

Hawaii Reporter

Freedom to Report Real News

California and Hawaii Cargo Fees Will Seriously Increase the Cost of Living

By Rep. Gene Ward, R-Hawaii Kai, 7/31/2008 7:34:11 AM

The cost of everything we use is going up again. In the near future, Hawaiian consumers will have to pay further fees to the State of California, the source of 90% of Hawaiian imports, which will raise its container fees to \$30/20ft of container. A bill will soon sit on Governor Schwarzenegger's desk to do just that.

Shouldn't the State of Hawaii find relief for our consumers in the face of this new fee? Unfortunately, the State Legislature just added to the burden. During the recent Special Session, the Legislature voted to override the governor's veto of House Bill 2843. This new law assesses a 50 cents-per-1000lbs. fee on cargo brought into the state (the old rate was \$1/20ft of container).

The intent of the bill is to protect Hawaii from invasive species, but the reconfiguration will exponentially increase the fees for cargo entering the state.

It is clear to me that, in combination with the California bill, these two fees will squeeze consumers even further in these times of high fuel prices. Now, we can look forward to continuing price increases at the store and at the pump.

I understand the need to protect Hawaii from invasive species. But now is not the time for this measure. Hawaiian consumers need a break from costs originating from government regulation, not further burdens.

Something to think about come November, as the cost of living continues to rise and those in our legislature who once again failed to give you a break.

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