

Testimony before
The City Council
Transportation and Planning Committee
On Council Bill 4, CD 2 (2009)

April 9, 2009

By
Resti Paguirigan
Public Safety Specialist
Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc.

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Chair Okino and Members of the Committee:

Hawaiian Electric Company, Inc. supports both versions of Bill 4, CD 2 as proposed by Councilmember Okino and Councilmember Apo as both would allow the use of two-way radios. However, we would prefer Councilmember Okino's version as it specifically exempts the use of two-way radios from the prohibition. Hawaiian Electric's primary mode of communication with our field personnel is the two-way radio. It is necessary for daily and emergency operations, and for the safety of the public and our work crews. Continued use of the two-way radio will ensure that field personnel hear and immediately respond to what is being communicated to eliminate decision errors that can threaten the safety of the public and Hawaiian Electric personnel.

In addition, during emergency situations or when the power is out, Hawaiian Electric will need to direct its field personnel by the most effective communication method available. Unlike cell phone sites that fail when the power is lost, Hawaiian Electric's two-way radio system has performed time after time during widespread electrical problems. Hawaiian Electric's two-way radio communication system is an effective and reliable method for communicating work instructions to field personnel. Without this form of communication, directing our workforce would be very difficult and the result would be longer outage times.

For these reasons, we strongly support Bill 4, CD 2.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.