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GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE
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LAND
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Friday, February 24, 2017
11:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 14
RELATING TO KEKAHA KAI STATE PARK

House Bill 14 proposes to appropriate funds for the employment of lifeguards and for life-saving equipment at Kua Bay within Kekaha Kai State Park on the island of Hawaii under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department). **The Department supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact our priorities requested in the Executive Budget.**

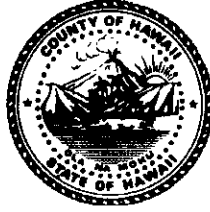
Lifeguards serve an essential function in a state surrounded by the ocean. Due to the increasing popularity at Kua Bay, it has come to the attention of the Department that there is a growing need for lifeguard services based on the increase in water safety incidents. The State does not have its own lifeguards, and contracts with the counties for those services at selected State Parks beaches. Currently, each county provides lifeguards at one State Park beach.

Two of the lifeguard contracts come out of the existing general fund allocation to State Parks and the other two contracts are paid for out of special fund income. Therefore, it is essential that any new lifeguard contract receive a new and general fund appropriation.

ISLAND	LOCATION	Current Annual Amount	MOF
Oahu	Keawa'ula Beach @ Kaena Point State Park	\$584,216	Special
Hawaii	Hapuna Beach State Recreation Area	\$465,785	Special
Maui	Makena Beach State Recreation Area	\$606,469	General
Kauai	Ke'e Beach @ Haena State Park	\$200,065	General

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i
Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy, Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

February 22, 2017

Representative Sylvia Luke
Finance Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Luke and members:

RE: HB 14

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB. 14

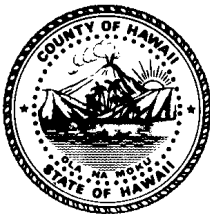
Kua Bay is one of the most beautiful locations in the islands, but its hidden hazards can prove deadly. It is now easily accessible, so for the sake of locals and visitors alike, a lifeguard at that location is definitely warranted and would be much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harry Kim".

Harry Kim
Mayor

Karen Eoff
Council Vice Chair
Council District 8 - North Kona



Phone: (808) 323-4280
Fax: (808) 329-4786
Email: karen.eoff@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

February 23, 2017

House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

Re: Testimony Supporting HB14; A BILL RELATING TO KEKAHA KAI STATE PARK - Appropriates funds for the employment of lifeguards and for life-saving equipment at Kua Bay.
Hearing Date and Time: February 24, 2017 at 11:00 a.m., Conference Room 308

Dear Committee:

On behalf of myself and constituents of Council District 8, North Kona, support for the above referenced Bill is expressed, with brief testimony provided as follows:

The Hawai'i County Council voted unanimously in favor of Resolution No. 49-17 to urge the Hawai'i State Legislature to appropriate funds to employ lifeguards and to purchase a lifeguard tower and rescue equipment for Kua Bay at Kekaha Kai State Park.

Skilled lifeguards, appropriate rescue equipment and a lifeguard tower for adequate field of sight are essential to save lives and prevent injuries at the heavily-visited Kua Bay, and West Hawai'i residents have voiced strong concerns regarding the alarming number of reported and unreported incidents which have occurred at Kua Bay.

This measure has favorably passed second reading and is before you heavily armed with supportive testimony from DLNR, the Sayre Foundation, Ho'omana Pono, the Kohala Coast Resort Association as well as other individuals. I strongly recommend the passing of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Eoff".

KAREN EOFF, Council Vice Chair
Council District 8, North Kona

KE.wpb

Harry Kim
Mayor



Darren J. Rosario
Fire Chief

Renwick J. Victorino
Deputy Fire Chief

County of Hawai'i
HAWAI'I FIRE DEPARTMENT
25 Aupuni Street • Suite 2501 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
(808) 932-2900 • Fax (808) 932-2928

February 23, 2017

The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Committee on Finance
State Capitol, Room 308
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Luke:

Subject: H.B. 14, RELATING TO KEKAHA KAI STATE PARK
Hearing Date: Friday, February 24, 2017
Time/Place of Hearing: 11:00 a.m., Conference Room 308

I am Darren J. Rosario, Fire Chief of the Hawai'i Fire Department (HCFD). The HCFD supports HB 14, which proposes to appropriate funds for the employment of lifeguards and for life saving equipment at Kua Bay at the Kekaha Kai State Park.

The HCFD manages lifeguard services for the County of Hawai'i through its Ocean Safety Division. The HCFD also provides services at the Hāpuna Beach State Park through funding provided by the State of Hawai'i, Department of Land and Natural Resources in a contract for services in line with HB 14. The HCFD is in support of this measure with the funding amounts proposed. The funding amount is the minimum amount needed to provide safe services for both the public and the Water Safety Officers. As Social Media mechanisms increase, the popularity of this beach park will most certainly grow. As a public safety department, we agree with the urgency of this bill.

Please do not hesitate to call me at 932-2903 or darren.rosario@hawaiicounty.gov should you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 14.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darren".

DARREN J. ROSARIO
Fire Chief



February 23, 2017

Representative Sylvia Luke
Chair, Finance Committee
Hawaii State Capitol, room 306
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Chair Luke,

I am a Battalion Chief in the Hawaii Fire Department, and I am submitting this testimony in support of HB14 that appropriates funds for the employment of lifeguards and for life-saving equipment at Kua Bay. As a Battalion Chief of Special Operations, part of my duties is to oversee the Ocean Safety division on the island of Hawaii.

