



# 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  
Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

By

Charles "Chip" Fletcher, PhD  
Interim Dean

School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology

And

Darren Lerner, PhD  
Director, Sea Grant College Program

And

Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

#### HB 1137 – RELATING TO RESTORATION OF BEACH LANDS

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, 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 1137, which amends the definition of beach restoration to include activities undertaken to maintain and improve eroded beaches and degraded dune systems through the management of sand and native vegetation, placement of sand, and activities undertaken to remove abandoned and remnant materials that pose a risk to public and ecosystem health.

Hawai'i Sea Grant and CRC support this measure because it will enable the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to more effectively maintain and improve beaches and the health of coastal resources and support sustainable climate adaptation statewide. Broadening the definition of beach restoration provides more flexibility to utilize dedicated funds for the best use for beach management and allows for more comprehensive coastal management strategies to be applied statewide. Hawai'i Sea Grant and CRC support the amendments proposed by DLNR to improve this bill.

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 and the historical patterns of coastal erosion have been developed by the University of Hawai'i, School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology. CRC and Hawai'i Sea Grant are available to provide updated sea level rise data and projections and examples of relevant adaptation to the Committee or any lawmaker upon request.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.