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 08:06 AM

Testimony:

I strongly oppose Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code, which would overturn a ban on consumer fireworks stronger than firecrackers. The bill would undercut a years-long effort by the city to stop house fires caused by fireworks and reduce the overwhelming volume of fireworks entering the state. The ban is working: In just a few months, the Department of Law Enforcement's Illegal Fireworks Task Force has helped interdict more than 40 tons of illegal explosives before they could pose a danger. Ending the ban serves no immediately apparent public purpose, since the ban already allows residents to celebrate designated holidays with firecrackers. However, ending the ban does pose increased risk of personal injuries, property damage and - in a drought-affected area - wildfires. It also poses a direct threat of trauma for children, pets and many adults. And it increases the ability of criminals to import large amounts of explosives for illegal use beyond holiday celebrations. I urge you to defeat this ill-informed measure.

Name: Brian Eji	Email: Brianeji777@gmail.com	Zip: 96821
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 08:31 AM

Testimony:

I am contacting you to discuss the safety concerns regarding the incidents in our neighborhood. Illegal aerial fireworks have been detonated from the valley beneath Halekoa Drive on a semi-annual basis. These aerals have disrupted the serenity of our community and caused significant concern for our safety and property.

As a resident of the ridge of Halekoa Drive, I have personally witnessed the hazards these illegal fireworks present. The explosive displays are frequently unpredictable and can result in accidents, fires, and injuries. There have been instances

in which these aerals have fallen in close proximity to residential areas, causing concerns about the potential for fires

The complete prohibition of aerial and novelty fireworks has resulted in the distribution of unregulated and frequently hazardous products in a black market. Legalizing novelty fireworks, such as sparklers and fountains, can offer a safer and more legal alternative to these hazardous aerals. Sparklers and fountains are generally safer, easier to manage, and pose a substantially lower risk of causing injuries or fires. The risks associated with illegal aerial fireworks can be mitigated by providing a regulated and safe compromise, thereby reducing the allure and demand for it.

Ultimately, the objective is to establish a balance that allows residents to participate in festive celebrations without jeopardizing their safety. Our community can be safeguarded from the hazards of illegal aerial fireworks while still respecting our cultural traditions and celebratory practices by collaborating to legalize and regulate sparklers and fountains. We would be deeply appreciative of your assistance and cooperation in this matter, as we endeavor to ensure the safety of all individuals in our community.

Name: Marc Britos	Email: mbritos46@gmail.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 08:42 AM

Testimony:

Subject: Endorsement of Bill 22 by Marc Britos, Resident and Father

Aloha Councilmembers,

As a dedicated resident of Honolulu and a father, I, Marc Britos, wish to express my unequivocal support for Bill 22. I am confident that this proposal holds substantial benefits for our city and our families.

Many of us, including esteemed councilmembers, hold fond memories of our childhoods, filled with the joyous crackling of firecrackers, the sparkling brilliance of sparklers, and the majestic displays of fountains during New Year's celebrations with our loved ones. Unfortunately, these moments of innocent joy have become a relic of the past due to current restrictions.

Despite the existing ban, there has been a noticeable annual increase in aerial fireworks displays, underscoring the difficulty of completely eradicating their use. Bill 22 presents a prudent compromise by permitting the controlled use of specific fireworks. This approach not only enhances safety by reducing accidents and fires but also creates a significant economic opportunity for the city and county through potential revenue generation from taxation.

I firmly believe that this proposal achieves a delicate balance between addressing safety concerns and preserving our

cherished fireworks tradition. The primary rationale for supporting this legislation is the preservation of our cultural and familial traditions, which have historically been an integral part of New Year's festivities. By permitting families to legally engage in the use of select consumer fireworks, we have the opportunity to revive and safeguard these traditional practices—a responsibility we all share.

I trust in your support for this legislation. It is imperative that we reassess the current ban to ensure that our community can legally and safely relive New Year's memories. Bill 22, in my view, represents a beneficial move for the people of Honolulu.

Sincerely,

Marc Britos
Resident and Father
Honolulu, HI

Name: Sandie Wong	Email: sawonglaw@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 09:01 AM

Testimony:
I strongly oppose this bill. Fireworks, not done by professionals, are a fire and safety hazard. They also disrupt the quiet enjoyment of the majority of citizens in the City and County of Honolulu. I dread New Year's Eve and the 4th of July because people go crazy with the fireworks. They do not follow the law and are popping before and after the designated times. Also, these illegal "bombs" that they set off needs to strictly prohibited and enforced. Thank you.

Name: Roxy Perez	Email: roxannevperez@gmail.com	Zip: 96744
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 09:19 AM

Testimony:
Councilmember Val Okimoto, Chair
Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety

RE: Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code – In Support
Thursday, June 27, 2024; 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to permit the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks.

Honolulu is the only County in the State that has a ban on consumer fireworks. The ban has resulted in people purchasing illegal fireworks to celebrate New Year’s Eve and July 4th, which have a greater health and safety risk.

Bill 22 provides a safe alternative. Many of us miss celebrating the holidays with sparklers, ground spinners and fountains. As the ban has had unintended consequences and we have seen a proliferation of illegal aerial fireworks, I urge you to pass Bill 22.

Roxy Perez

Name: Lynn Ishii	Email: ljishimobile@gmail.com	Zip: 96786
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 09:51 AM

Testimony:

I am in opposition to Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code and here's why:

- 1) Fireworks as a cultural tradition is being exploited to the point that illegal use out side of legal and culturally relevant windows of time does not allow those with pets or mental vulnerabilities to prepare and protect themselves and pets from trauma.
- 2) By lifting restrictions of commercial sale and use, you are also eliminating legal justifications for those that abuse restrictions. More so, you are bending to the pressures of illegal users which is unconsonianable.
- 3) Let's NOT forget the fire hazards these types of fireworks pose! Most of us have or know someone how has suffered the consequences of wild/home fires.
- 4) Laws desuade illegal use. Making restricted fireworks available through commercial sales only exacerbate the existing problem.
- 5) Finally, my rescued dogs are my therapy dogs by reciprocally also needing me to be there for their therapy. Fireworks going off at all times of the days and nights mean I cannot always be with them and only magnify our trauma.

I wish that you will oppose Bill 22.

Name: Kum Chang	Email: bustedbyu808@yahoo.com	Zip: 96701
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Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 10:03 AM
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Testimony:

Aloha,

As a parent of a young 7 year old and a french bulldog, I support Bill 22. This bill will help chip away on consumer demand of illegal and dangerous explosives while steering responsible families access to enjoy time honored cultural traditions.

Fireworks, legal or illegal, have always been part of Hawaii's celebratory culture especially on New Years. We are aware and have adjusted in preparation of New Years --- close windows and doors, feed Benadryl to your pet, sleep early, watch tv, etc --- so the logic that the 'status quo' of looking the other way is safer is disingenuous.

We all prepare for New Years whether safe in our homes or celebrating with families and friends. The logic that the current fireworks regulation and 'status quo' are working to keep us safe and shouldn't be revisited hasn't seen the illegal explosives on New Years.

I support Bill 22.

Name: Chad Yokoo	Email: cyokoo1983@gmail.com	Zip: 96817
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Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 10:18 AM
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Testimony:

I strongly support Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to permit the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks.

Honolulu is the only County in the State that has a ban on consumer fireworks. The ban has resulted in people purchasing illegal fireworks to celebrate New Year's Eve and July 4th, which have a greater health and safety risk.

Bill 22 provides a safe alternative. Many of us miss celebrating the holidays with sparklers, ground spinners and fountains. As the ban has had unintended consequences and we have seen a proliferation of illegal aerial fireworks, I urge you to pass Bill 22.