Kua Bay is located in a remote location in west Hawaii. Until recently, Kua Bay was not routinely visited by beach patrons due to the unimproved beach access. However, in the recent years, there have been many improvements to this beautiful beach that is now easily accessible by many locals and visitors alike. With the increased number of beach patrons, the amount of ocean related incidents including spinal injuries and drowning has increased. Kua Bay is now one of the top ten locations in the state where spinal injuries occur.

In January of this year, a male visitor from the mainland in his fifties had died after being pulled from the water by bystanders who were on the beach. The victim was in cardiac arrest and the bystanders performed CPR but without success. The nearest rescue or medical assistance to Kua Bay was approximately 15 to 20 minutes away that seemed like an eternity for someone in this condition.

With the absence of lifeguard services or lifesaving equipment at Kua Bay, the chances of someone surviving who sustains a major injury or medical condition is very low.

I have gotten many calls, including some from our own lifeguards who inform me that they performed many rescues at Kua Bay on their days off due to the absence of lifeguards there. I have also received a call from a victim who was rescued by a bystander after being caught in the rip current. He stated that he would have drowned if he didn't get help, and questioned why we do not have lifeguards there.

Our lifeguards are in full support of this bill and have testified at our council meeting pleading their case. I understand that there are many budgetary constraints moving forward, however, we cannot put a price on a life and I have been in position too many times having to be the bearer of bad news to families who have come to visit paradise that ends in tragedy.

Sincerely,

Gerald Kosaki
Battalion Chief, Hawaii Fire Department

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2017 9:30 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: Lngmakani@earthlink.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB14 on Feb 24, 2017 11:00AM

HB14

Submitted on: 2/23/2017

Testimony for FIN on Feb 24, 2017 11:00AM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
sean gallagher	hawaii fire dept	Support	No

Comments: as an ex lifeguard from Magic Sands, the most dangerous public beach on the big island, I can safely say that if there was ever a beach that needed, actually demanded lifeguard protection it is Kua Bay. my wife, an ICU nurse at NHCH, and I went there two years ago on Christmas Day and it was carnage. 650 patrons on the beach and 400 people, men women and children, in the water on a 5-6ft shore break day. in one hour we saw at least two people get injured. they were helped by their friends. we finally had to leave it was so crazy. we spoke to the ambu rig on the way out...2 trips that day already! when the West Hawaii Today employee drowned there last year the paper, rather than spearhead this issue was silent. Sad!!!!

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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DANIEL ROBERT SAYRE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 1285, Kailua-Kona, HI 96745
808-325-5456

February 22, 2017

Hawaii State House of Representatives
Finance Committee
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Committee members

The Daniel R. Sayre Memorial Foundation **supports** HB14 which will provide life-saving Ocean Safety Officers at Kua Bay.

The purpose of this Foundation is to assist the Hawaii Fire Department in saving lives through the purchase of needed rescue equipment and training not afforded to them by the Hawaii County budget. We help to provide life-saving equipment to the Ocean Safety Division of the HFD and we are extremely concerned that Kua Bay does not have funding for Ocean Safety Officers.

For years, we have been hearing of near drownings, broken necks and drownings that have occurred at this unguarded beach. Off-duty lifeguards have saved countless lives at this location due to the treacherous currents and shore breaks which have put our community members and visitors at risk. Also for years, Representatives and Senators from Hawaii Island have been asking for financial support from the State budget to protect the visitors to this beach from having tragic endings. For years, the State Finance Committee has chosen to not fund Ocean Safety Officers for this dangerous beach and more lives have been lost. This is a State beach and therefore must be funded by the State.

It seems irresponsible to invite our visitors and community members to enjoy the beauty of Kua Bay and not provide protection for them. It is our feeling that the access to Kua Bay be closed or that protection for this Kua Bay be financed. Waiting another year to fund this Bill shouldn't even be a consideration. If charging an entrance fee to this location is necessary to fund the lifeguards, then I believe that most visitors would be more than happy to do so to receive the benefit of having trained Ocean Safety Officers present. Continuing to lose lives at Kua Bay is an enormous liability to the State of Hawaii and it is devastating for the families that are involved.

Please move HB14 through and provide the funding for our Ocean Safety Officers at Kua Bay.

Sincerely,

Laura Mallery-Sayre
Executive Director

Dr. Frank Sayre
President

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 4:51 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: ammonwhigham@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB14 on Feb 24, 2017 11:00AM

HB14

Submitted on: 2/22/2017

Testimony for FIN on Feb 24, 2017 11:00AM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ammon Boyd Koaikapono Whigham	Individual	Support	No

Comments: As a resident of the Big Island and a frequent visitor of Kua Bay, I highly support this bill. Every year there are several deaths at this beach where hundreds of people visit daily. It amazes me that many of the smaller less populated beaches have such services yet this rather large beach/bay has none.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 9:46 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: mallerysayre@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB14 on Feb 24, 2017 11:00AM*

HB14

Submitted on: 2/22/2017

Testimony for FIN on Feb 24, 2017 11:00AM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laura Mallery-Sayre	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2017 8:24 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: fsayre@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB14 on Feb 24, 2017 11:00AM



HB14

Submitted on: 2/23/2017

Testimony for FIN on Feb 24, 2017 11:00AM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dr. Frank H. Sayre, D.D.S.	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Due to shore break and rip currents this is one of the most dangerous beaches on the Big Island. The State has improved and paved the access road, put in bathrooms, showers and picnic tables. In essence inviting local and beach going visitors and yet not providing lifeguards for their safety!!!

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