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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
WATER AND LAND

Wednesday, January 31, 2018
2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2331
RELATING TO TRAILS

Senate Bill 2331 proposes to appropriate funds to Nā Ala Hele, the Hawaii Statewide Trail and Access Program, by improving access to and maintaining state controlled recreational trails statewide and promoting hiker safety and hiker etiquette education and outreach. **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 Budget request.**

The Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife has a current statewide inventory of 128 trail-and-road features spanning approximately 855 miles. According to the 2015 Hawaii State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), there are two areas regarding public hiking identified for improvement, *(a) demand for more trails or access to mauka lands and (b) the need for trail facilities and maintenance*. Working to protect and expand legal access to trails and public rights-of-way is an integral part of the Nā Ala Hele Program that requires specific legal and land disposition expertise. Additionally, due to budget and staffing limitations, the level of maintenance on these features varies.

The Department also recognizes the need for hiker safety and hiker etiquette education and outreach. Hiker safety and hiker etiquette is associated with a significant increase in people wishing to access trails due to the rise of social media. Trails throughout the State have gained immense popularity, resulting in an increase in trail-head conflicts and mountain rescues. Trail-heads are frequently associated with residential areas, and hikers need to be educated about proper etiquette to minimize impacts to local residents.

Potential campaign objectives and tasks include: (1) conduct surveys to identify target audience and develop potential strategies to better educate the public about hiking safety; (2) identify and implement ways to counter misleading information about trails found on the internet and social media; (3) use Honolulu Fire Department rescue data to implement a higher level of risk management at identified rescue hot spots by identifying target audience and best time of the year to advocate for hiking safety; (4) create television and radio commercials advocating for hiking safety and etiquette; (5) work with visitor industry constituents, such as airlines and hotels to create and promote hiking safety and etiquette; (6) further expand and enhance the existing hiking safety program; and (7) expand efforts to provide safety presentations to public organizations, such as the military and schools.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-2331

Submitted on: 1/28/2018 10:51:39 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/31/2018 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Hawaiian Civic Club of Honolulu	Support	No

Comments:



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**

P.O. BOX 150
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EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY LAUREL A. JOHNSTON
ACTING DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2331

**January 31, 2018
2:45 p.m.
Room 224**

LATE

RELATING TO TRAILS

Senate Bill No. 2331 appropriates funding for the Department of Land and Natural Resources' (DLNR) Na Ala Hele State Trails and Access Program to improve access to and maintenance of State-controlled recreational trails and promote hiker safety.

Senate Bill No. 2331 mandates that funds appropriated in the bill for the Na Ala Hele Program be added to and included in the base budget of the DLNR. The bill appropriates an unspecified sum of general funds for FY 19 for trail improvements, statewide.

While the Department of Budget and Finance understands the importance of maintaining the State's trails system, the department does have a serious concern regarding Section 3 of the bill. In developing the Executive Biennium Budget, the normal practice is to allow departments to submit requests to continue funding for specific appropriations. Due to the myriad of demands and limited resources statewide, there is no guarantee for the continued funding of specific appropriations. As such, we do not believe the bill sets forth good budgeting practice.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAII
MĀLAMA I KA HONUA. *Cherish the Earth.*

LATE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Wednesday, January 31, 2018 2:45PM Conference Room 224

In SUPPORT of SB 2331 Relating to Trails

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the Committee,

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **supports SB 2331**, which makes an appropriation to improve na ala hele, the Hawaii statewide trail and access program, by improving access to and maintaining state controlled recreational trails statewide and promoting hiker safety and hiker etiquette education and outreach. Beginning with the 2019-2020 fiscal year, SB 2331 requires funds necessary to improve na ala hele to be included in the base budget of the department of land and natural resources.

One of the founding principles of the Sierra Club is to “explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth.” The organization's founder, John Muir, knew that when people get out into the wilderness, they learn to respect and value the importance of our environment. John Muir spent a majority of his life exploring many of the trails and paths in what would become state and national parks, and to this day the Sierra Club seeks to embody this spirit of enjoyment, protection, and conservation through our work.

The Hawai'i chapter of the Sierra Club has utilized the copious trail, state, and national park system throughout the state to educate students, visitors, and concerned residents on the importance of environmentalism, as well as demonstrate the beauty of Hawai'i's unique natural spaces. Last year, our organization led over 200 hikes statewide and worked to maintain dozens of public and private trails. The O'ahu Group alone led nearly 90 hikes and service projects, with an emphasis on native species conservation, hiker safety, and trail etiquette.

We know firsthand that our state's trail systems are in dire need of maintenance and protection. Millions of tourists who visit our islands use these trails everyday, but the funds to protect them have declined significantly every year. SB 2331 seeks to correct this by allocating funds to the operation of the na ala hele trail program. In order to continue enjoying the natural spaces of our

marvelous state, we must prioritize trail funding within the budget of the department of land and natural resources. The Sierra Club of Hawai'i strongly urges the committee to pass SB 2331.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.

Mahalo,

Jodi Malinoski

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jodi Malinoski".