Name: Shanelle Hughes	Email: jonellefukushima@gmail.com	Zip: 96785
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Representing: Hanap'a Keiki Hunting Club	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @
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		10:56 AM
Name: Nani Andrea Barretto	Email: directors@hawaiiwildfire.org	Zip: 96743
Representing: Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 10:59 AM
Name: Maile Tavares	Email: jonellefukushima@gmail.com	Zip: 96745
Representing: Te'eo Te Turama	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 11:03 AM
Name: JoNelle Fukushima	Email: jonellefukushima@gmail.com	Zip: 96720
Representing: Tutu Ohana Quilts	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 11:06 AM
Name: Margaret Anne Forshey	Email: annejforshey@gmail.com	Zip: 96706
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 11:26 AM
Name: Jamie Johnston	Email: jamielumjohnston@gmail.com	Zip: 96797
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 11:27 AM
Name: Russ Nakamura	Email: kavajuce@gmail.com	Zip: 96701
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 11:45 AM
Testimony: My name is Russ Nakamura. Retired, taxpayer, and grandfather.		

I support Bill 22 out of my selfish need to celebrate legally with my family and grandkids. This bill is a good compromise at a time when aerals are more of a danger than a simple fountain firework.

Moreover, access to black market goods has run rampant and is based on supply and demand. I am tired of seeing \$60 for an array pack of fountains on Oahu on black market sheets of paper when I know consumers can purchase legally a similar product for \$20 on Maui.

It is confusing that Honolulu is very restrictive but neighbor island communities are enjoying consumer fireworks with families and friends. Let's support a safe and legal alternative for families in Honolulu who wish to continue the tradition of consumer fireworks during celebrations rather than high cost of black market illegals.

Thank you for your support of Bill 22 as a safer alternative.

Name: Mildred Ching	Email: mching.lcg@gmail.com	Zip: 96744
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 11:53 AM

Testimony:

Dear Chair Okimoto,

I submit this in strong support of Bill 22 which amends the Fire Code to permit the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks. As a life long resident of Hawaii and Kaneohe, I have enjoyed having my family over to enjoy the safe consumer fireworks. The sparklers, fountains and ground spinners are not noisy and are not aerals. I continue to see the use of illegal aerals on the windward side and believe that this is due to those individuals who go to the black market to purchase illegal fireworks which pose a much greater safety risk to our community.

Bill 22 provides a safer option for people who want to celebrate and keep our traditions alive without the risk of aerals and without the loud noise and smoke that is caused by the illegal aerals and other "bomb" like fireworks.

I am a pet lover and admire our fire department personnel for all that they do as well as the Humane Society and Bill 22 will not further endanger our furry friends or increase the risk of fire, to the contrary, I believe that Bill 22 will help reduce the illegal aerals.

Mildred Ching

Name: Donna Ching	Email: donnalching@icloud.com	Zip: 96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Support	Jun 26, 2024 @ 01:01 PM
Testimony: Despite owning a very nervous dog, my personal belief is that the proliferation of illegal, fire-starting aerals and house-shaking, animal-traumatizing bombs is a direct result of the 2010 consumer ban on firecrackers and sparkler. For generations before that families gathered with the kids and grandkids for dinner and afterwards, in the driveway to light off a string of firecrackers at midnight and did some harmless, relatively quiet sparkling devices. Family fun that even my dog would prefer! The process we have now - buying a permit weeks prior to a holiday for a ridiculously small number of firecrackers is so flawed it's no wonder no one bothers. Separating the purchase of the permit from the fireworks means that you may pay for the permit only to find out later that no firecrackers are sold out and your permit is worthless. It's no wonder so many people turn to the black market to keep family traditions alive. We should simultaneously focus energy on a crack down on the transportation and distribution of dangerous commercial-grade aerals and bombs while we allow families to once again have access to the firecrackers and sparklers that memories and traditions are built on. Watch the demand for the illegal stuff drop! Mahalo for your support of Bill 22!		
Name: Melissa Mackintosh	Email: melissamackintosh5@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 01:09 PM
Testimony: I am writing in strong support of Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to permit the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks, while keeping aerial fireworks illegal. Honolulu's ban on consumer fireworks has had the unintended consequence of a significant increase in illegal aerial fireworks. Every New Year's Eve and July 4th, we see and hear these illegal fireworks and "bombs" across Oahu, which pose health and safety risks to people and animals. Bill 22 will permit the sale of ground-based consumer fireworks such as sparklers, fountains and spinners; a much safer option and the aerals and "bombs" will still be illegal. Honolulu is the only county in the State that bans consumer fireworks. Bill 22 is reasonable; it allows for cherished family traditions of celebrating New Year's Eve and July 4th with ground-based fireworks and hopefully will help curb the purchase of illegal aerial fireworks.		

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support. I ask for your favorable consideration in passing Bill 22.

Name:

Chad Sakagawa

Email:

chad.sakagawa@gmail.com

Zip:

96789

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Jun 26, 2024 @
01:42 PM

Testimony:

As a proud parent of a young girl, I share fond memories of creating lasting memories with safe, legal, and regulated sparklers and fountains, just like I did when I was young.

This bill has no impact on illegal "bombs" and "explosives," which will remain illegal. Bill 22 provides a safe and legal alternative for Honolulu families who want to continue the tradition of celebrating with consumer fireworks, without resorting to the high cost and dangers of black-market illegals.

Enforcement efforts should address illegal "bombs" and "explosives." Sparklers and fountains are not loud, noise-emitting fireworks. I believe that Bill 22 will help reduce the illegal demand for "bombs" and "explosives".

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Name:

Bronson Gonzales

Email:

bronsonkkgonzales@gmail.com

Zip:

96792

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Jun 26, 2024 @
02:26 PM

Testimony:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

I AM IN STRONG SUPPOURT of Bill 22 which amends the Fire Code to permit the use of safe, consumer fireworks in Honolulu County. I still remember the joy and comradery that New Years and Fourth of July brought for my family. As a child, we would meet up with the rest of my family at my grandmothers house. Here, all us kids ran around with mosquito punks in our hands taking turns throwing "ground-blooms" on the ground. While us kids ran around with smiles on our faces, our parents sat back, enjoyed a few drinks, and reminisced about the old times. This was our tradition for years until the ban was enacted.

With the enactment of Bill 22, I feel that it can help instill the value of family and togetherness back into Honolulu county. Bill 22 only seeks to allow consumer fireworks, not the bigger and more dangerous types like aerals. Since the initial

enactment of the ban, I have yet to see a halt on the use of these more dangerous types of fireworks. Bill 22 seeks to legalize only the consumer fireworks that families can enjoy safely. I am in support of this bill to help bring this tradition back to my community. I want my children to be able to experience the same fun I had with my family.

In sum, I ask for the favorable consideration of Bill 22. Hawai'i's culture is unique, and this tradition is very important to the local community. Respectfully, I urge the council to vote "yes" on Bill 22.

Name: Joni Tanimoto	Email: joni.chieko@gmail.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 02:31 PM

Testimony:

Councilmember Val Okimoto, Chair

Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice Chair

Committee on Public Safety

RE: Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code – In Support

Thursday, June 27, 2024; 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to permit the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks.

Honolulu is the only County in the State that has a ban on consumer fireworks. The ban has resulted in people purchasing illegal fireworks to celebrate New Year’s Eve and July 4th, which have a greater health and safety risk.

Growing up in Hawaii, I have cherished memories of celebrating numerous holidays with family and friends, and always looked forward to playing with fireworks such as fountains, ground spinners and sparklers. I would like my children to be able to have the same experiences.

