



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

---

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Water, Land, & Hawaiian Affairs  
Monday, June 29, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.

by

Judith Lemus, PhD  
Interim Director

Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology  
School of Ocean and Earth Science  
And Technology

And

Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HCR 26 – AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF A TERM, NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT COVERING A PORTION OF STATE SUBMERGED LANDS AT KANEOHE, KOOLAUPOKO, OAHU, FOR THE EXISTING PIER, AND FOR USE, REPAIR, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS CONSTRUCTED THEREON.

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HCR 26. This concurrent resolution requests the authorization to issue a term, non-exclusive easement covering portions of state submerged lands fronting the property identified as tax map key: (1) 4-6-001: seaward of 015, Kāne'ohe, Ko'olaupoko, O'ahu, for the existing pier, and for use, repair, and maintenance of the existing improvements constructed thereon pursuant to section 171-53, Hawai'i Revised Statutes. The University of Hawai'i supports this concurrent resolution.

The pier is a critical access point for travel to Moku o Lo'e (Coconut Island) and is therefore essential to the research and education operations at Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB). The only other access option available to HIMB would be at He'eia Kea Pier, a 20-minute boat ride away. As an organized research unit for UH Mānoa, HIMB conducts highly relevant research on coral reef ecosystems and works closely with state resource agencies to help inform management decisions. Each year HIMB also educates hundreds of university students in marine conservation research and hosts over 4,000 visitors in our high school and community education programs. We could not support this level of research or education without a pier at Lilipuna for boat transport of both people and materials.

As required by Section 171-53, HRS, the Board of Land and Natural Resources

("Board") may lease submerged lands "with the prior approval of the Governor and the prior authorization of the Legislature by concurrent resolution". At its meeting on August 25, 2017, under agenda item D-5, the Board approved a grant of a 55-year non-exclusive easement to resolve the pier encroachment, and such non-exclusive easement to run with the land and to inure to the benefit of the abutting real property at gratis rent for the purposes state above.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.