

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
1151 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 325  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA  
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE**

**Friday, February 23, 2018  
12:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1974, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

House Bill 1974, House Draft 1 proposes to transfer funds from the Natural Area Reserve Fund to the Department of Land and Natural Resources' (Department) Firefighter's Contingency Fund to be expended to upgrade firefighting equipment to be used jointly by the State and counties. **The Department supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

The Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) is the primary responder for wildland fires across 1,368,002 acres of the State's forested watersheds and supports federal and county responders on the remaining area of the State. Due to climate change and associated droughts, the annual area burnt in Hawai'i has grown in past decades. In fact, the percentage of land area burned annually in Hawai'i exceeds the national average and some years it surpasses the 12 most fire-prone western states.<sup>1</sup>

DOFAW's fire and emergency response mandates require specialized equipment. Resources are needed to modernize DOFAW's fleet of response vehicles and equipment to ensure timely response to wildfires. State crews currently rely on outdated vehicles, some of which are on loan from federal agencies, are incurring costly repairs, and have broken down while crews were en route to fires. The Department also assists counties during natural disasters, such as hurricanes

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<sup>1</sup> Pacific Fire Exchange Wildfire in Hawaii Factsheet

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54825edae4b0426dc2c78f10/t/5696b96c0ab377d4c95fd307/1458772891261/Wildfire+in+Hawaii+fact+sheet+--+Pacific+Fire+Exchange+2014.pdf>

and lava flows. Much of DOFAW's equipment used for fire response is also used in such disasters.

1. The Department supports the use of the Natural Area Reserve Fund for upgrading firefighting equipment as fire suppression protects native ecosystems which are not fire-adapted.
2. It appears that the Department's Firefighter's Contingency Fund is appropriate for purchase of equipment.
3. Using equipment "jointly" with the counties is a viable concept as it pertains to the State's assistance to county response. Although renegotiating agreements to include joint equipment usage is possible, the current policy assigns trained DOFAW staff with equipment to assist the counties.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

ALAN M ARAKAWA  
MAYOR



JEFFREY MURRAY  
FIRE CHIEF

LIONEL MONTALVO  
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF

COUNTY OF MAUI  
DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & PUBLIC SAFETY

200 DAIRY ROAD  
KAHULUI, HI 96732  
(808) 270-7561  
Fax (808) 270-7919

February 22, 2018

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 306  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Luke:

Subject: House Bill (HB) 1974, House Draft (HD) 1, Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources

I am Jeffrey A. Murray, Member of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Maui County, Department of Fire and Public Safety (MFD). The SFC and the MFD support HB 1974, which proposes to transfer \$1,000,000 from the natural area preserve fund to the fire fighter's contingency fund to upgrade fire fighting equipment for the state of Hawaii (State) and counties.

Summer is historically the busiest time of the year for wildland fires. As equipment technology improves and older equipment deteriorate, the State and county fire fighters are continually looking to replace equipment. The transfer of this money will provide the needed support to replace and upgrade aging equipment.

The SFC and the MFD urge your committees' passage of HB 1974, HD1, for the protection of the public and our fire fighters.

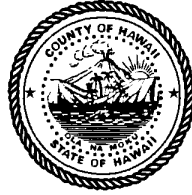
Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Lloyd Rogers at 723-7176 or [lrogers@honolulu.gov](mailto:lrogers@honolulu.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Murray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

JEFFREY A. MURRAY  
Fire Chief

**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 21, 2018

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
State Capitol, Room 306  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Luke:

**Subject: H.B. 1974, HD1 Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources**  
**Hearing Date: Friday, February 23, 2018**  
**Time/Place of Hearing: 12:00 p.m., Conference Room 308**

I am Darren J. Rosario, Fire Chief of the Hawai'i Fire Department of the County of Hawai'i (HCFD). The HCFD supports HB 1974, HD1 which proposes to appropriate funds from the natural area reserve fund in the sum of \$1,000,000 or so necessary to be deposited into the firefighter' contingency fund.

The HCFD works hand in hand with the Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Forestry & Wildlife in the mitigation of wildfires in Hawai'i County. Our great partnership has resulted in the protection of countless homes and businesses during catastrophic wildfires throughout the past years. Currently, our partnership is working on mitigating a large wildfire on the West side of Hawai'i Island in the vicinity of Waikoloa Village.