Bill 22 provides a safe alternative. Many of us miss celebrating the holidays with sparklers, ground spinners and fountains. As the ban has had unintended consequences and we have seen a proliferation of illegal aerial fireworks, I urge you to pass Bill 22.

Joni Tanimoto

Name:	Email:	Zip:
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John Hirai	johnhirai@gmail.com	96789
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 03:07 PM
Testimony: To legalize fireworks means to set guardrails, fund public programs, and allow access to resources to a situation that is already happening. Prohibiting fireworks hasn't decreased its usage. There seems that more people popping fireworks than ever before.		
Name: Michael Walker	Email: michael.j.walker@hawaii.gov	Zip: 96813
Representing: State of Hawaii Department of Land & Natural Resources Division of Forestry & Wildlife	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 03:48 PM
Name: Jamie Tanimoto	Email: jmekt@hotmail.com	Zip: 96744
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 04:10 PM
Name: Ashley McIver	Email: westonay@gmail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 04:24 PM
Testimony: Dear Chair Okimoto, I am writing in strong support of Bill 22 which amends the Fire Code to permit the sale and use of ground based consumer fireworks. Honolulu's ban on consumer fireworks has had the unintended consequences of individuals going to the black market to purchase illegal aerial fireworks which pose a much greater safety risk. My family and friends have enjoyed safely using sparklers, fountains and ground spinners and we miss these at celebrations. I recognize that there may be concerns about smoke and noise but these consumer fireworks do not have the amount of noise or smoke that the illegal fireworks have. Bill 22 would decrease and hopefully eliminate illegal aerial fireworks. Additionally, the fire hazard is significantly less than the illegal fireworks given the very small size and limited scope of the		

consumer non aerial fireworks.

I urge the Council to vote in favor of Bill 22 and retain the tradition and cultural significance of fireworks that makes Hawaii so very special.

Ashley McIver

Name: ALBERTA Flagg	Email: ajf@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96826
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 26, 2024 @ 07:02 PM

Testimony:
In opposition to Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code

Name: Natalie Iwasa	Email: iwasajunk@mail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 27, 2024 @ 04:20 AM

Name: Germaine Okino	Email: gokino@gmail.com	Zip: 96797
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 27, 2024 @ 07:41 AM

Name: Korynn Grenert	Email: korynng@gmail.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 27, 2024 @ 08:02 AM

Name: Asa Iwasa	Email: iwasajunk@mail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 27, 2024 @ 09:14 AM

Testimony:

I hope this isn't too late. I support Bill 22 to allow some fireworks.

Name: RAY TABATA	Email: TABATA@HAWAII.EDU	Zip: 96822
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Jun 27, 2024 @ 09:33 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

I read with consternation that the proposed Council to allow sparklers and small firecrackers on New Year's and 4th of July passed 2nd reading. Before the third reading, I would strongly suggest that the bill be amended with a "sunset clause" (perhaps 2 years after going into effect,, or end of 2nd calendar year after passage).

As is common with many pieces of legislation (e.g., red light camera law), a sunset clause would allow the Council to evaluate how the ordinance is working. I am pessimistic that all residents will adhere to the law with respect to types of fireworks allowed and when they may be used. The C&C should evaluate whether the ordinance is being misused and is leading to more illegal fireworks in our communities. The amendment should provide for a reasonable period of evaluation and process for allowing or not allowing sparklers and small firecrackers.

We already know the many arguments against fireworks---smoke, noise, respiratory issues, PTSD, fires, harm to animals, etc. It would be prudent to analyze the effects of changing the current law before allowing long-term loosening of our fireworks laws. We also need time to assess how the fireworks task force is progressing with enforcement and prosecution of illegal importation, sales, and use of fireworks.

Name: Jordan Lowe	Email: Jordan.Lowe@hawaii.gov	Zip: 96813
Representing: Hawaii Department of Law Enforcement	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Jun 27, 2024 @ 10:06 AM

Name: Sherry Menor-McNamara	Email: ngarcia@cochawaii.org	Zip: 96813
Representing: Chamber of Commerce Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Jun 27, 2024 @ 11:06 AM

PHANTOM FIREWORKS

Distributors of Phantom® and Wolf Pack® Brand Fireworks

2445 Belmont Ave
Youngstown, Ohio 44505
Danial Peart, Director of Government Affairs

o. 330.746.1064
dpeart@fireworks.com
www.fireworks.com

June 27th, 2024

Councilmember Tommy Waters, Chair
Councilmember Esther Kiaʻāina, Vice-Chair
Members of the Honolulu City Council

Bill 22 – Relating to the Fire Code; City Council Meeting June 27, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

Dear Chair Waters and Vice Chair Kiaʻāina, and Members of the Council.

My name is Dan Peart, Director of Government Affairs for Phantom Fireworks. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Bill 22.

The prospect of legalizing the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks is exciting for several reasons, but chief among them are the two reasons I'll discuss today.

Principally, with no legal consumer fireworks able to be purchased and used in Honolulu, the illegal market is left to flourish. I won't suggest that Bill 22 will completely eliminate illegal fireworks in Honolulu, but we've seen in other states that the inclusion of a legal option for consumer fireworks shows a downturn in illegal usage as early as year one. Many consumers will opt for the legal variant for the peace of mind it offers while still being able to celebrate their favorite holiday or religious event.

Currently, Phantom Fireworks works only with non-profit groups in Hawaii. Not only has this been good for Phantom, but selling fireworks is the biggest fundraiser of the year for many of the groups that we work with. These relationships tend to be long-term and mutually beneficial. With the ability to expand to Honolulu, we would be able to add more non-profit groups to our operations and ultimately grow both our footprint and theirs.

Legal, responsible, and safe consumer fireworks usage is the trend across the U.S., with injury rates plummeting while usage has soared in recent years. The inclusion of ground-based consumer fireworks should help to ease some of the illegal market while helping various non-profit groups at the same. For this reason, I respectfully urge the council to vote "yes" on Bill 22.

Sincerely,
Danial Peart



Date: June 21, 2024

To: Public Safety Committee
Val Okimoto, Chair
Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Tyler Dos Santos-Tam
Andria Tupola

Submitted By: International Arson Investigators International (IAAI)
Edward Bonollo, Hawaii Chapter 62 President

RE: Testimony Apposed to Bill 22 (2024): Relating to the Fire Code
Thursday, June 27, 2024, 1 p.m.

Aloha e Chairperson Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba, and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Hawaii Chapter of the International Arson Investigators International (IAAI) thank you for considering our opposition to Bill 22 (2024) relating to the Fire Code. As you know, Bill 22 has passed two readings in front of the Honolulu City Council and is scheduled to be read again on July 10, 2024 at 10 a.m.

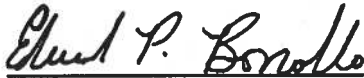
Bill 22, by making Consumer Fireworks available to the general public without permits, will:

- 1) Increase the risk of serious injury to our communities. There were 6 severe injuries this past New Year's Eve according to Honolulu EMS Director Dr. James Ireland who described the injuries as "permanently disfiguring injuries". Three of the six severe injuries (8 total fireworks related injuries) were to children under 15 years of age. This mirrors the national data supplied to us by our Strategic Partner the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA). The NFPA reports that one third of all firework related injuries are suffered by children under the age of 15.
- 2) Severely tax our Fire Fighters and Emergency Response resources. The Honolulu Fire Department reported 23 Firework related fires New Years Eve 2023. The NFPA reported to us that there is an average of 19,500 firework related fires annually nationwide. We are concerned

that these avoidable incidents place additional strain on the HFD Fire Investigators caseloads as well.

