



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Water & Land
House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 9:05 a.m.

By

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And

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And

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HB 1545 – RELATING TO ADAPTATION PATHWAYS PLANNING

Chairs Ichiyama and Lowen, Vice Chairs Poepoe and Cochran, and members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) and the Climate Resilience Collaborative (CRC) support House Bill 1545, which expands the authority of the State and counties to develop adaptation pathways plans to modify and relocate infrastructure away from critically threatened areas to locations outside sea level rise and coastal flooding exposure areas and appropriates funds.

Hawai'i Sea Grant and CRC support this measure and defer to the amendments from the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Hawaii Sea Grant and CRC suggest a minor amendment to clarify this intent applies to critical infrastructure, not just habitable dwellings. HB 1545 proposes an amendment to §171-Sea level rise adaptation pathways plan, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to read (suggested amendments underlined).

Page 7 Line 3. "§171-Sea level rise adaptation pathways plan. (c) Adaptation pathways plans developed pursuant to this part may incorporate proposed time-limited land dispositions in the adaptation pathways for a habitable structure and critical infrastructure that is proposed to be modified to withstand occasional flooding with sea level rise and temporarily occupy private land and state owned land makai of the shoreline. These Modifications shall:"

Page 8 Line 6:

"(2) Coastal lands that are critically threatened by coastal erosion and sea level rise and have high natural and community resource value appropriate for adaptation and ultimate relocation of

structures **and critical infrastructure** with the overall purpose of natural resource restoration and conservation.”

Hawai'i Sea Grant's mission is to provide integrated research, extension, and education activities that increase understanding and use of ocean and coastal resources of the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands and support the informed personal, policy, and management decisions that are integral to realizing this vision. Hawai'i Sea Grant is part of a national network of 34 university-based programs associated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that promote better understanding, conservation, and use of coastal resources.

CRC is a multi-investigator research project at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa focused on sea level rise adaptation and climate resilience. CRC is updating coastal models that project the impacts of sea level rise.

The research that goes into identifying Hawai'i's exposure to sea level rise is coming out of the University of Hawai'i School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology. To maintain our understanding of sea level threats based on the latest science, these researchers need ongoing financial support from the State. CRC would be happy to provide updated sea level rise data and projections to the Committee or any lawmaker upon request.

CRC and Hawai'i Sea Grant support House Bill 1545, provided its adoption does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.