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## Editorial | Letters

# Money wasted on fireworks

Posted January 04, 2017

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This is the second incident in recent times when someone has been killed by fireworks (["Woman killed by fireworks, relative hurt, as year starts,"](#) Star-Advertiser, Jan. 2).

How many more people have to die before our political leaders step up and do something about the use of fireworks? I am well aware of the cultural impact on a complete ban, so that is not what I am advocating.

This year there appeared to be more illegal fireworks being used than in recent years. Maybe the government should use the military bomb squad dogs to check shipments coming into the island.

The really sad problem is the amount of money being spent on fireworks while our seniors go hungry.

I do not know the actual dollars spent for one night of "fun" but I am sure it would feed and clothe a lot of people in need.

**Ken Takeya**

*Kailua*

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## Lawbreakers fill sky with aerals

Malfeasance by the thousands burst into dazzling colors in the Honolulu skyline on New Year's Eve.

Each of the many thousands of aerial fireworks that greeted the new year represented the middle finger to lawmakers, not just by the people who lit the fuses, but by the many more who aided and abetted them, not to mention the many tens of thousands of appreciative onlookers who encouraged the act by applauding it from their front porches.

It was, perhaps, the best impromptu poll of the people's opinion regarding fireworks laws. Laws that are openly flouted by the people are not laws at all. Lawmakers should pass laws that the people want and respect unless we endure the spectacle of prosecuting the people in the name of the people.

**Nelson S.W. Chang**

*Kaneohe*

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**Crowded city endangered**

After years of personal injuries and property damage, as well as the waste of resources by the police and fire departments, we continue to permit individual use of fireworks.

It never ceases to amaze me that some activist group has not filed a class-action lawsuit against the city over this issue.

At one time, with plenty of open space, private fireworks were not much of a problem.

But now, with houses so close together and the streets so narrow, it would seem that fireworks should be limited to professionals. This still allows the general public to watch the beauty of professionally orchestrated displays.

Wake up, Honolulu. Don't continue to permit the senseless injury of your citizens.

**Don Chambers**

*Mililani*

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**U.S. Senate isn't population-based**

Letter after letter is written to the newspaper regarding the unfairness of the Electoral College ("[The Electoral College has failed the people](#)," Star-Advertiser, Letters, Jan. 2).

Fortunately, our Founding Fathers were much wiser and understood governing better than these complainers, as currently Hawaii has two U.S. senators and two U.S. representatives.

If the system was completely equitable as those writing letters would propose, then the U.S. would have to abandon the Senate, as it is not population based. Currently, each member of the House of Representatives represents more than 750,000 people. Under that scenario, that would leave Hawaii with one representative and no senators for our entire state.

Certainly I did not see letters from these citizens complaining when our representatives for years brought back more dollars in federal funds than Hawaii citizens pay, or that we have equal representation to populous California in the U.S. Senate. Be careful what you wish for.

**Gary R. Johnson**

*Kaneohe*

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**Council needs better ethics**

Thank you for the editorial on city ethics rules and the plans of the Ethics Commission to revisit the issue of campaign contributions ("[City ethics rules need clarification](#)," Star-Advertiser, Our View, Dec. 31).

This is important stuff, and I hope you continue coverage of upcoming public opportunities to participate in the discussion.

I personally think that any campaign contribution over \$100 should be publicly disclosed, and City Council members should recuse themselves from any action involving a person or company that gave over \$1,000 to their campaign.

It is only then that we will have Council members who are truly there to serve the people's interests.

This is why the opportunity for the public to weigh in on this issue is so important.

Transparency is essential for accountability.

**Kathee Hoover**

*Kalihi Valley*

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