- 3) Make the components of these Consumer Fireworks available to the General Public with no regulation nor ability to track excessive purchases. The explosive power of a couple of boxes of common sparklers is astounding <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBqV1MdUCFQ>. The inherent dangers involved with common consumers altering fireworks are extreme. The danger of these components being used in an act of terrorism will be increased if Consumer Fireworks are available, without permit, without regulation.
- 4) There are regulations in place to limit the amount, and location of fireworks storage for importers and retailers. There will be no regulation, nor limitation to the storage of Consumer Fireworks by individuals in the community. These hazardous materials pose additional threat to HFD Fire Fighters, homeowners, and property.

We urge the committee to oppose this measure. Mahalo for your consideration.



Edward Bonollo
IAAI Hawaii Chapter 62 President
(808)312-8296



Date



June 27, 2024

Councilmember Val Okimoto, Chair
Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety

RE: BILL 22 (2024) Relating to the Fire Code
Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba, and Members of the committee:

Thank you for allowing TNT Fireworks (TNT) to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Bill 22 – Relating to the Fire Code. TNT is the largest distributor of fireworks in the U.S. and an importer and seller of legal and safe consumer fireworks in Hawaii. TNT has had a presence in Hawaii for over 50 years and we partner with retail partners such as Longs Drugs, Marukai, Don Quijote, Costco, Foodland, Malama Market, Food Pantry, Times Supermarkets and many others.

Bill 22 seeks to amend the state Fire Code to permit consumer fireworks such as fountains and sparklers while keeping aerial fireworks unlawful. The proliferation of illegal aerial devices is at an all-time high and legislative efforts aimed at strengthening enforcement and penalties for the use of illegal aerial devices have not proved successful. In the absence of an alternative, the proliferation of black-market access will only continue.

In 2010, the Honolulu City Council banned consumer fireworks except for 5,000 firecrackers with a \$25 permit. The unintended consequence of this action was an inadvertent surge in black market activities as consumers sought alternative sources for consumer fireworks.

The City and County of Honolulu is the only county in the state that prohibits consumer fireworks and, not a surprise, has the undesirable outcome with illegal aeriels lighting up Honolulu skies on New Years Eve. County of Maui, County of Hawaii, and County of Kauai allow the sale and use of consumer fireworks which Bill 22 proposes to align. Additionally, this measure allows firecracker permits to be sold at licensed retail locations the same time firecrackers are bought and sold relieving staffing and enforcement resources at the Honolulu Fire Department and Satellite City Halls.

Instead of driving consumers to the black market, a safer alternative should be available. New York, New Jersey, Arizona, Delaware and others have modified their ban on consumer fireworks and allow the sale of consumer fireworks such as fountains and ground

AMERICAN PROMOTIONAL EVENTS, INC.
2120 MILWAUKEE WAY • TACOMA, WA 98421
TACOMA (253) 922-0800 • FAX (253) 830-2930
www.tntfireworks.com



spinners, which produce significantly less smoke and noise. Currently, fireworks are allowed in 49 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Hawaii consumers are enamored with fireworks and have a long cultural history of fireworks being an integral part of New Years and July 4th family celebrations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure and we look forward to working with all interested stakeholders to address this issue of reducing illegal aerals in our communities while providing a safer alternative to celebrate.

Brian Trim, Vice President

Enclosure



The City & County of HONOLULU

Legal Consumer Fireworks

Cylindrical Fountain

Upon ignition, a shower of colored sparks, and sometimes a whistling effect, is produced.



Cone Fountain

Upon ignition, a shower of colored sparks, and sometimes a whistling effect, is produced.



Smoke Devices

Tube or sphere containing pyrotechnic composition that, upon ignition, produces a white or colored smoke as a primary effect.



Wheels

Pyrotechnic device attached to a post or tree by means of a nail or string. A wheel may contain up to six "driver" units; upon ignition, the wheel revolves, producing a shower of color and sparks and, sometimes, a whistling effect.



Mine / Cakes

Mine – A device that shoots stars in an upward spray pattern.

Cake – Dense-packed collection of mine tubes that are fused together.



Ground Spinners

A small device similar to a wheel in design and effect. When placed on the ground and ignited, a shower of sparks and color is produced by the rapidly spinning device.



Dipped Stick, Sparkler

Stick or wire coated with pyrotechnic composition that produces a shower of sparks upon ignition. Total pyrotechnic composition not to exceed 100 grams per item.



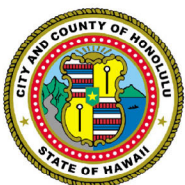
Firecrackers

Generally 1/4" x 1 1/2" or less that come in packs to large bricks. A firecracker makes a single "pop" sound. Many firecrackers strung together will make repetitive "popping" sounds.



Novelties

"Trick and Novelty Devices" means any small firework device not classified as a Consumer of Display Firework. Items contain a small amount of pyrotechnic composition that is friction sensitive.



Celebrate Safely with Legal Consumer Fireworks





The City & County of HONOLULU

ILLEGAL FIREWORKS

Sky Rockets and Missiles

Similar to the Bottle Rocket, a Sky Rocket is attached to a stick or has fins and may have a plastic cap. A missile will have fins rather than a stick. Once lit, it ascends rapidly, high into the air where it explodes.



Bottle Rockets

A firecracker type (tube) attached to a 12" long wooden stick. The stick is placed in a bottle and once lit, it rises into the air, travelling laterally before exploding.



Reloadable Mortars

A shell consisting of a container, a lift charge, a time fuse, a burst charge, and stars/effects. The lift charge propels the shell out of the tube igniting the burst charge at the right altitude, igniting the effects.



Helicopters, Aerial Spinners

A propeller or blade is attached, which, upon ignition, lifts the rapidly spinning device into the air. A visible or audible effect is produced at the height of flight.



Roman Candles

Heavy paper or cardboard tube containing pyrotechnic composition. Upon ignition, up to ten "stars" are individually expelled at several-second intervals.



Parachutes

Upon ignition, one or more parachutes are propelled into the air with stars, smoke, and other effects being discharged as the parachute floats downward.

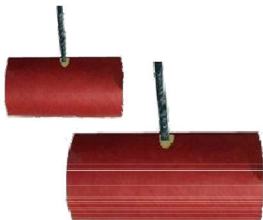


ILLEGAL EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

THE POSSESSION, MANUFACTURING, OR USE OF ILLEGAL EXPLOSIVE DEVICES is a criminal offence.

M-80's, M-100's, etc.

Illegal since the 70's, an M-80 can contain flash powder, black powder, or a composition of materials that are sensitive to shock and can injure or kill people. Can do serious permanent damage to fingers, hands, and eyes.



Improvised Explosive Device (IED)

A pipe bomb is an improvised explosive device, consisting of a tightly sealed section of pipe that is filled with an explosive material. The pipe provides containment, meaning that a low explosive can be used to produce a relatively large explosion.

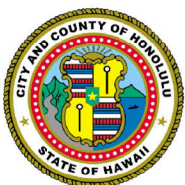
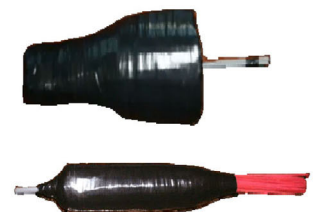


A tennis ball bomb is an improvised explosive device consisting of a tennis ball filled with combustibles or pyrotechnic material with a fuse producing a loud explosion.



Altered Firework

Sparklers are bound together in electrical or duct tape to contain the ignition of the sparklers, providing for a loud "whoomp" sound with a flash of light.



