



Legislative Testimony  
**HB 2955, RELATING TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA**  
House Committee on Finance

February 22, 2008

2:15 p.m.

Room: 308

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB 2955, which establishes an archaeological data survey as an online database program under the State of Hawai'i Museum of Natural and Cultural History (Museum). The bill would also authorize the Museum, in consultation with OHA and the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) to withhold information from the database if a disclosure may pose a threat to a site or artifact.

OHA agrees with the intent of the bill, which would collect and disseminate important archeological information to the public on an easy-to-use on-line database application. This legislation has the potential to increase access for professionals who regularly go to the many public repositories to conduct archeological research. The potential downside of this bill would be the threat of disclosure, in an easy-to-access format, of the location of important and sacred historic and cultural sites. Our office is also concerned with the security access, including the tracking and record keeping of the users of the system. The potential for confidential information of OHA's beneficiaries being revealed to the general public is a concern.

Many institutions, both public and private, are currently making attempts to create similar on-line databases for their own institutional purposes, including OHA. The idea of an all-encompassing database of archeological information will require a lot of resources to both create and maintain over the long run.

Our office has also been working with SHPD to get their Geographic Information Systems (GIS) historic sites database up and running again, a large concern of many archeological professionals. SHPD currently does not have staffing with the technical experience and knowledge to handle the task being a consulting partner with the Museum and OHA to help establish this database program. We recommend that the legislature support increased funding at SHPD for a GIS specialist to help manage and maintain the historic sites GIS system.

OHA urges the Committee to PASS HB 2955, taking the above concerns into account. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.