



**Testimony to the House Committees on Water, Land & Ocean Resources,
Energy & Environmental Protection and Agriculture
Monday, January 30, 2012
9:00 a.m.
State Capitol - Conference Room 325**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 2671 RELATING TO SUSTAINABILITY

Chairs Chang, Coffman and Tsuji, Vice Chairs Har, Kawakami and Hashem, and members of the committees:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber") respectfully recommends that the bill be amended to ensure that there is a balanced representation on the working group representative of the economic, social, community and environmental priorities being discussed.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing more than 1,000 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 its members, which employ more than 200,000 individuals, to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The Chamber has the following comments on H.B. No. 2671 which proposes to require the office of planning to convene a workgroup for sustainability guidelines, establish benchmarks for measuring sustainability progress, and coordinate sustainability progress made by the State and counties. It also authorizes the office of planning to contract for a coordinator or facilitator.

Our understanding is that pursuant to Act 181, Session Laws of Hawaii 2011, the University of Hawaii public policy center, in consultation with the office of planning, submitted a report to the legislature identifying the progress made in implementing the sustainability guidelines and principles, as set forth in Act 181, and making recommendations for legislation or other action to facilitate their full implementation.

The bill provides for the office of planning to convene a working group of government, non-profit, education, business and other interested organizations to establish guidelines for the Hawaii Statewide sustainability partnership in implementing the recommendations made by the University of Hawaii public policy center in response to Act 181, Session Laws of Hawaii 2011.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our views.