Celebrate Safely with Legal Consumer Fireworks





To: Chair Val Okimoto, Public Safety Chair, Vice Chair Augie Tulba and Committee Members

Hrg: Honolulu City Council

Re: **STRONG Opposition to**

By: Valerie Chang, JD, Executive Director
Hawaii COPD Coalition, www.hawaiicopd.org
P O Box 240053, Honolulu, HI 96824
(808)699-9839
copd.hawaii@yahoo.com

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **OPPOSITION** to **Bill 22 (2024) Relating to the Fire Code** which would make Hawaii noisier, smokier—and **LESS healthy for all**.

My name is Valerie Chang. I am Executive Director of the Hawaii COPD Coalition. Our organization provides services and support to Hawaii's people affected by Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, more commonly known as emphysema and chronic bronchitis. COPD is the fourth leading cause of death in the US and second leading cause of disability. The American Lung Association has estimated that over 50,000 people in Hawaii have COPD; the Hawaii Department of Health surveys indicate that over 45,000 people in Hawaii have already been diagnosed with COPD and it is estimated that at least 45,000 more people may suffer from COPD but remain undiagnosed. Many, many more people in Hawaii suffer from asthma, tuberculosis, pneumonia and other respiratory conditions. Our organization provides free breathing testing, resources, information and support for cessation and those with lung disease.

Our organization sees first-hand how lives are severely affected by lung irritants, including fireworks. People with lung conditions have a hard time breathing especially when there is the extra irritation of smoke and combustion from fireworks.

On a personal note, I have asthma and emphysema. I have had to figure out where to hide from the smoke and odors caused by fireworks every time the holidays (fourth of July and New Year's Eve) approach. It has been wonderful between 2010 and now, when this City Council passed clean air legislation, Bill 34, CD2, to limit the fireworks that make breathing so difficult for many, many of us in this state. Other patients similarly have had to make these plans on where to go to avoid the fumes that can send them to the hospital, except during that interval between 2010 and now. Some patients are compelled to leave our state for the holidays to avoid the smoke and combustion.

Additionally, of course, fireworks increases the risk of fires, especially when places are dry, as evidenced by the devastating fire on Maui and this year on Kauai. Oahu also has numerous brush fires which are attributed to fireworks and other causes. Allowing fireworks to be burned again on Oahu will be a HUGE step backwards and burden our already very busy firefighters with having to put out more fires caused by fireworks, as well as medical emergencies caused by inhaling smoke and particulate matter from fireworks.

Thanks for the opportunity to testify about this issue that is so vital to the health of Hawaii's people. **Please OPPOSE Bill 22.** This issue is very important to our state and our Hawaii COPD Coalition strongly OPPOSES fireworks as written in the bill.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

2700 Waialae Avenue Honolulu, Hawaii 96826
808.356.2200 • HawaiianHumane.org

Date: June 25, 2024

To: Chair Val Okimoto
Vice Chair Augie Tulba
and Members of the Committee on Public Safety

Submitted By: Steph Kendrick, Director of Community Engagement
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2217

RE: Opposition to Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code
Thursday, June 27, 1 p.m., City Council Chamber

Mahalo for considering the Hawaiian Humane Society's opposition to Bill 22, Relating to the Fire Code.

This bill proposes to liberalize the City and County of Honolulu's restrictions on pyrotechnics by allowing for the sale of consumer fireworks. Hawaiian Humane advocates for efforts to restrict fireworks from residential neighborhoods as illegal fireworks continue to fill our communities with explosions that terrorize pets and people alike while disrupting what should be joyous times for local families.

When the city banned all consumer fireworks except firecrackers in 2010, the ban was intended to reduce the sheer volume of fireworks coming into the state, which was cited as making it impossible to spot the illegal fireworks that were setting roofs on fire and leading to tragic injuries and deaths. The idea that fewer legal imports would make the illegal bombs easier to spot was a fine theory. Unfortunately, the intervening 14 years brought no serious enforcement effort. The lack of a robust crack down on the import of illegal explosives was a huge missed opportunity and the people and animals of O'ahu have continued to be traumatized by illegal explosives as a result.

In fact, the problem only seems to get worse. Hawaiian Humane has long educated our community about keeping pets safe from the terror of fireworks around New Years and July 4, but illegal bombs increasingly go off for months at a time without warning. That makes it impossible for pet owners to prepare and creates sustained stress on people and animals, which can do lasting damage to their emotional, mental and physical health.

Neither people nor animals should have to take tranquilizers just to survive the impacts of their neighbors' illegal behavior.

There is good news, however. The Department of Law Enforcement's Illegal Fireworks Task Force is now on the job. In just a few months, state and federal agencies worked together to interdict more than 40 tons of illegal explosives before they could pose a danger. We implore the Council to give this new momentum a chance to bear fruit. Government needs to show it is finally serious about keeping explosives out of our communities and protecting the people and animals of O'ahu from the noise and air pollution that take such a profound toll on our most vulnerable populations.

Liberalization of fireworks restrictions cannot responsibly be considered until the trade in illegal explosives is halted once and for all. As Chair Tommy Waters said upon the approval of the FY25 city budget, public safety must be government's top priority.

We urge you to vote against the passage of Bill 22 and support long-overdue efforts to keep explosives out of our neighborhoods. Mahalo for your consideration.



**TESTIMONY OF TINA YAMAKI, PRESIDENT
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII**

June 27, 2024

Re: BILL 22 (2024) – RELATING TO THE FIRE CODE

Aloha, Chair Okimoto, and members of the Honolulu City Council's Committee on Public Safety. I am Tina Yamaki, President of the Retail Merchants of Hawaii and I appreciate this opportunity to testify.

The Retail Merchants of Hawaii, established in 1901, is a statewide nonprofit trade organization committed to fostering the growth and development of Hawaii's retail sector. Our diverse membership encompasses small mom-and-pop stores, large box stores, resellers, luxury retailers, department stores, shopping malls, online sellers, and local, national, and international chains.

We strongly support Bill 22 (2024), which seeks to amend the state Fire Code to permit consumer fireworks such as fountains and sparklers while maintaining the ban on illegal aerial fireworks.

The City and County of Honolulu is the only county that has banned commercial fireworks that include firecrackers and sparklers.

Firecrackers hold profound cultural significance, especially within the Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino communities in Hawaii. They are an integral part of celebrations such as Chinese New Year, New Year's Eve, and other traditional festivals, symbolizing the warding off evil spirits and the ushering in of good luck and happiness. These celebrations are essential for preserving our rich cultural heritage and fostering a sense of community.

The use of firecrackers during festivals and holidays brings people together. Families, friends, and neighbors gather to celebrate, creating lasting memories and strengthening community bonds. These shared experiences are vital for maintaining the unique spirit of aloha that defines our state. Allowing retailers to sell legal consumer fireworks and enabling the community to celebrate with these fireworks would be greatly appreciated.

The sale and use of consumer fireworks like firecrackers and sparklers contribute significantly to the local economy. Prior to the ban, retailers, distributors, and small businesses used to see a substantial increase in revenue during the festive seasons. This economic boost is especially important for small business owners who rely on seasonal sales to sustain their livelihoods. Many legitimate retailers depended on the sale of legal fireworks like sparklers and firecrackers, knowing that buyers must obtain a permit before purchase. The complete ban on fireworks imposed an additional financial burden on these law-abiding retailers, many of whom are still struggling to stay afloat. Nonprofits and churches also relied on the seasonal pop-up sales of legal fireworks. Allowing the sale of consumer fireworks would support the economic health of these retailers and community organizations.

