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COUNTY COUNCIL

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February 5, 2024

TO: The Honorable Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Technology
The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair, and Members of the Senate
Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 9, 2024; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
SB2085, RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure to re-establish the State Fire Marshal position to direct statewide efforts to protect persons and property against fire loss.

I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. This proposal emerges following the August 8, 2023, Lahaina wildfires, as a common-sense means of providing dedicated support for statewide wildfire prevention and protection that already exists in every other state across the nation.
2. The centralized coordination the State Fire Marshal would provide is a health and safety priority. The measure acknowledges that re-establishing this position would fill gaps in state and local enforcement, provide leadership in fire and arson investigations, and ensure mitigation of wildfire risk.
3. Maui has experienced firsthand the devastating effects to life, property, safety, and security of the recent wildfires. Re-establishing the State Fire Marshal position is a reasonable and cost-effective step that can be taken to increase safeguards and protect the State's residents and visitors.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.