



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 of Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Friday, February 23, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

By

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And

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And

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HB 1546 HD1 – RELATING TO RESTORATION OF BEACH LANDS

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) and the Climate Resilience Collaborative (CRC) support HB 1546 HD1, which amends the definition of "beach restoration" used in laws governing the Board of Land and Natural Resources' powers to engage in beach restoration to include activities undertaken to improve eroded beaches and degraded dune systems and to remove abandoned and remnant manmade materials that pose a risk to the health of the public and ecosystem.

Hawai'i Sea Grant and CRC support this measure because it will enable the Department of Land and Natural Resources to more effectively maintain and improve beaches and coastal resources.

Hawaii Sea Grant and CRC suggest a minor amendment to clarify the definition of beach restoration (suggested amendments underlined).

Page 2 Line 18:

(1) Maintain and improve eroded beaches and degraded dune systems through restoration, maintenance and active management of sand and native vegetation; or

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 HB 1546 HD1, 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.