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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Friday, February 21, 2020
1:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration of
HB 1856 HD1
RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE.

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee on Finance.

The Office of Planning (OP) supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget. The OP defers to the testimony of Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission for suggested amendments to this measure.

The OP looks forward to continuing to support the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION
COMMISSION
POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
Anukriti Hittle
Coordinator, Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission**

**Before the House Committee on
FINANCE**

**Friday, February 21, 2020
12:00PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1856, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE**

House Bill 1856, House Draft 1 proposes to direct the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, in collaboration with the office of planning CZM program, to conduct certain activities to address the impacts of sea level rise and report to the legislature before the 2022 regular session; and appropriates funds for the commission's activities and extends the lapse date to June 30, 2022. **On behalf of the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) I appreciate the intent of this measure, and offer the following comments for consideration. I appreciate the appropriation intent as well, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicted in the Department of Land and Natural Resources' Executive Supplemental Budget.**

The Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission "recognizes the urgency of climate threats and the need to act quickly. It promotes ambitious, climate-neutral, culturally responsible strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation in a manner that is clean, equitable and resilient." The Commission, established by Act 32 SLH 2017 to uphold the United States' pledges under the Paris Agreement, is the coordinating body for policies on climate change mitigation and adaptation for the state. It is a high-level multi-jurisdictional body that guides the priorities of the state's climate response. Co-chaired by DLNR and Office of Planning, it consists of 20 members—chairs of four legislative committees, and executive department heads at the county and state levels.

At its September 2018 meeting, the Climate Commission agreed to five priority recommendations for countering impacts of sea level rise, including requesting that all new development, redevelopment, and modifications be directed away from beach areas; urging counties to incorporate the 3.2 foot sea level rise exposure area (SLR-XA) as detailed in the Hawaii Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report (Hawaii Sea Level Rise Report) into their general and community plans; and bring resources to assist in planning and implementing for sea level rise and other climate related impacts.

Co-Chairs:
Chair, DLNR
Director, Office of Planning

Commissioners:
Chair, Senate AEN
Chair, Senate WTL
Chair, House EEP
Chair, House WTH
Chairperson, HTA
Chairperson, DOA
CEO, OHA
Chairperson, DHHH
Director, DBEDT
Director, DOT
Director, DOH
Chairperson, DOE
Director, C+C DPP
Director, Maui DP
Director, Hawai'i DP
Director, Kaua'i DP
The Adjutant General
Manager, CZM

This measure acts on the Commission’s priority recommendations, and is a crucial component of Hawaii’s adaptation to the impacts of sea level rise. Since several of these components are already being initiated as part of the Commission’s “Climate Ready Hawaii” initiative, the following comments are offered to help align legislative and executive action—which is one of the main purposes of the Commission:

1. For item (1), Page 2 Line 14: instead of directing the Commission to conduct said inventory, it might be more appropriate for the Commission, in keeping with its role as a coordinating body, to bring resources to the various agencies and departments in the form of best practices, formulating guidance, and providing a coordinating structure and timeframe within which to work, and I recommend modifying the language in this part to support the Commission’s role in assisting agencies and departments in this manner;
2. For item (2), Page 2 Line 20: I believe this task has already been completed with the issuance of the State’s Sea Level Rise report, and recommend it be removed from this measure;
3. For item (3) Page 3 Line 3: the Commission’s staff is working with partners to operationalize sea level rise exposure areas into county planning and permitting, and can provide a status update in its Annual Report to the Legislature, and it is recommended that the measure’s language reflect this;
4. For item (4) Page 3 Line 6: while this measure is helpful in underscoring the need to incorporate sea level rise into various plans, the Commission is working to enhance, uniformize, and support the work of the counties, rather than be seen as “interfering” in their jurisdictions. It is therefore recommended that the current language be replaced with “Work to enhance, uniformize, and support the work of the state and county agencies in their development of sea level rise adaptation plans utilizing the sea level rise vulnerability and adaptation report”; and
5. For item (5) Page 3 Line 9: This task would be an outcome of the previous task, and therefore, perhaps not appropriately placed in this measure—it might be more appropriate as a “Phase 2” task, once the above tasks have been completed; and recommend this be stricken from this measure, and considered at a future time.

