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GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

STATE HISTORIC PRESEERVATION DIVISION  
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**TESTIMONY OF THE CHAIRPERSON  
OF THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**on House Bill 2955 – Relating To Archaeological Data**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
WATER, LAND, OCEAN RESOURCES AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**February 4, 2008**

House Bill 2955 establishes and designates an archaeological data survey as an online data base program of the State of Hawaii Museum of Natural and Cultural History. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the intent of this bill but recommends amendments to focus on curation and repositories of archaeological collections obtained through archaeological work in Hawaii and on the Bernice Pauhi Bishop Museum's own material collections, and on a definition of archaeological data survey. The Department is willing to work with effected partners to develop the aforementioned amendments.

Additionally, the Department notes that it has previously been made aware, by federal partners, of concerns regarding making information on certain federal historic properties available. There is also a concern that information available to the public may pose a threat to the protection of valuable historic properties.



Legislative Testimony

**HB 2955, RELATING TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA**

House Water, Land, Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs  
February 4, 2008 8:30 a.m.  
Room: 312

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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 reveled 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.