



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 24, 2012
Contact: Office of Representative Cynthia Thielen
Phone: (808) 586-6480 Fax: (808) 586-6481
Email: repthielen@capitol.hawaii.gov

REPRESENTATIVE THIELEN'S BILL TO PREPARE HAWAII FOR CLIMATE INDUCED SEA LEVEL RISE

Honolulu – Hawai'i State Representative Cynthia Thielen (R, 50th District: Kailua, Kaneohe Bay) announced that Hawaii's rising seas pose a substantial threat to Hawaii's infrastructure and overall economy. Because of climate change, the Center for Island Climate Adaptation and Policy (ICAP) stated that Hawaii is expected to experience sea level rise of one foot by 2050. Long term sea level rise has contributed to, and will continue to contribute to, ongoing coastal erosion, coastal flooding, and drainage problems.

"The science tells us that sea level rise is coming to our islands regardless of mitigation efforts. In order to successfully adapt to rising sea levels in the coming decades, we must implement land use policies that take into consideration ICAP's predictions before it is too late," declared Thielen.

"If Hawaii's Legislators and other governmental officials do not take steps to adapt to anticipated sea level rise, scientists predict increased sea levels will inundate our islands negatively impacting their infrastructures. For example, parts of the Honolulu airport could be inundated making those sections unusable, and thereby hurting our tourism industry," explained Thielen.

As a result of the anticipated sea level threat, Thielen has introduced H.B. No. 2330 Relating to Climate Change. The purpose of the legislation is to require the State Office of Planning and the planning authority of each county in the State of Hawaii to take into account a predicted sea level rise of one foot by 2050 when reviewing present applications for development and future county plans.

####