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Judge affirms county shutdown of illegal vacation rental

LĪHU'E – Fifth Circuit Judge Kathleen Watanabe yesterday ruled in favor of the county's shutdown of an illegal vacation rental in Kīlauea.

Watanabe's ruling in the case of Rene Campos v. County of Kaua'i, et al affirms the Planning Commission's decision on an administrative appeal last year.

Kaua'i attorney Jonathan Chun had attempted to persuade the judge that the planning director was wrong in not considering his client's conversion of a guest house to a single family vacation rental as grandfathered, and supposedly entitling his client to a certificate that allows the continued vacation rental usage.

"We are pleased with the judge's ruling," said Planning Director Michael Dahilig. "I would like to acknowledge our legal team in defending our enforcement actions to stop those wishing to cheat our land use laws because they are tempted by the large sums of money these vacation rentals can yield. Illegal vacation rentals like these take valuable housing out of the long-term housing market for our local residents, and is precisely why our vacation rental laws need to be respected."