Prompt response and mitigation efforts are key to the saving of open area spaces that are also used for agriculture or reserve functions. Mitigation efforts are further enhanced with serviceable equipment, apparatus, and proper personnel manning. This measure would greatly enhance the DLNR's ability to assist local County Fire Departments with the protection of its mutual communities, open rangelands, and forest reserves. The HCFD strongly urges you to support this measure.

Please do not hesitate to call me at 932-2903 or [darren.rosario@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:darren.rosario@hawaiicounty.gov) should you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2097, HD1.

Respectfully,

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

**DARREN J. ROSARIO**  
Fire Chief



**Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.**  
Mayor



**Robert F. Westerman**  
Fire Chief

**Wallace G. Rezendes, Jr.**  
Managing Director

**Kilipaki K. F. Vaughan**  
Deputy Fire Chief

**KAUA'I FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**County of Kaua'i, State of Hawai'i**  
4444 Rice Street, Suite 315, Lihu'e, Hawai'i 96766  
TEL (808) 241-4980 FAX (808) 241-6508

February 21, 2018

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 306  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Luke:

Subject: House Bill (HB) 1974, House Draft (HD) 1, Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources

I am Robert Westerman, Vice Chair of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Kauai Fire Department (KFD). The SFC and the KFD support HB 1974, which proposes to transfer \$1,000,000 from the natural area preserve fund to the fire fighter's contingency fund to upgrade fire fighting equipment for the state of Hawaii (State) and counties.

Summer is historically the busiest time of the year for wildland fires. As equipment technology improves and older equipment deteriorate, the State and county fire fighters are continually looking to replace equipment. The transfer of this money will provide the needed support to replace and upgrade aging equipment.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committees' passage of HB 1974, HD1, for the protection of the public and our fire fighters.

Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Lloyd Rogers at 723-7176 or [lrogers@honolulu.gov](mailto:lrogers@honolulu.gov).

Sincerely,

Robert Westerman  
Fire Chief, County of Kaua'i

RFW/dag



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
[www.labor.hawaii.gov](http://www.labor.hawaii.gov)  
Phone: (808) 586-8844 / Fax: (808) 586-9099  
Email: [dliir.director@hawaii.gov](mailto:dliir.director@hawaii.gov)

February 21, 2018

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Committee on Finance  
House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 306  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Luke:

Subject: House Bill (HB) 1974, House Draft (HD) 1 Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources

I am Manuel P. Neves, Chair of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD). The SFC and the HFD support HB 1974, HD 1, which proposes to transfer \$1,000,000 from the natural area preserve fund to the fire fighter's contingency fund to upgrade fire fighting equipment for the state of Hawaii (State) and counties.

Summer is historically the busiest time of the year for wildland fires. As equipment technology improves and older equipment deteriorate, the State and county fire fighters are continually looking to replace equipment. The transfer of this money will provide the needed support to replace and upgrade aging equipment.

The SFC and the HFD urge your committee's passage of HB 1974, HD 1 for the protection of the public and our fire fighters.

Should you have questions, please contact SFC Administrative Specialist Lloyd Rogers at 723-7176 or [lrogers@honolulu.gov](mailto:lrogers@honolulu.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "MPN".

MANUEL P. NEVES  
Chair

MPN/LR:clc



The Nature Conservancy  
Hawaii Program  
923 Nu'uauu Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96817

Tel(808) 537-4508  
Fax(808) 545-2019  
nature.org/hawaii

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii  
Supporting HB 1974 HD1 Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources  
House Committee on Finance  
Friday, February 23, 2018, 12:00PM, Room 308

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*The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which life depends. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawaii. We manage 43,000 acres in 14 preserves and work in 19 coastal communities to help protect the near-shore reefs and waters of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnerships with government, private parties and communities to protect Hawaii's important watershed forests and coral reefs.*

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The Nature Conservancy supports HB 1974 HD1 to provide funding to the State's firefighter's contingency fund to upgrade firefighting equipment to be used jointly by the State and counties.

Except in active volcanic areas, fire is not a part of the natural life-cycle of native Hawaiian ecosystems. Often, only a few native species regenerate after a fire, if at all. The void they leave is quickly filled by fire-adapted alien weeds, which increase the risk of future fires. This vicious cycle of destruction has played out especially on Moloka'i and Hawaii island, which have seen major in recent decades. These fires allow flammable alien grasses to gain a foothold, and with each new fire they spread further. Heavily impacted are some of the last remnants of native lowland dry forest and the rare species that survive there.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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**LATE**

**HB-1974-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 8:55:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2018 12:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dawn Bruns          | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: