



LATE

March 16, 2017

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on International Affairs and the Arts

Support of HB 875, HD1 Relating to Historic Preservation (Appropriates funds for five full-time equivalent (5.00 FTE) temporary student intern II positions within the State Historic Preservation Division.)

IAA Hrg: Thursday, March 16, 2017, 2:45 p.m., Conf. Rm. 229

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources and public health and safety.

LURF **supports** HB 875, HD1 Relating to Historic Preservation, which would appropriate funds for five full-time equivalent (5.00 FTE) temporary student intern II positions within the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR); and respectfully requests an amendment to include an appropriation of \$204,000.00 in each year of the biennium, as requested by DLNR.

LURF's Position. LURF members include long-time Kama'aina land owners and new land owners who are stewards of Hawaii's natural and historic resources; and believe that that section 6E-42, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), plays an essential role in the protection and management of the State's historic places, burial sites, and aviation artifacts. SHPD administers the historic preservation review processes pursuant to Chapter 6E-2, HRS, and by Section 106, of the national Historic Preservation Act. Prior to certain government approvals, Section 6E-42, HRS requires that certain projects that may affect historic properties be submitted to SHPD for review and comment.

LURF agrees that a number of SHPD reviews are essential to the protection and management of Hawaii's unique cultural and historic heritage and that relevant, reasonable and timely reviews of projects by the Division are also critical to ensuring the timely development of housing, critical infrastructure, and other economic development initiatives.

DLNR has expressed that SHPD has an unacceptable backlog of projects needing review, which has slowed-down needed housing and infrastructure projects. DLNR attributes the backlog to the tight market for qualified SHPD technical professionals and staff and an exceptionally heavy project review workload due to the current strength of the State's economy, demand for housing, and critical infrastructure needs.

According to DLNR, SHPD has experienced problems recruiting technical professionals due to the highly competitive nature of the job market, which is exacerbated by the limited size of the pool of qualified applicants. In order to increase the size of the pool of qualified applicants and assist in reducing the state historic preservation division's backlog of reviews, DLNR believes it is necessary to add student intern positions within the SHPD. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to support five student intern positions within SHPD.

DLNR has testified that funding of the five proposed Student Intern positions will require an appropriation of \$204,000.00 in each year of the biennium; and has requested that this measure be amended to provide for general funding for these positions

For the reasons stated above, LURF is **in support of HB 875, HD1**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this measure.