



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
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HB 2248 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO BEACH MANAGEMENT ON THE NORTH SHORE OF OAHU

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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 House Bill 2248 HD1 SD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to develop a north shore beach management plan for the north shore of O'ahu from Sunset point to the Kapo'o (Sharks Cove) area.

It is important that the Ways and Means committee recognizes that although a unit of the University of Hawai'i, Hawai'i Sea Grant's extension and technical and project support functions are fully funded by extramural funds not through funds appropriated by the legislature. This is the reason why appropriated funds are needed in order to support new research and planning efforts such as those detailed in this measure.

Hawai'i Sea Grant realizes there may not be sufficient state funding to support the full objectives of this measure to produce a comprehensive climate adaptation plan, beach and dune management plan, pilot restoration projects and robust community outreach and engagement. With this limitation in mind, it is recommended that the deliverables of this measure be scaled commensurate to the appropriate funding level. Hawai'i Sea Grant can provide estimated costs and a simple summary of potential deliverables and project outcomes to support informed decision-making on this measure.

Hawai'i Sea Grant has developed similar beach and dune management plans for Maui County, Kailua Beach Park, O'ahu and the Hawai'i Dune Restoration Manual as recent examples of similar work.

A common element of coastal management planning involves the evaluation and assessment of climate adaptation pathways, triggers and implementation strategies. This is an important component of any coastal planning effort and has been an important component of this bill as it would serve to provide professional merit as a comprehensive climate adaptation plan rather than just a beach management plan, as funding is available.

Recent community-oriented working group activity strongly supports the goals and objectives of this measure. [The North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group](#) (NSCRWG) was launched by the Surfrider Foundation, Surfrider's O'ahu Chapter, the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College, and consulting firm SSFM International to proactively address accelerated beach loss and improve community resilience on the North Shore. In 2021 and 2022, the NSCRWG facilitated meaningful, community-driven discussions related to the future of coastal management on the North Shore. The Working Group released a report detailing critical concerns and recommendations for immediate action.

The NSCRWG report details three priority areas of concern as erosion hotspots, including; Rocky Point - Sunset Beach, Laniākea - Chun's, and Mokolē'ia, with identified key strategies including the development of a beach and dune management plan and pilot restoration projects.

This measure, if passed, can serve as an important coastal management, adaptation planning and community engagement model for other coastal communities struggling with coastal hazards and sea level rise and can facilitate improved community-focused coastal planning statewide.

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.

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.

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 2248 HD1 SD1, provided its adoption does not impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.