Since the ban we continue to see more and more "bombs" and aerals lighting up the sky's weeks before the actual holiday from people's residences, from the street fronting people's homes, and at beaches. Banning fireworks did not eliminate their use in Hawaii and has NOT proven to be a viable solution as people still find ways to obtain them illegally, making those in the black market richer. It is important to remember that illegal fireworks are unregulated and pose significant safety risks.



We support the option for retailers to become licensed fireworks permit facilities if they so choose. This would ensure that the sale and use of fireworks are regulated, safe, and confined to permissible types, thereby reducing the prevalence of dangerous, illegal fireworks.

In conclusion, the Retail Merchants of Hawaii strongly supports Bill 22 (2024). Allowing the sale of legal consumer fireworks while maintaining the ban on illegal aerial fireworks respects cultural traditions, supports local businesses and nonprofits, and addresses public safety concerns more effectively than an outright ban.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Councilmember Val Okimoto, Chair
Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety

RE: Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code – In Support
Thursday, June 27, 2024; 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of this measure. My name is Jodi Nakama and I respectfully ask that you pass Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to allow the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks.

Growing up in Hawaii, I have cherished memories of celebrating numerous holidays with family and friends, and always looked forward to playing with fireworks such as fountains, ground spinners and sparklers. I have three children and would like them to have the same experience.

The current ban on consumer fireworks has led to a significant increase in illegal aerial fireworks, which have greater health and safety risks. Bill 22 offers a safer alternative.

My friends and family urge you to pass Bill 22 and allow families in the City & County of Honolulu to continue tradition while preserving public health and safety.

Mahalo,

Jodi Nakama



**Hawaiian
Electric**

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

**Testimony in Opposition to Bill 22 (2024)
Relating to the Fire Code**

Thursday, June 27, 2024
1:00 P.M.
City Council Chamber

Submitted by:
Hawaiian Electric

Dear Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and Members of the Committee,

Hawaiian Electric submits written testimony in opposition to Bill 22 (2024),
Relating to the Fire Code.

Hawaiian Electric recognizes the growing risk wildfires pose to public safety in the communities we serve. The company has worked closely with the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) and other stakeholders on wildfire safety measures such as the Public Safety Power Shutoff program to reduce the risk of wildfires and help keep the public and our communities safe.

Hawaiian Electric appreciates HFD's concerns that fireworks are a known ignition source for wildfires in Hawai'i. Bill 22 (2024) would effectively increase the use of consumer fireworks in the City and County of Honolulu. While Hawaiian Electric understands the cultural significance of fireworks in Hawai'i, we believe that wildfire prevention and public safety are paramount given the elevated risk wildfires pose. It is with these considerations in mind that Hawaiian Electric respectfully opposes Bill 22 (2024).

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Shanelle Hughes
11-2258 Ohialani Drive
Volcano, HI 96785

April 12, 2024

Dear Oahu Firework Committee,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to you as a representative of the Hanap`a Keiki Hunting Club, a club deeply rooted in our community's culture and traditions.

Our mission is to teach our keiki the time-honored practices of hunting and fishing safely, ensuring that these vital skills continue to be passed down through generations. The funds raised from firework sales have been instrumental in our efforts, enabling us to organize more training sessions, provide necessary equipment, and promote safe hunting practices.

But our work goes beyond teaching practical skills. We are also committed to fostering a sense of community and spreading awareness about the importance of hunting and fishing in our culture. The funds have allowed us to reach out to more members of our community, sparking conversations, and strengthening communal bonds.

The potential reinstatement of ground fireworks on Oahu represents more than just a commercial opportunity. It is a chance to invigorate local non-profit organizations, enabling many to further each mission and make a positive impact on our communities.

We believe that every community thrives when its cultural heritage is valued and preserved. The return of ground fireworks could provide a significant boost to our efforts, helping us to continue our work and contribute to the cultural richness of our community.

Thank you for considering our perspective. We wholeheartedly support the return of ground fireworks on Oahu and look forward to the positive impact it could have on local communities.

Best regards,

Shanelle Hughes



Testimony to the Honolulu City Council

Public Safety Committee Meeting on June 27, 2024 at 01:00pm

Strong Opposition to Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code

Dear Chair Val Okimoto, Vice Chair Augie Tulba, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety,

We, the Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization (HWMO), respectfully submit our testimony in strong opposition to Bill 22. As a nonprofit organization dedicated to wildfire prevention and awareness, we are acutely aware of the significant risks posed by the use of consumer fireworks, particularly in our unique and vulnerable wildland environments.

Bill 22 proposes to roll back and weaken the current ordinance that bans all fireworks except permitted firecrackers and permitted professional fireworks shows. Specifically, it seeks to legalize consumer fireworks such as sparklers and fountains. While these items may appear harmless, history has shown that not everyone uses them safely or plays by the rules, leading to unintended and often devastating consequences.

The legalization of consumer fireworks poses a significant threat to public safety and our natural environment. The potential dangers and ignitions of wildland fires are well-documented, and we have been vocal about these risks:

1. **Increased Risk of Wildland Fires:** The introduction of consumer fireworks significantly heightens the risk of igniting wildfires. Hawaii's unique climate and vegetation make our wildlands particularly susceptible to fire, and even a small spark can lead to a large-scale disaster.
2. **Public Safety Concerns:** The use of consumer fireworks has historically resulted in numerous injuries and accidents. Legalizing these items increases the likelihood of improper use, leading to severe injuries or even fatalities. The safety of our community members must remain a top priority.
3. **Environmental Impact:** Wildfires not only destroy natural habitats but also contribute to air pollution and long-term ecological damage. The prevention of such fires is crucial in preserving Hawaii's natural beauty and environmental health.
4. **Strain on Emergency Services:** Allowing consumer fireworks would likely result in an increased number of fire-related incidents, placing additional strain on our already stretched emergency services. This would divert critical resources from other essential public safety needs.

As the state's primary hub organization for wildfire prevention, mitigation, and planning, we urge the Honolulu City Council to prioritize the well-being of our community and environment by rejecting Bill 22. Maintaining the current ordinance, which restricts fireworks to permitted firecrackers and professional displays, is essential in reducing the risk of wildfires and protecting public safety.

We stand ready to support the Council in any efforts to enhance fire prevention measures and to promote awareness about the dangers of fireworks. Together, we can ensure a safer, healthier, and more resilient Hawaii.

Thank you for considering our testimony.

Mahalo nui loa,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature, on the left, reads "Andrea Barretto" in a cursive script. The second signature, on the right, reads "Elizabeth Pickett" in a similar cursive script.

Andrea (Nani) Barretto and Elizabeth Pickett
Co-Executive Directors
Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization
directors@hawaiiwildfire.org
(808) 885-0900
www.hawaiiwildfire.org

Maile Tavares
P.O. Box 2084
Kailua-Kona, HI 96745

April 14, 2024

Dear Consideration Committee,

I am writing to you as a proud member of Te'ea Te Turama, a Tahitian Hula club that is more than just a dance group - it is a vibrant community and a vital part of our cultural heritage.

Our club is a place where tradition meets passion. We are dedicated to preserving the beautiful art of Tahitian Hula, a dance form that is not just a performance, but a powerful expression of our history, our values, and our connection to the natural world.

The funds raised from firework sales over the firework seasons have been instrumental in our efforts. They have allowed us to host regular classes, provide costumes and equipment, and organize performances that bring our community together. More importantly, they have enabled us to share the joy and beauty of Tahitian Hula with a wider audience.

