

Vice Chair Onishi's Office

Comments on AGR Hearing 02/19/15 (0830)

After Councilmember Hooser testified in front of the House Agriculture Committee (AGR) he stepped out of the hearing. Subsequently, Rep. Tokioka asked Chair Tsuji if it was possible to accommodate Neighbor Island testifiers as they may have flights to catch back home. He also asked if it was possible to have testifiers who had already testified vacate their seats in the hearing room to make room for those who had not yet testified. Those who had already testified and wished to monitor the hearing could do so via the closed-circuit television located immediately outside of the conference room. The Chair gladly accepted the recommendation as he too realized that there was a multitude of individuals inside and outside of the conference room, some who had already testified and some who had not.

At the same time, from the doorway of the conference room, Councilmember Hooser instructed the Chair to allow neighbor islanders to testify first. Rep. Tokioka responded saying, "don't worry Gary, we got it", to which the Councilmember responded, "Bite me Jimmy, bite me".

This prompted the AGR committee staffers Mr. Timothy Coughlin and Mr. Isaac Goya to take action and intervene as to maintain decorum in the committee hearing. The House Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms had also stepped in to assist in this effort.