



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 Higher Education
Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 3:10 p.m.

By

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And

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Provost

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SB 1559 – RELATING TO DUNE RESTORATION

Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) stands in support of SB 1559, which seeks to provide funding to the Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to partner with the County of Maui in dune restoration at Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park, Maui.

Hawai'i Sea Grant is committed to supporting nature-based methods to improve and restore ecosystem health throughout the state. Through our extension programs we provide technical expertise and guidance to state and county agencies and community based organizations to assist with the planning and implementation of dune restoration projects. The funds appropriated by this measure will support an ongoing partnership with the County of Maui Department of Parks and Recreation focusing on public access and dune restoration to support coastal hazard mitigation and community resilience. Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park is especially important to local users for beach access, as the home site for three canoe clubs, and as a culturally vital place including a cemetery.

Success of the proposed project will be contingent on the support and participation of the Department of Parks and Recreation. While Hawai'i Sea Grant supports this measure and appreciates the opportunity for funding to better support the community, we would like to ensure that this effort is aligned with the priorities of the Department of Parks and Recreation. Additionally, a multi-year funding structure is important to enable acquisition of funds and adequate time for implementation.

In conclusion, we support this bill, provided that its passage does not impact the priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.