

STATE FIRE COUNCIL

The State Fire Council (SFC) is administratively attached to the State of Hawaii (State), Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and comprised of the four county Fire Chiefs. Its primary mission is to develop a comprehensive fire service emergency management network for the protection of life, property, and environment throughout the State. The SFC is responsible for adopting a state fire code, applying and administering federal fire-related grants, and administering a Reduced Ignition Propensity Cigarette (RIPC) Program. The SFC may advise and assist county fire departments where appropriate and prescribe standard procedures and forms related to inspections, investigations, and reporting of fires. It also advises the Governor and legislature with regard to fire prevention and protection, life safety, and any other function or activity for which the various county fire departments are responsible.

Hawaii, Honolulu, and Kauai counties adopted the state fire code, which is based on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1 Uniform Fire Code, 2006 Edition as their county fire code with local amendments. Through the efforts of its Fire Prevention Committee and the NFPA, the SFC completed its amendment package of the NFPA 1 Fire Code, 2009 Edition for adoption as the next state fire code. The state fire code, in union with the county fire codes, comprehensively addresses minimum requirements for the protection of life and property to mitigate and prevent the disastrous effects of fire, explosion, and hazardous materials incidents.

The SFC participates as a member of the State Building Code Council (SBCC), which is comprised of county, State, and private stakeholders who coordinate the adoption of a comprehensive set of building codes. The state building code applies a consistent and current set of codes based on national standards that affect county, State, commercial, industrial, and residential buildings. An investigative committee chaired by the SFC is concluding its findings on infrastructure standards, systems, costs, and benefits for the 2009 International Residential Code Fire Sprinkler Requirements for New One- and Two-Family Dwellings.

The SFC has administered the RIPC law since its adoption in October 2009. The SFC receives manufacturers' documentation on fire-safe cigarette testing, certifies brands/ styles, and deposits the fees collected. A \$400,000 appropriation into the RIPC special fund was legislatively established to employ personnel to develop administrative rules to more effectively enforce and administer the program. To date, the SFC collected \$503,625.

The SFC introduced or supported the following legislative bills that were approved with or without Governor Neil Abercrombie's signature during the 2012 session:

1. Act 9, House Bill (HB) 2769 amends the definition of public safety agency for E911 purposes to refer to State and county divisions and not federal government entities.

2. Act 69, Senate Bill (SB) 2877 abolishes a requirement to reimburse the City and County of Honolulu for operating and maintaining the fireboat.
3. Act 229, HB 1765 allows counties to conduct criminal history record checks for prospective fire department employees.
4. Act 233, HB 1968 appropriates \$400,000 to the RIPC special fund to hire personnel and other related costs to administer the program.
5. Act 318, HB 2030 requires motorists to “move over” when passing stationary emergency vehicles on a highway.
6. Act 319, HB 2113 bans using, possessing, or selling aerial luminaries.
7. Senate Resolution 97 establishes a task force to examine management policies on overtime use by State and county employees.

The SFC introduced or supported the following legislative bills that did not pass the 2012 session:

1. HB 1753/SB 2050 repeals the sunset date of tort liability for lifeguards.
2. HB 2642 amends the definition, labeling, and storage of inventory of display fireworks.
3. SB 2390/HB 2124 amends the requirements for submitting building plans to the Fire Chief for approval.
4. SB 2391/HB 2256 bans the possession and use of consumer fireworks statewide.

The SFC testified in opposition to the following bills, which were signed into law during the 2012 session:

1. Act 83, SB 2397 prohibits the counties from requiring fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family dwellings, except as a variance for fire department access road or water supply requirements. Prohibition includes nonresidential agricultural/ aquacultural buildings.
2. Act 153, HB 2487 increases employer contributions for employees with significant nonbase pay increases.

The SFC coordinated Department of Homeland Security, National Fire Academy statewide fire service training courses in Leadership Strategies for Personal and Supervisory Success; Incident Safety Officer; Decision Making for Initial Company Operations; Incident Command for High-Rise Operations; Community Risk Issues and

Prevention Interventions; Command and Control of Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Operations for the Company Officer; and Decision Making for Initial Company Operations Train-the-Trainer.

The SFC monitored and eventually participated in discussions with the Attorney General and the Department of Planning and Permitting on SB 2646, which exempted certain agricultural/aquacultural structures from county building permits. The bill establishes a task force, with the SFC as a member, to identify and examine bill conflicts and potential resolutions to Governor Abercrombie before December 15, 2012.

The SFC continues to meet quarterly to fulfill its statutory duties and responsibilities.