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Chair Charles Djou
Executive Matters and Legal Affairs Committee
Honolulu City Council
City and County of Honolulu
Honolulu, HI 96813-3077

RE: Bill 7: Regulating Tents in City and County Parks

Dear Chair Djou and members of the Honolulu City Council Executive Matters and Legal Affairs Committee:

As a community member who interfaces with numerous members of the Wai`anae community, I must speak in opposition to the bill as proposed.

While I believe I understand what is driving the recommendation to clearly define what a tent is, there could be some unforeseen circumstances that negatively impacts casual users of the city parks.

The definition being proposed regarding what constitutes a tent takes a very narrow view and could potentially preclude casual users of city parks from being able to fully enjoy their experience. Many times family gatherings are held at city parks due to the open space available that allows for all members of the gathering to enjoy one another's company while also enjoying the benefits of being in a city park.

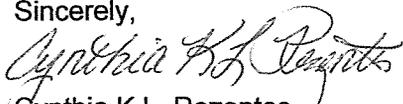
Unfortunately, given the proposed definition of a tent, families who might use pop-up shade structures or tarps over metal posts would not be allowed to also install a wind- or shade-break "wall". This could provide undue hardship on elders or young children who might be part of the gathering.

At a minimum, the definition should be re-considered to be more forgiving regarding whether a wall would disqualify this structure from being constructed, especially for an innocuous gathering of users of the park.

I would encourage the committee to review the special access permit for the Ka`ena State Park (Keawa`ula side) which allows night access and for shelter a pop-up or ez-up structure with two walls for element protection but no paraphernalia that would be considered camping equipment. While this is only for night time access in a closed park, it may provide some insight into other alternatives the committee may consider to still meet the administration's goals while allowing innocent use of the city parks by our residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,


(Cynthia K.L. Rezendes)