Sierra Club of Hawai'i
O'ahu Group Coordinator

HIKING O'AHU

10 SIERRA CLUB TIPS



- **PLAN AHEAD.** Know what weather and trail conditions to expect.



- **BE PREPARED.** Select the proper equipment and always bring water.



- **BE MINDFUL OF NEARBY RESIDENTS.** Keep the noise down, carpool when possible, and never trespass through people's yards.



- **HIKE WITH A FRIEND.** Hiking with someone gives added security and is more fun!



- **STAY ON THE TRAIL.** Avoid damaging treasured ecosystems and respect all wildlife.



- **AVOID CLOSED TRAILS.** They are dangerous and illegal.



- **BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER HIKERS.** Do not smoke on trails, keep dogs on a leash, and leave items such as radios at home.



- **BE CONSIDERATE OF HAWAIIAN CULTURE.** Respect cultural traditions, historical, and sacred sites.



- **TAKE SAFE SELFIES.** No photo is worth risking your life.

PROTECT OUR TRAILS!
JOIN THE SIERRA CLUB
FOR AN UPCOMING HIKE
OR SERVICE PROJECT!



SIERRA CLUB
OF HAWAII
O'AHU GROUP



SIERRACLUBOAHU.ORG/OUTINGS

27 January 2018

Dear Senate Water and Land Use Committee,

Aloha! We are writing to you from a community of 250 households, approx. 600 residents, that has painfully experienced firsthand the ongoing impacts of a poorly funded DLNR Na Ala Hele trail system. The health and safety of our families and kupuna are impacted daily by a trail that has no management and no resources. (Run by DLNR for 18 years, now left in limbo.)

Today hikers invade our residential neighborhood waking up residents at 5:30am. Elder residents have trouble navigating around hikers to get to their homes as this trail has no parking and no security. Property is destroyed and daily trash is left for residents to clean up.



With no enforcement, resources and controls, the safety of our Keiki are impacted daily. Children can't play in their own front lawns as hikers speed around looking for parking. Criminals prey on hiker cars and police spend much time ticketing cars that are blocking



driveways and hydrants.

Years of neglect has left the Aina destroyed. Hikers regularly need rescuing often by helicopter at great public expense. There is no trail enforcement and maintenance.



Our precious Aina, waterways and marshes are being destroyed due to gross overuse, no maintenance and few resources. Thousands of hikers are polluting our environment, this is shameful.



Hawai'i has long been noted for its natural beauty and clean environment. As stewards, much more needs to be done today to better manage and protect our finite resources. We need good accountability and clear sustainability plans. There are already several Japanese websites that talk about the filth and destroyed land at these overused trails.

SB2330 is a step forward to help better Malama Hawaii, more needs to be done today. Please support SB2330.

Aloha,

Chris Nakamatsu, POC, 808.261.9591
Cheryl Tom Parker, President
Maunawili Estates Community Association
PO Box 693
Kailua, HI 96734

LATE

SB-2331

Submitted on: 1/30/2018 7:11:49 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/31/2018 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Colleen Soares		Support	No

Comments:

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Committee on Water and Land

Re: S.B. 2331

I am writing to strongly support S.B. 2331, relating to trails.

My name is Colleen Soares. I am a volunteer outings leader for Sierra Club, O'ahu Group, and I submit testimony as a private individual. There are more and more people, including many from the 9 million visitors each year, who realize the benefits of hiking, and trails are highly used. Unfortunately, many trails are in sad shape and need maintenance. Sierra Club does considerable service work to help keep trails safe, oftentimes working with the DLNR. However, given its limited budget, there is just too much that needs to be done on hundreds of miles of trails for the DLNR to keep pace with growing demands.

DLNR has huge responsibilities and needs a bigger share of state funds in order to protect and conserve our gorgeous paradise. As its website reads, "DLNR is responsible for 1.3 million acres of state land, 3 million acres of state ocean waters, 2 million acres of conservation district lands, our drinking water supply, our fisheries, coral reefs, indigenous and endangered flora and fauna, and all of Hawai'i's historic and cultural sites." And yet, the total DLNR operating budget "adds up to less than 1% of the entire state operating budget..." bit.ly/DLNRbudget

I urge you to support SB2331.

Thank you for your consideration.

Colleen Soares, PhD

47-678 Hui Alala St.

Kaneohe, HI 96744

csoares48@gmail.com

LATE

SB-2331

Submitted on: 1/30/2018 7:23:26 PM
Testimony for WTL on 1/31/2018 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Randy Ching		Support	No

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the committee,

I am an outings leader for the Sierra Club of Hawaii. This is my 25th year as a hike leader, trail builder, trail maintainer. I have hiked on most of Oahu's trails. Na Ala Hele needs more money to keep our trails hikeable. 9 million tourists have had tremendous impacts on our state trails. I have known Aaron Lowe of Oahu Na Ala Hele for about 20 years and have helped him with many trail projects over the years. He has to have more money, more equipment and more personnel if he is to keep up with the ever increasing number of hikers. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Randy Ching / Honolulu / makikirandy@yahoo.com

SB-2331

Submitted on: 1/28/2018 3:32:40 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/31/2018 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
William K. Chang	Citizen	Support	No

Comments: