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GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE  
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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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LAND  
STATE PARKS

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

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**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
OCEAN, MARINE RESOURCES & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, February 17, 2016  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 2563  
RELATING TO TOURISM**

House Bill 2563 proposes to appropriate funds for the restoration of a continuous beach and infrastructure for public access along the Waikiki waterfront from Kaimana Beach to Ala Moana Brach Park. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Biennium Budget.**

Part of the Department's mission, through the Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands is to manage coastal areas and ocean resources, including at Waikiki. The Department is engaged in efforts to preserve and restore beaches and public access along the Waikiki shore through projects such as the 2012 Waikiki Beach Restoration Project and ongoing planning to replace the failing groin (erosion control structure) at the Ewa end of Waikiki Beach. The Department is appreciative of cost-share funding that has come from private interests to support these projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII  
*The Voice of Business*

**Testimony to the House Committee on Ocean, Marine Resources & Hawaiian  
Affairs**

**Wednesday, February 17, 2016 at 9:00 A.M.  
Conference Room 325, State Capitol**

**RE: HOUSE BILL 2563 RELATING TO TOURISM**

Chair Ing, Vice Chair Lowen, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 2563, which appropriates funds for the restoration of a continuous beach and infrastructure for public access along the Waikiki waterfront.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Waikiki beach plays both a vital part to the state's tourism industry as well as the recreational relaxation for residents. Preserving the Waikiki shoreline is crucial to maintaining public access for visitors and residents alike. HB 2563 provides state assistance in conjunction with private funds to initiate a plan to restore Waikiki beach and maintain its status as a world-class destination.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2016 10:09 AM  
**To:** omhtestimony  
**Cc:** MSMatson@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB2563 on Feb 17, 2016 09:00AM

**HB2563**

Submitted on: 2/16/2016

Testimony for OMH on Feb 17, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 325

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michelle Matson	O'ahu Island Parks Conservancy	Comments Only	No

Comments: Please see attached comments and recommendations.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OCEAN, MARINE RESOURCES, & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

February 17, 2016, 9:00 A.M., Room 325

(Testimony is 1 page long)

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2563**

Aloha Chair Ing, Vice Chair Lowen and members of the Committee:

Blue Planet Foundation supports HB 2563, which would appropriate funding for beach restoration efforts and the development of a multi-use pedestrian bicycle path through the Waikiki Beach Special Improvement District.

Waikiki Beach is an important asset to Hawaii's visitor economy and ensuring the preservation of the beach will help keep the state's visitor economy strong. It is equally important to secure and maintaining non-vehicular access to and along the beach in order to ensure that both visitors and residents alike can access and enjoy Waikiki's shoreline.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Ocean, Marine Resources, & Hawaiian Affairs  
**February 17, 2016 at 9:00am**  
Conference Room 325

By  
Rick Egged  
Waikīkī Beach Special Improvement District Association

**HB2563– RELATING TO BEACHES**

Chair: Ing, Vice Chair: Lowen, and members of the committees:

The Waikīkī Beach Special Improvement District Association (WBSIDA) supports the intent of House Bill 2563. This legislation appropriates funds for the restoration of a continuous beach and infrastructure for public access along the Waikiki waterfront.

Hawaii’s beaches have become increasingly threatened by coastal erosion. According to the United States Geological Service (USGS) National Assessment of Shoreline Change for the Hawaiian Islands, 70% of Hawaii’s beaches are eroding and 13 miles of beach have been lost over the last century. Beach erosion effects shoreline access, recreation and cultural activities, coastal ecosystems and environments, and our economy. Beaches are the backbone of Hawaii’s \$15 Billion tourism industry and are central to Hawaii’s unique culture and lifestyle. With sea-level rise and chronic coastal erosion, the state is challenged to find effective and efficient ways to preserve and maintain our naturally occurring sand beaches. We believe the proposed legislation will support small-scale beach maintenance projects that attempt to address this issue.

Waikīkī Beach is a globally recognized icon of Hawai‘i and is the state’s largest tourist destination. Waikīkī generates approximately 42% of the state’s visitor industry revenue and is responsible for 8% (\$5 billion) of the Gross State Product<sup>1</sup>. Beaches are a primary attraction for visitors to Waikīkī. It has been estimated that Waikīkī Beach accounts for over \$2 billion in annual income for the local economy<sup>2</sup>. However, a 2008 survey found that 12% of visitors would not return to Waikīkī due, in part, to limited beach area and resulting overcrowding<sup>2</sup>. Waikīkī Beach also has tremendous cultural significance as a former playground of Hawaiian royalty and the birthplace of the sport and culture of surfing. The beaches and myriad of world-renowned surf breaks and reef ecosystem located offshore are valuable natural resources that support the culture and lifestyle of Hawai‘i, and the idyllic image of Waikīkī.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.waikikibid.org/>

<sup>2</sup> Waikīkī Improvement Association (2008) *Economic Impact Analysis of the Potential Erosion of Waikiki Beach, Final Report.*

HB2563 proposes to appropriate \$1.5 million to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the planning and design work for beach improvements in Waikīkī. The bill includes a provision for a multi-use pathway in conjunction with a beach restoration project for the stretch between the Royal Hawaiian groin and the Fort Derussy Storm drain. This stretch of iconic Waikīkī shoreline has not had any beach restoration or maintenance project since the construction of a series of 8 groins in the area in the 1940's followed by small-scale beach fill in the late 1960's. No other efforts to restore or maintain the beach have occurred since then. The WBSIDA supports the intent to further enhance the beach area along stretch of shoreline which is currently mostly beachless or very narrow wet beaches.

HB2563 also calls for enhancing public access by creating a mutli-use pathway through this section of coast, possibly in conjunction with the beach improvements. Improved public access along this stretch of coast would offer an improved visitor experience and facilitate pedestrian foot traffic along the coast, thus providing a viable alternative to vehicular transportation within Waikīkī. Currently the lateral shoreline access corridor along most of Waikīkī is excellent with the exception of the reach between the Royal Hawaiian groin and the Fort De Russy Groin which has narrow public access along the top of seawalls and alternates between wet sand beaches that need to be traversed, often at an increased level of risk to the public. A continuous pathway connecting the Fort DeRussy pathway to the Royal Hawaiian Beach would serve both visitors and residents with an efficient access and unique coastal amenity.

WBSIDA is a non-profit which has the ability to partially support beach improvement projects in the Waikīkī district as a public-private partnership. The WBSIDA supports the intent of HB2563. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
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**To:** omhtestimony  
**Cc:** hawaiiifishingfanatic@gmail.com  
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**HB2563**

Submitted on: 2/15/2016

Testimony for OMH on Feb 17, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 325

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Don Aweau	Individual	Support	No

Comments: In full support of legislation. Infrastructure to ensure public access for perpetuity along the renown Waikiki beachfront is not only good for tourism but for the general public as well. Mahalo.

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**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2016 12:39 PM  
**To:** omhtestimony  
**Cc:** rkailianu57@gmail.com  
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**HB2563**

Submitted on: 2/16/2016

Testimony for OMH on Feb 17, 2016 09:00AM in Conference Room 325

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rachel L. Kailianu	Ho`omana Pono, LLC	Oppose	Yes

Comments:

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