Without these funds, we would struggle to continue our work. The cost of maintaining our club, providing for our dancers, and organizing events is significant. The loss of this funding would be a blow to our club, and to the cultural life of our community.

But it's not just about the money. It's about what we can achieve with it. It's about the young people who discover a passion for dance, the audiences who are moved by our performances, and the sense of pride and belonging that comes from being part of a cultural tradition.

We believe that the return of ground fireworks on Oahu could provide similar benefits for your community, supporting local heritage programs and providing much-needed funds for non-profit organizations.

Thank you for considering our perspective. We wholeheartedly support the return of ground fireworks on Oahu and look forward to the positive impact it could have on local communities.

With warm regards,

Maile Tavares

JoNelle Fukushima
1785 Waianuenue Avenue
Hilo, HI 96720

April 14, 2024

Dear Oahu Fireworks Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Tutu Ohana Quilts, based in the Big Island. Our mission is to preserve and promote our rich cultural heritage by providing much-needed Hawaiian blankets to our local community.

Our organization has been fortunate to benefit significantly from firework sales. The funds raised have been instrumental in allowing us to fulfill our mission. They have enabled us to source quality materials, run workshops, and reach more members of our community than would have otherwise been possible.

Without the funds from firework sales, our ability to operate effectively would be severely compromised. We would struggle to provide the same level of support to our community, and our efforts to preserve and promote our cultural heritage would be hindered.

The impact of these funds extends beyond our organization. The individuals and families who receive our blankets feel a stronger connection to their heritage. The workshops we run foster a sense of community and shared identity that is invaluable.

We believe that reinstating ground fireworks on Oahu could provide similar opportunities for your community. The funds raised could support local nonprofits in carrying out their valuable work, just as they have supported us.

Thank you for considering our perspective. We wholeheartedly support the return of ground fireworks on Oahu and the positive impact it could have on local communities.

Sincerely,

JoNelle Fukushima

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Val A. Okimoto, Chair

Augie Tulba, Vice Chair

Bill 22 (2024) - RELATING TO THE FIRE CODE

- DATE: THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2024
- TIME: 1:00 PM
- PLACE: (VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE), CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

IN OPPOSITION TO THE BILL

Thank you for the opportunity to articulate my position and concerns related to this bill. As a pet owner, animal lover, and resident of a community filled with family pets, I am confused by several aspects of this proposal. Many Hawai'i residents have come out in support of LIMITING fireworks, firecrackers, and other incendiaries in recent years. We all recognize the inherent dangers of these explosive, loud, and invasive devices in our community. We are thankful that the Department of Law Enforcement created the Illegal Fireworks Task Force, and hope to see positive change in this arena. We look forward to safer, better managed celebrations in the future. This proposal seems to move us in the OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

Areas of confusion:

1. How to enforce with changing conditions, increasing demand, and higher temperatures:

- No retailing facility or site shall be allowed at any location where the fire chief deems that sale of firecrackers will pose a threat to public health or safety.

2. How to police when the sales/exchanges are informal and lucrative:

- No person with a valid permit under § 20-6.12 or [20-6.13] § 20-6.13 shall sell or transfer display fireworks or firecrackers to any other person.

3. Permit process seems too lenient. How will the "Fire Chief" enforce? Why allow "14 days after the ending date of the designated firecracker sale period" to "provide permit to the fire chief"?

- For the purposes of this section, licensed retailers may acquire firecracker permits from the fire chief not less than 14 days before the date of the use of the firecrackers; provided that not more than 14 days after the ending date of the

designated firecracker sale period, retailers licensed and subject to this section must provide to the fire chief:

4. Why allow anyone to stockpile 6-month's worth of materials? I understand logistics can cause delays in shipping, but this seems unreasonable, How are the incendiary materials stored?, and how are the public and nearby property protected?

(f) Display fireworks or firecrackers shall only be imported and stored, if necessary, in an amount sufficient for an anticipated three-month inventory; provided that if a licensee provides display fireworks, firecrackers, or articles pyrotechnic more than once a month, the licensee may import or store, if necessary, sufficient display fireworks, firecrackers, or articles pyrotechnic for a six-month inventory."

I fully support the safe, planned, and lawful use of fireworks during designated celebrations. In fact, we take measures to protect our pets and then seek out fireworks displays for New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Fourth of July, Chinese New Year's Day, and for other cultural events. Unfortunately, the release of firecrackers, noise makers, and fireworks occurs almost nightly (definitely every weekend). Let's address safety, first, and minimize the current "free for all" with guidance and insights from the Illegal Fireworks Task Force.

This proposal is not crafted to protect our families or our pets. Please, go back to the drawing board and work in partnership with the Illegal Fireworks Task Force to develop sensible, meaningful legislation that protects our land, property, and our families (both human and animal).

Thank you for the opportunity to articulate my position to this Bill.

I support the position of the Hawaiian Humane Society on this Bill.

Anne Forshey/anneforshey@gmail.com/Ewa Beach, HI 96706

Councilmember Val Okimoto, Chair
Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety

RE: Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code – In Support
Thursday, June 27, 2024; 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and members of the committee:

My name is Jamie Johnston and I am in strong support of Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to permit the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks, while keeping aerial fireworks illegal.

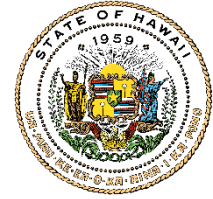
I grew up celebrating New Year's Eve and July 4th holidays with pot luck family gatherings and playing with sparklers, ground spinners and fountains. I would like my children to experience the same joy.

There has been an escalation of illegal aerial fireworks since Honolulu's ban on consumer fireworks. The ban has had the unintended consequence of driving people to the black market and it is the illegal aerial fireworks that present health and safety risks to the community.

Bill 22 offers a safe alternative. Allowing the sale of consumer fireworks will also help generate revenues in permit fees and taxes.

For these reasons, I urge you to pass Bill 22. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support.

Jamie Johnston
94-211 Lumiaina Place
Waipahu, HI 96797



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
Michael Walker
Statewide Fire Protection Forester**

**Before
HONORABLE VAL A. OKIMOTO, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY
Honolulu City Council
City Council Chamber**

**Thursday, June 27, 2024
1:00 PM
City Council Chamber**

**In consideration of
BILL 22**

BILL 22 proposes to revise the Ordinances of Honolulu, to address fireworks use and permitting in the City and County of Honolulu. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly opposes this measure.**

The Department fully opposes the use of fireworks by the general public. The widespread use of fireworks endangers the public in the form of direct injury, house fires, and wildfires.

Members of the public experienced firework-related injuries during recent New Year's Eve celebrations in Honolulu. In 2023 the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) responded to at least eight incidents, including eye injuries, serious burns, and more. Six out of the eight cases resulted in permanent disfigurement, involving the loss of limbs and eyesight. The age of victims ranged from six-years old to senior citizens. A 28 year-old male suffered a fatal head injury from fireworks on New Year's Eve 2022-2023. On April 8, 2011; 5 fatalities resulted from an accidental fireworks explosion at the Waikele Self Storage facility in Waipahu, Hawaii.

Every New Year's Eve, first responder agencies throughout the state experience high operational tempo from fireworks misuse; with incident call volume occasionally exceeding available resources. The Honolulu Fire Department responded to 23 fireworks-related fires from 8 a.m. on Dec 31 2023 and 8 a.m. on Jan. 1 2024. The HFD responded to eight fireworks-related blazes during the same time period of 2022 to 2023. According to the National Fire Protection Association, fireworks cause more than 19,500 fires each year.

