



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HONOLULU

December 15, 2009

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

Re: OPPOSITION to Bill 7 – Bed and Breakfast Homes

Aloha Chair Apo, Vice Chair Garcia and Honorable Councilmembers,

The League of Women Voters of Honolulu continues to be a strong supporter of a general plan for Oahu and the Community Development Plan for each district. We also support zoning ordinances that ensure zoning is consistent with each adopted Plan. You should have compelling reasons to override an adopted plan.

We strongly repeat our opinion that the proposed Bill 7 runs roughshod over both the plans and zoning on Oahu. There have been very many good and strong voices calling for a halt to legislation which will allow for increased density and mushrooming of commercial shelters, traffic (both human and vehicular) and noise in residential, apartment and country zoned neighborhoods. That congestion is not at all for the greater good. You do not have compelling reasons for overriding the adopted plan.

We strongly repeat our dismay that this issue has progressed over the objections of the City Planning Commission and without the support of a single Neighborhood Board. B&B operators will enjoy a property tax benefit at the low residential rate while operating a hotel business in a residential community while avoiding health and safety requirements of hotels.

We strongly ask again, how can a Neighborhood Watch or Community Policing team be effective when the neighbors change every few days and strangers wandering the area become common? Legalization and expansion of bed and breakfast operations in residential areas will undermine the very notion of neighborhoods. Where is the public interest?

The League is also very concerned about the impact on our housing situation. The conversion of homes and cottages to B&Bs reduces available housing for our local people, and helps to further escalate rents and prices of homes. You certainly are aware of the homeless crisis on Oahu. Sharing living space in overcrowded conditions results in undignified living situations. How can we be an enlightened society while allowing such treatment of our residents?

The League of Women Voters of Honolulu very strongly requests Bill 7 be defeated and the City stop trying to legalize existing infractions.

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