I am, further, supportive of language in Senate Bill 2683 Senate Draft 1 and Senate Bill 2162 Senate Draft 1 for which I provided the following clarification to the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

“In order to clarify the direction given to the Commission, I recommend replacing the current language of Item 3 (b) with the following (underscored text is new) language: “The Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission shall research and submit a report on options for a state supplemental insurance program for properties within the State subject to climate change impacts to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2021.”

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on this measure.



HB 1856, HD1, RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE

FEBRUARY 21, 2020 · HOUSE FINANCE
COMMITTEE · CHAIR REP. SYLVIA LUKE

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: IMUAlliance supports HB 1856, HD1, relating to sea level rise, which requires the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission, in collaboration with the office of planning CZM program, to conduct certain activities to address the impacts of sea level rise and report to the legislature before the 2022 regular session.

According to a report produced by the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, global sea levels could rise more than three feet by 2100, with more recent projections showing this occurring as early as 2060. In turn, over the next 30 to 70 years, approximately 6,500 structures and 19,800 people statewide will be exposed to chronic flooding.

Additionally, an estimated \$19 billion in economic loss would result from chronic flooding of land and structures located in exposure areas. Finally, approximately 38 miles of coastal roads and 550 cultural sites would be chronically flooded, on top of the 13 miles of beaches that have already been lost on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui to erosion fronting shoreline armoring, like seawalls.

Furthermore, according to research conducted by Michael B. Gerrard from Columbia Law School, modern-day slavery tends to increase after natural disasters or conflicts where large numbers of people are displaced from their homes. In the decades to come, says Gerrard, **climate change will very likely lead to a significant increase in the number of people who are displaced**

and, thus vulnerable, to human trafficking. While the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015 established objectives to limit global temperature increases and several international agreements are aimed at combating modern-day slavery, it is highly uncertain whether they will be adequate to cope with the scale of the problem that is likely to occur as a result of climate change.

As we work to reduce carbon emissions and stave off the worst consequences of climate change, we must begin preparing for the adverse impact of sea level rise on our shores. We are now quantifying the speed at which we must act. We cannot continue to develop the 25,800-acre statewide sea level rise exposure area—one-third of which is designated for urban use—without risking massive structural damage and, potentially, great loss of life.

Therefore, our state should take steps to protect Hawai'i's coastal areas, including by identifying vulnerable public infrastructure and creating plans for mitigating and adapting to the imminent and existential threat of sea level rise. For the sake of our keiki, we cannot afford to wait to solidify strategies to preserve our island home for generations to come.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 21, 2020 1:30 PM Room 308

In **SUPPORT** of **HB1856 HD1**: Relating to Sea Level Rise

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and committee members,

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **strongly supports HB1856 HD1** Relating to Sea Level Rise.

This bill provides specific guidance to the State of Hawaii Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Commission and funds the work of the Commission.

The impacts of sea level rise and the related coastal hazards, including flooding, storm surges, high tides, and accelerated coastal erosion are already being felt in low-lying coastal areas throughout the state. These impacts will increase in coming years as sea level rise continues and eventually accelerates, potentially placing significant numbers of lives, properties, cultural and natural resources at risk in the absence of effective adaptation strategies. The impacts will occur in different areas at different times and will require different adaptation strategies depending upon the nature and location of coastal properties being impacted. The resources to address these impacts will be very substantial and must be phased in over time based on the priorities to be established by the Commission as specified in the bill.

As documented in its report to the legislature, the Commission has evolved into a very effective body for coordinating the efforts of state and county agencies, in consultation with a variety of stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations such as Sierra Club. It has sponsored well-attended climate change conferences which have brought climate change mitigation and adaptation experts from across the nation to Honolulu, and promoted education and outreach on climate change issues among our citizens.

Often the communities most impacted by climate change are vulnerable communities lacking the resources more affluent communities can bring to bear for climate adaptation. Importantly, the Commission has stressed the need for climate equity as the lens through which climate adaptation strategies must be evaluated.

While the state of Hawaii has adopted very ambitious goals for mitigation of climate change, including goals for clean and renewable energy to reduce our carbon emissions, much work remains for developing and implementing the adaptation strategies we will need in this era of

climate change. HB1856 HD1 provides needed guidance and resources for these efforts, and we urge its adoption.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony on **HB1856 HD1**.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Raney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dave Raney
Co-Chair
Sierra Club Climate Adaptation and Restoration Team

HB-1856-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 7:42:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1856-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2020 7:51:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/21/2020 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments: