

TESTIMONY
SB 2414

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAROLAWA ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
LAURA H. THIELEN
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WATER, LAND, HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, AND AGRICULTURE**

**Monday, February 8, 2010
3:15 PM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 229

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2414
RELATING TO STATE PARKS**

Senate Bill 2414 would establish a sub-account for each county in the state parks special fund to deposit park user fees collected at state parks in the respective county for repairs, maintenance, and operating costs incurred in the management of state parks in the same county. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strenuously opposes this bill as it would seriously and negatively impact the ability of the Department to operate, maintain, and repair its parks statewide.

Over the years, fundamental park services once covered by the General Fund, have had to be covered by the State Parks Special Fund. Currently there is insufficient revenue in the State Parks Special Fund to pay for all the positions, repair and maintenance, and lifeguard services intended to be covered by the fund. Restricting the use of funds generated in one park will impact maintenance in other parks as a few parks generate most of the revenue for the State Parks, and some parks generate no revenue, and have little potential to ever generate revenue. The State has an obligation to protect the public trust resources housed in our parks – primarily the significant cultural and historic sites and provide public access and park services to all our residents, regardless of whether they live in urban areas, rural communities, or near parks with high visitor traffic. Accordingly, the Department needs the ability to use funds from the few parks which generate revenue to support our operations statewide.

Segregating funds into island-based subaccounts is extremely inefficient and ineffective means to manage a statewide park system. The benefit of lump sum budgeting include:

- o Ability to fund and rotate large projects across islands, rather than sitting on numerous, smaller balances and waiting for them to rise to the necessary level to support a project;
- o Ability to redeploy cost savings from one project to complete other projects that are in progress across the state;

- o Ability to address unexpected expenses necessitated due to natural hazards such as rockfall removal, tree limb removal, and vandalism.

Creating sub-accounts defeats this sort of flexibility within the operating budget, and has the unfortunate unintended consequence of making parks statewide less efficient and in poorer condition. A measure passed several sessions ago which created a sub-account for Diamond Head State Monument has already had the effect of hampering statewide operations.

A further complication is the fact that numerous state park personnel are funded through special funds. In such cases, if the park system is segregated into island accounts, the resulting lack of revenues in certain years or on certain islands may necessitate the layoff of park staff. This result is supported by the fact that the Department's special fund revenues have dropped over 35% in less than three years and the decline appears to be continuing.

This measure would severely and negatively impact parks across the State and we respectfully request the bill be rejected.

----- Michael -----

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2010 12:18 AM
To: WTLTestimony
Cc: judie@aloha.net
Subject: Testimony for SB2414 on 2/8/2010 3:15:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 2/8/2010 3:15:00 PM SB2414

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Judie Lundborg
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone: 808-639-0212
E-mail: judie@aloha.net
Submitted on: 2/5/2010

Comments:

Logic says that the more a park is used, the more maintenance/repair is needed, therefore the user fees correspond to the amount of repair needed.

TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT** OF SB 2414

RELATING TO STATE PARKS; Requires that park user fees collected in a county be used for repair, maintenance, and operating costs of state parks within the same county.

I am in support of this measure as I believe that all State park user fees collected in counties should be used to for the park expenses of each respective county. I am a life-long resident of Kaua'i and would hate to see our resources be used as revenue generating sources for other counties. Thank you.

Mel Rapozo
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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 07, 2010 8:49 PM
To: WTLTestimony
Cc: taylork021@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2414 on 2/8/2010 3:15:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 2/8/2010 3:15:00 PM SB2414

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Ken Taylor
Organization: Individual
Address: 1720-A Makaleha Pl. Kapaa, Hi.
Phone: (808)823-8527
E-mail: taylork021@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/7/2010

Comments:
The only fair thing to do.

TESTIMONY
SB 2414
(END)