SB 1619
RELATING TO THE USE OF REFLECTIVE OR MIRROR SURFACED MATERIAL IN CONSTRUCTIONS

Statement for
Senate Committee on
Economic Development
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SB 1619 would limit the use of reflective or mirror surfaced material in the construction or renovation of buildings or facilities over an as yet unspecified height to an as yet unspecified percent of total external wall surface and would delegate to the counties the authority to implement these restrictions. This statement on SB 1619 does not reflect an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Restrictions on the use of reflective or mirrored surface materials seem more appropriately provided at the county level by county zoning or building codes than statewide by state law. The proposal to limit the use of reflective glass, depending on the height, to some percent of the total external wall surface of the building does not take into account the site specific conditions of the structure. At one extreme, for example, reflective glass used in structures surrounded by a golf course and seashore and lacking adjacent structures would have minimal or no adverse reflective impacts. At the other extreme, even modest use of reflective materials may be highly objectionable to occupants of closely adjacent buildings where localized reflective heat may be significant. Furthermore, modifying the angle of the mirrored surface may mitigate some of the reflective problems even in highly developed areas.

If the counties must have a legislative mandate before they can initiate restrictive controls over the use of reflective glass, then we would suggest that SB 1619 be amended to provide the counties with that power so that site specific decisions can be made and that the proposed blanket prohibition of its use be eliminated.

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