



**LATE**

# SB2152

**Measure Title:** RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.

**Report Title:** Hawaii Emergency Management Agency; Community Preparedness; Resilience; Appropriation (\$)

**Description:** Appropriates funds to the Hawaii emergency management agency for the purpose of supporting community resilience and preparedness programs.

**Companion:**

**Package:** None

**Current Referral:** PSM, WAM

**Introducer(s):** GABBARD, KEITH-AGARAN, NISHIHARA, SHIMABUKURO, Espero, Galuteria, Ihara, Kidani, Slom, Taniguchi, L. Thielen

Mr. Chairperson and members of the Public Safety Committee,

I would like to testify in favor of SB 2152 which would support community resilience preparation and response throughout Hawaii.

It has been acknowledged that if a major disaster were to ever hit Hawaii, the government will not be there initially to assist communities. That is why communities have been organizing themselves to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a large disaster. The communities have conducted their own hazard and disaster risk assessments in their own communities. Have held training with Red Cross in Shelter Operations and Damage Assessment to augment Red Cross because there are not sufficient Red Cross volunteers to staff shelters and do assessments after a major disaster. Community members have also taken Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training sponsored by the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) that covers topics such as: Medical Operations, Light Search & Rescue, Fire Operations, and Terrorism that culminates in a field exercise to test what was learned in class. The minimum expected from each student is to take care of themselves, their families, their neighbors and if possible, their community. Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) is sponsoring the Hawaii Hazard Awareness and Resilience Program (HHARP) that teaches the communities how to organize themselves, how to make a community response plan, teaches the community about hazards and how to do outreach to inform the community about the potential disasters that could affect the community.

The communities are being organized without any funding at the State or County level. All supplies, equipment, and administrative expenses are being handled in-house. In the event of a major disaster, the communities do not report to the State or County, but are on their own until the government arrives. Without support from government, the communities may not be able to sustain the preparation, responding and recovery of their communities which would leave their communities exposed to citizens being injured with the lack of food and water during a major disaster without any relief for days or weeks.

By supporting SB 2152, you would give some relief to those communities that choose not to wait for the government and have been trying to sustain themselves in the event of the next major disaster in Hawaii.