



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

HOUSE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

HB 0895, Relating to Marriage License Fees

Testimony of Loretta J. Fuddy, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.
Director of Health

February 6, 2013

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health strongly supports HB 0895.

2 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department anticipates revenues of \$1.05 million based on 30,000
3 marriages/civil unions annually.

4 **Purpose and Justification:** House Bill 0895 is part of Governor Abercrombie's Administrative
5 Package and supports the New Day Agenda goal of transforming government. This proposal will raise
6 the marriage license fee to \$100 from \$60 of which \$30 will be deposited into the vital statistics
7 improvement special fund (VSISF) for the operation, maintenance, and enhancement of the statewide
8 marriage/civil union online registration system, and will reduce dependence on General Funds. The
9 current fee has not changed in 12 years.

10

11 On January 1, 2012 the Department of Health implemented an online system to register marriage/civil
12 union performers, issue licenses for marriages and civil unions, and register marriage and civil union
13 performed in the State. The additional revenues to the VSISF proposed from the marriage/civil union
14 license fee will cover increased operational costs. The majority of couples entering traditional marriage
15 and civil unions are non-residents and require much more resources to inform and educate the couples

1 about the marriage/civil union registration process. In addition the couples also bring their own
2 marriage/civil union officiants to perform the ceremony. The State must register and educate the
3 performer about the laws and procedures regarding marriage/civil unions in Hawaii. These individuals
4 will usually perform only one marriage/civil union during their visit. It is very expensive to register and
5 train these visiting performers in addition to registering, training and servicing the performers who
6 reside in Hawaii. Many of the visiting performers arrive only a day or two before performing the
7 ceremony.

8
9 The department plans to enlist the hotel industry to provide license agents in visitor destination areas
10 where most of the couples stay. These private individuals require extensive training in processing the
11 marriage/civil union applications and issuing licenses. The Governor's Liaison Offices on the Neighbor
12 Islands no longer provide these services and some of the revenue will fund training of hotel personnel to
13 replace the services formerly provided by the Governor's Liaison Offices.

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15 The \$5 going to the domestic violence and sexual assault special fund will be used to enhance programs
16 to meet a serious problem in our community.

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18 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 0895.