Honolulu Fire Department Battalion Chief Jean-Claude Bisch recently described to this Council the

immediate measurable impact of the ban. On New Year's Eve of 2010, the last year consumer fireworks were legal on Oahu, the fire department responded to seven structure fires. The following New Year's Eve, that number was zero.

Fireworks are known ignition sources for building fires and wildfires in Hawaii. To protect the public, property, and the environment; the Department urges your committee to oppose the passage of Bill 22.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of this measure.

Councilmember Val Okimoto, Chair
Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety

RE: Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code – In Support
Thursday, June 27, 2024; 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of this measure. My name is Jamie Tanimoto and I respectfully ask that you pass Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to allow the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks.

Growing up in Hawaii, I have cherished memories of celebrating numerous holidays with family and friends, and always looked forward to playing with fireworks such as fountains, ground spinners and sparklers. With so many things changing, I hope we can preserve some of the things that are a part of our Hawaii culture.

Mahalo,

Jamie Tanimoto

TO: Members of the Committee on Public Safety

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
808-395-3233

DATE: Thursday, June 26, 2024

SUBJECT: Bill 22, Relating to Fire Code - **SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Okimoto and Councilmembers,

Thank you for allowing testimony on Bill 22, which would allow the sale and use of certain ground-based fireworks. I support this bill.

During the June 5 full council meeting, a representative of the Honolulu Fire Department gave statistics from before the ban and the year after. The ban was put into effect over 10 years ago, and statistics from then are not comparable to today. **Please ask the fire department representative what recent statistics have been.**

We have way more illegal aerals now than we did prior to the ban. Based on media reports, there are still fires and injuries. This bill would allow smaller fireworks such as sparklers, and if put into effect, I believe would decrease the number of aerals and loud booms.

Please vote “yes” on Bill 22.

Councilmember Val Okimoto, Chair
Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety

RE: Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code – In Support
Thursday, June 27, 2024; 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba and members of the committee:

My name is Germaine Okino and I am a resident of Waipahu here to express my strong support for Bill 22. This bill proposes the sale and use of safe, ground-based consumer fireworks like sparklers, fountains, and spinners, while keeping aerals and “bombs” illegal.

Here's why Bill 22 makes sense:

- **Safer Celebrations:** A complete ban pushes people towards the dangerous black market for illegal aerial fireworks. Regulated ground-based fireworks are a safer alternative.
- **Family Traditions:** Bill 22 allows families to continue celebrating with a tradition they cherish.
- **Common-Sense Approach:** This bill prioritizes safety while enabling responsible enjoyment.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support of Bill 22.

Councilmember Val Okimoto, Chair
Councilmember Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety

RE: Bill 22 Relating to the Fire Code – In Support
Thursday, June 27, 2024; 1:00 p.m.

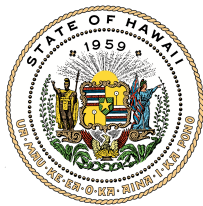
Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Tulba, and members of the committee:

I am writing in strong support of Bill 22, which amends the Fire Code to allow the sale and use of ground-based consumer fireworks.

I support this Bill because ground-based spinners and sparklers bring so much nostalgia and joy and legalizing these limited items will reduce the number of illegal aerals and other fireworks that are used. These ground-based spinners and sparklers do not make anywhere near the noise, smoke, or pollution that illegal aerial fireworks make, and having these limited ground-based fireworks legalized will allow families to have fun together while reducing the number of illegal aerals that are purchased and set off.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support. I urge you to pass Bill 22.

Korynn Grenert
2427 Puunoa Pl.,
Honolulu, HI
96816



JOSH GREEN, M.D.

GOVERNOR

KE KIAĀINA

JORDAN LOWE

DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKUĀINA O HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Ka Oihana Hookō Kānāwai

715 South King Street

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

MICHAEL VINCENT

Deputy Director

Administration

SYLVIA LUKE

LT GOVERNOR

KE KEENA

JARED K. REDULLA

Deputy Director

Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON BILL 22

RELATING TO THE FIRE CODE

Before the Council Committee on Public Safety

Thursday, June 27, 2024; 1:00 p.m.

City Council Chamber

Written testimony only by Director Jordan Lowe

Chair Okimoto and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) offers comments on Bill 22 which proposes to: 1) exempt consumer fireworks other than firecrackers from permit requirements when used during designated periods, 2) establish certain requirements relating to retailing facilities and sites licensed to import, store, and sell display fireworks or firecrackers, 3) provide that permits for firecrackers may be obtained at locations licensed and approved by the fire chief, 4) Require that retailers that acquire firecracker permits from the fire chief provide the fire chief with certain information, and 5) establishes deadlines.

The DLE is the State law enforcement agency that manages the statewide Illegal Fireworks Task Force. Since the Illegal Fireworks Task Force became operational, approximately 200,000 pounds of illegal fireworks have been seized. Additionally, there have been two arrests and significant criminal investigations are ongoing.

The DLE offers two comments regarding Bill 22. First, the DLE would respectfully refer the Committee to House Bill (HB) 2193 which was passed by the 2024

Legislature. HB 2193 is currently awaiting the Governor's signature. Among many things, HB 2193 proposes to strengthen the State's fireworks control laws. As HB 2193 has not yet become law, our community has not yet had a chance to assess the impact that HB 2193 may have on the fireworks environment in Hawaii. Moreover, we don't know what impact, if any, that Bill 22 may have on the Honolulu fireworks environment should both HB 2193 and Bill 22 become law. Additionally, because both bills are not yet law, the DLE cannot easily assess what impact these bills may have.

Second, during the last holiday season, the DLE seized nearly 100 tons of illegal fireworks. One key takeaway from that experience is that no matter where anyone is on the issue of allowing or disallowing more fireworks is that fireworks are resources intensive. Therefore, any effort to lessen restrictions over fireworks in the community requires an investment in resources (staff, funding, equipment, etc.) to ensure they can be safely and effectively managed.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on this bill.



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

Testimony to the Committee on Public Safety
Thursday, June 27, 2024, at 1PM
Re: BILL 22 (2024) – RELATING TO THE FIRE CODE

Aloha Chair Okimoto and members of the Honolulu City Council's Committee on Public Safety:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii Supports ("The Chamber") **supports Bill 22**, which seeks to amend the state Fire Code to permit consumer fireworks such as fountains and sparklers while maintaining the ban on illegal aerial fireworks.

The City and County of Honolulu is the only county that has banned commercial fireworks that include firecrackers and sparklers.

Firecrackers have deep cultural importance, particularly among the Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino communities in Hawaii. They play a vital role in celebrations like Chinese New Year, New Year's Eve, and other traditional festivals, symbolizing the expulsion of evil spirits and the welcoming of good fortune and joy. These festivities are crucial for maintaining our rich cultural heritage and promoting a sense of community.

The Chamber completed its 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii Initiative earlier this year. The vision was to create a data-based action plan for Business to lead and shape Hawaii's economic future as a top place to do business. We connected with stakeholders from business, government & community to shape goals and priorities and develop a strategy that presents achievable policy reforms and metrics to increase Hawaii's economic competitiveness.

As a part of the blueprint, stakeholders indicated that industry diversification and strengthening the state's quality of life factors as vital to maintaining our state's competitiveness. Another recommendation was to ensure that economic growth avenues be of benefit to the local community. Moreover, results indicated collaboration among government, businesses, and communities is key to fostering sustainable economic development.

Preserving the unique spirit of aloha that defines our state is essential. Allowing retailers to sell legal consumer fireworks and giving the community the opportunity to celebrate with them would be a contributing factor towards achieving the quality of life our residents deserve.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

On behalf of The Chamber, thank you for this opportunity to testify.