

TESTIMONY
HB586, HD1
LATE



KO`OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

March 20, 2009

LATE TESTIMONY

TO: Sen. Clayton Hee, Chair
And Members
Senate Committee on Water, Land & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Mahealani Cypher, President
Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

RE: H. B. 586, H.D.1, Relating to the Kane'ohu Bay Regional Council

Aloha mai kakou from the Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, which works with the nine ahupua'a surrounding Kane'ohu Bay, moku Ko'olaupoko, O'ahu. We have monitored this bill with keen interest and concern, and wish to oppose the sunseting of the Kane'ohu Bay Regional Council.

Members of our civic club worked long hard, years ago, to advocate for the legislation that created this regional council. They served among the early members of the council, with the goal of ensuring that the valuable natural and cultural resources of the bay would be managed wisely and protected for generations to come.

While some of us have been disappointed at the regional council's relative lack of strong advocacy to preserve these resources in recent years, we firmly believe that the regional council remains a necessary community and government partnership to ensure that these resources will be around for years to come. We are also concerned that, should the responsibilities of the council be transferred wholly back to various government agencies, projected cutbacks in state services and staffing will make it impossible for there to be adequate and holistic oversight or monitoring of activities in Kane'ohu Bay.

We have noted, over the past 15 years, an alarming increase in the volume of recreational boaters in the bay, as well as commercial fishing and fish-gathering in the area. State conservation enforcement officials do their best to handle the increased work, but they are already saying there is not enough funding their current budget to provide enforcement on busy holiday weekends, when most of the serious violations may occur.

The so-called "24-hour hotline" simply does not respond adequately to potential safety and resource concerns that arise during DLNR's non-working hours. The regional council and the DLNR would be wise to partner together to educate the community, particularly the boating and fishing communities, on how their actions can help or harm our natural and cultural resources in Kane'ohu Bay.

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We strongly urge your committee to file this bill.

Mahalo for this opportunity to offer our mana`o on this legislation.

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(END)