

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



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

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FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL  
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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HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
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 Senate Committee on  
WAYS AND MEANS

Wednesday, February 20, 2019  
10:05 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 875  
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR STATE LIFEGUARDS

Senate Bill 875 proposes to appropriate unspecified funds salaries and benefits for lifeguards for Kua Bay, Kekaha Kai state park, on Hawai'i, an area 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 priorities indicated in the Executive Budget request.**

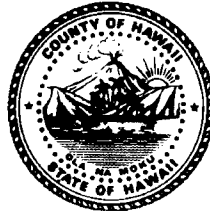
The Department has supported proposed legislation to provide for lifeguard services since 2015 and currently has a contract with the County of Hawai'i (County) for lifeguard services at Hāpuna Beach State Recreation Area. There is currently no lifeguard protection for visitors to Kua Bay and the Department would have to contract lifeguard services with the County. After Hāpuna Beach, Kua Bay would be the next location to provide for lifeguard services as it has the most reported spinal cord injuries.

The Department supports the appropriation of general funds in the amount of \$400,000 for the establishment of four full time equivalent (4.0 FRE) ocean safety officer positions in Fiscal Years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 and \$80,000 for equipment purchases in the Fiscal Year 2019-2020.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**LATE**

**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 Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

February 19, 2019

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

**RE: SB 875 Relating to Making an Appropriation for State Lifeguards**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 875, which would fund lifeguard services at Kua Bay in Kekaha Kai State Park.

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.

Please act favorably on SB 875. Better yet, please include the positions and appropriate funding in the Senate version of the Budget.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim  
MAYOR

**SB-875**

Submitted on: 2/19/2019 9:33:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/20/2019 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

**VALERIE T. POINDEXTER**  
*Council Member*  
*Chair, Committee on Parks and Recreation*  
*Council District 1*



Phone: (808) 961-8018  
Fax: (808) 961-8912  
Email: [valerie.poindexter@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:valerie.poindexter@hawaiicounty.gov)

## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

*County of Hawai'i*  
*Hawai'i County Building*  
*25 Aupuni Street, Suite 1402*  
*Hilo, Hawai'i 96720*

February 18, 2019

Committee on Ways and Means  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Email: [sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Email: [senkeithagaran@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senkeithagaran@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Subject: Testimony Supporting SB875, Relating to Making an Appropriation for State Lifeguards

Hearing: February 20, 2019, 10:05 a.m., Conference Room 211

Dear Chair Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Keith-Agaran:

I am submitting this testimony in full support of SB875 that appropriates funds for the employment of lifeguards at Kua Bay (Kekaha Kai State Park).

Kua Bay is located in a remote location in West Hawai'i that has now become easily accessible to an overwhelming amount of beach goers. The amount of ocean related incidents have increased including spinal injuries and drownings.

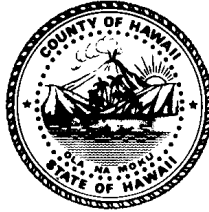
According to the Hawai'i Health Department EMS patient care data base, there were 32 patients who required treatment at Kua Bay between 2013 and 2018. Most (94% or 30) of these patients required transport to a hospital with the majority (84%, or 27 patients) being for traumatic injuries. Per the Trauma Registry there were 10 spinal cord injuries suffered at Kua Bay over the 2009-2017 period. The nearest rescue or medical assistance to Kua Bay is approximately 20 minutes away. The absence of lifeguard services and medical equipment at Kua Bay decreases the chance of mitigating or surviving major injury or serious medical events.

I strongly support and urge the enactment of SB875. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Valerie T. Poindexter

**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 19, 2019

### COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S. C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**Testimony supporting HB 558 RELATING TO KEKAHA KAI STATE PARK.**  
Appropriates funds for the employment of lifeguards and for life-saving equipment  
at Kua Bay  
WAM - February 20, 2019 at 10:05 a.m., Conference Room 211

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:

Skilled lifeguards, appropriate rescue equipment and a lifeguard tower for adequate field of sight are essential to save lives and prevent injuries at Kua Bay. The beach is well known to Kona residents to be even more heavily-visited since the paving of the road leading to the beach. West Hawai'i residents have strongly voiced concerns regarding the disturbing number of reported and unreported incidents which have occurred at Kua Bay.

Hawai'i County has continuously urged 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. We urge you to approve this measure to do so, for the sake of Hawai'i Island residents and visitors.

Sincerely,

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

KE.wpb

**SB-875**

Submitted on: 2/17/2019 2:19:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/20/2019 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Stephanie Donoho	Testifying for Kohala Coast Resort Association	Support	No

Comments:



**Department of Land and Natural Resources  
Aha Moku Advisory Committee  
State of Hawaii  
Post Office Box 621  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809**

Testimony of  
Aha Moku Advisory Committee

Before the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, February 20, 2019  
10:05 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

**In SUPPORT of Senate Bill 875  
Making an appropriation for State lifeguards**

SB 875 appropriates unspecified funds for salaries and benefits for lifeguards for Kua Bay, Kekaha State Park, on the island of Hawaii, an area under the jurisdiction of DLNR. **The Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) supports this measure.**

Under the Aha Moku Process, a traditional land and ocean management system restored from the translation of oral chants of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Kona Moku (District) on Moku O Keawe (the Island of Hawaii) has for centuries retained the traditional practices of *lawaiia*, ocean and marine fishing methods that are unique to the Kona Moku. These practices have been kept alive from ancient times to current times by the empirical knowledge of the marine resources of Kona that have been handed down generation to generation by expert Native Hawaiian fishermen of Kona. In this last century, the *lawaiia* of the ahupua'a of Kona, particularly the Ahupua'a of O'oma, Kalaoa, and Kau continue to use Mahaiula, the beach area where Kua Bay is located for traditional and cultural practices.

