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GCA of Hawaii

GENERAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

Quality People. Quality Projects.

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April 6, 2017

Honorable Ikaika Anderson, Chair
Committee on Transportation and Planning
Honolulu City Council
Honolulu, Hawaii

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION TO BILL 3, BUILDING CODE. Amended Chapter 16
("Building Code") of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 1990, with
respect to construction barriers. (Bill 3 passed second reading and public
hearing held 2/17/16)
Transportation Committee Meeting: Thursday, April 5, 2017 at 2:30 p.m.

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C & C OF HONOLULU

Dear Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Pine and Members of the Committee,

The General Contractors Association of Hawaii (GCA) is an organization comprised of over 500 general contractors, subcontractors, and construction related firms. The GCA was established in 1932 and is the largest construction association in the State of Hawaii. GCA's mission is to represent its members in all matters related to the construction industry, while improving the quality of construction and protecting the public interest.

Similar to its position in March of 2016 GCA continues to have grave concerns regarding Bill 3, which proposes to amend the building code to require a 12 x 12 inch opening every 25 feet in any barrier around a construction site, whether private or public. GCA **strongly opposes** this measure because it is not necessary, may cause for further safety concerns for workers on a construction site and the public in general, and is broadly worded as to exclude exceptions where such viewing panels may not be necessary.

First and foremost, the proponents of the bill mention that the intent is to allow inspectors to observe the safety of the project. Access to any construction site by regulatory agencies is not the issue because most regulatory agencies that require inspection of the site can gain ready access upon request, even if with short to no notice. It should also be noted that almost every project being constructed here in Hawaii can be viewed from many vantage points, excluding federal projects, which require base access. Most projects have gates for vehicles and delivery's and employees to enter. These gates typically give a very wide view of the project activities. Most projects are multi-story which one can observe the project while looking over the barricades, if any. And most projects can be seen from adjacent structures which offer the best view of the entire project. Due to any regulatory access being available to city or state inspectors for various site visits, this measure will not make it easier for those individuals; instead it will make it easier for uninvited guests or thieves and potentially subject others to unsafe working conditions.

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Secondly, this measure would create a greater safety hazard. Some projects with barricades are along public roadways where barricades are set up next to a curb. Typically pedestrian traffic is diverted to the other side of the roadway so they have a safe means of travel. If there were viewing panels every 25 feet along an active roadway with no safe pathway of travel we feel that this would invite people to look in and create an unnecessary unsafe exposure.

Lastly, the need for these viewing panels may not be necessary if you have a "barricade" that does is fully transparent to the public, for example, a chain link fence. In those cases such viewing panels should not be required because again they would be unnecessary. Furthermore such installations could add cost to a project and public works construction which would be borne by the taxpayer.

For these reasons, GCA cannot support this measure.