Since the Kekaha Kai State Park (Kua Bay) was publicly opened to all in 1995, Native Hawaiian *lawaiia* (fishermen), and other practitioners now share these natural and cultural assets with others. The Kekaha Kai State Park is comprised of Manini'owali Bay (Kua Bay), Makalawena beach at Pu'u Ali'I Bay, and Mahai'ula Bay. Along this stretch of coast, these beaches and bays are well-known for their pristine waters and white sand beaches. They are frequently used by the honu (turtle) who congregate along this coast.

However, Native Hawaiian communities who have traditionally gathered and continued their ocean practices over the decades know, there are definite seasons, changes of currents and wave sizes. In their hospitable Hawaiian culture, local communities who share these beaches with malihini, visitors and tourists often warn people about the currents that are unseen but can be deadly. Locals have often saved the unwary tourist from harm, and usually at their own risk. Resorts that have come up along the Kohala Coast contribute to the popularity of Kekaha Kai State Park, and to possible injury to the unwary.

Since the restoration of the Aha Moku Process by the Legislature in 2012, via Act 288, §171.4-5, the AMAC has successfully strived to bring the voices of the communities and 'ohana of ahupua'a districts forward to work with Hawai'i government in addressing and sustaining the natural and cultural resources of our Pae'Aina. We are attached to DLNR, and through this venue, our people have been able to collaborate with government to address critical issues that are important to the people. A critical issue for the people of Kona is ensuring that the safety of those who come to enjoy some of the most beautiful bays and stretches of coastline in Hawaii can do so safely, especially in a Hawaii public State Park. Adopting this Bill not only provides critically needed lifeguards, equipment and infrastructure that will save lives and reduce injuries, it will also protect and relieve the locals from harm as they currently continue to rescue the unwary when needed. **On behalf of the Moku of Kona, Moku O Keawe, we humbly ask that Senate Bill 875 be passed by the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.**

Respectfully yours,

Leimana DaMate, Hawaii State Aha Moku for Piilani Kaawaloa, Po'o, Aha Moku Advisory Committee  
Phone: 808-640-1214 Email: Leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov

**SB-875**

Submitted on: 2/18/2019 10:19:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/20/2019 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kirstin Kahaloa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha! I am a resident of Kona and I wholeheartedly support this bill. This bill helps both residents and visitors. Please say YES to SB875!

Mahalo,

Kirstin Kahaloa





Hawai'i Convention Center  
1801 Kalākaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815  
**kelepona** tel 808 973 2255  
**kelepa'i** fax 808 973 2253  
**kahua pa'a** web hawaiiourismauthority.org

**David Y. Ige**  
Governor

**LATE**

**Chris Tatum**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of  
**CHRIS TATUM**

Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

Wednesday, February 20, 2019  
10:05 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room #211

In consideration of  
**SENATE BILL NO 875**  
**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR STATE LIFE GUARDS.**

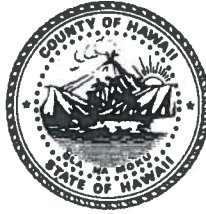
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Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Committee on Ways and Means, the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) **supports** Senate Bill 875 which appropriates funds to support lifeguards at Kua Bay in Kekaha Kai State Park.

Senate Bill 875 would be beneficial as it will help to make Kua Bay safer for both residents and visitors. As stated in the proposed measure, we agree that supporting lifeguards that will be stationed at Kua Bay will have far-reaching, positive impacts by having first responders onsite in the event they are needed for rescues, administering first aid, and for teaching ocean safety.

It is for these reasons that the HTA **supports** Senate Bill 875. We appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony.

REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



PHONE: (808) 323-4267  
FAX: (808) 323-4786  
EMAIL: [Rebecca.villegas@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:Rebecca.villegas@hawaiicounty.gov)

**LATE**

## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

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

February 19, 2019

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS  
COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON SB 875, RELATING TO MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR STATE LIFEGUARDS  
Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, February 20, 2019  
10:05 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 875, relating to an appropriation for State lifeguards.

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds for salaries and benefits for lifeguards for Kekaha Kai State Park (Kua Bay).

Kua Bay is one of the most beautiful locations in the islands, but its hidden hazards can be deadly. With the easier accessibility to this location, for the sake of locals and visitors alike, lifeguards at this location is highly warranted and would be much appreciated. With lifeguards being the primary responders for emergencies on shorelines and within nearshore waters, where the majority of ocean recreation activity occurs, lifeguards provide injury control and dispatch ocean rescue services. With Kua Bay under state jurisdiction, state funded lifeguards are a necessity for this very popular beach and is a priority need.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the Committee on Ways and Means to support this measure as well. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.

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

Rebecca Villegas  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council