

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
WATER, LAND, & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Friday, January 31, 2020
9:00 A.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2031
RELATING TO THE WAHIAWA DAM AND RESERVOIR**

House Bill 2031 proposes to appropriate funds and direct the Department of Land and Natural Resources Engineering Division's Dam and Reservoir Safety Program to develop and implement an emergency intervention plan for the Wahiawa dam and reservoir. **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.**

An emergency intervention plan (Plan) could be a very important tool that would assist dam owners, operators and Government agencies in identifying triggers, unsafe conditions and response actions necessary to minimize risks to the downstream community during an emergency event.

The Plan would be developed in coordination with the appropriate entities involved in its execution and would identify roles and responsibilities, trigger points and appropriate measures to be taken. Although it is the dam owner's responsibility to remedy unsafe conditions at their dam, the Department does have the authority to implement the Plan, in the event of an emergency. If the Department, in consultation with other government agencies, deems that the conditions of a dam or reservoir poses an imminent danger to the downstream community the Department may immediately implement remedial measures identified in the Plan necessary to protect life and property.

The Department supports this measure and proposes the following amendments:

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

ROBERT K. MASUDA
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
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

SECTION 1. The legislature recognizes that climate change is occurring, and it is a priority issue for the State. Climate change poses immediate and long-term threats to Hawaii's economy, sustainability, security, and way of life.

The legislature also recognizes that climate change creates increased risks of both drought and sea level rise, making it critical to maintain the State's water storage capabilities and to protect downstream communities from flooding. To address these risks, the Wahiawa dam and reservoir, which serves as a major water supply for central and North Shore Oahu, must be carefully monitored for safety and must be the subject of an emergency intervention plan.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to direct the department of land and natural resources engineering division dam safety program to develop ~~and implement~~ an emergency intervention plan for the Wahiawa dam and reservoir.

SECTION 2. (a) The department of land and natural resources engineering division shall develop ~~and implement~~ an emergency intervention plan for the Wahiawa dam and reservoir.

(b) The Wahiawa dam and reservoir emergency intervention plan shall identify:

(1) Communities that may need to evacuate in a dam emergency, using inundation maps that highlight flood areas and estimated travel times for floodwaters;

(2) The dam owner's responsibilities to ensure timely and effective action in the event of an emergency;

(3) The respective responsibilities of the State and the city and county and their areas of jurisdiction in the event of a dam emergency;

(4) Potential defects in the dam and reservoir;

(5) Any aspects of the dam and reservoir that are not in compliance with dam safety standards;

(6) Financing opportunities to bring the dam into safety compliance if necessary; and

(7) Opportunities for public outreach in the adjacent and downstream communities, for both the State and the dam owner.

(c) The department of land and natural resources engineering division shall submit the Wahiawa dam and reservoir emergency intervention plan to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2022.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of _____ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for the Wahiawa dam and reservoir emergency intervention plan. The moneys shall be allocated as follows:

(1) \$1,000,000 to develop the Wahiawa dam and reservoir emergency intervention plan;

(2) \$ _____ to create one permanent full-time equivalent position (1.0 FTE) in the department of land and natural resources engineering division dam safety program for a planner V to ~~implement~~ aid in the development of the Wahiawa dam and reservoir emergency intervention plan and to ~~carry~~ assist in carrying out dam inspection, repair, and maintenance oversight pursuant to chapter 179D, Hawaii Revised Statutes; and

(3) \$3,000,000 to purchase necessary dam safety emergency intervention equipment, ~~including~~ which may include a dozer, excavator, tractor and flat-bed trailer, and ~~emergency~~ other related dam supplies and materials which could include ~~for~~ erosion control measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 723-8960 • FAX: (808) 768-1492

KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR



HIROKAZU TOIYA
DIRECTOR

JENNIFER M. WALTER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

January 29, 2020

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
The Honorable Chris Todd, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Water, Land
and Hawaiian Affairs
House of Representatives
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd, and Members of the Committee on Water, Land
and Hawaiian Affairs:


SUBJECT: House Bill 2031 Relating to the Wahiawa Dam and Reservoir

The City and County of Honolulu Department of Emergency Management (DEM)
SUPPORTS House Bill 2031, which proposes to appropriate funds and direct the
Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Engineering Division to develop
and implement an emergency intervention plan for the Wahiawa dam reservoir.

DEM has worked closely with DLNR with additional resources and capabilities
needed to identify unsafe conditions and take action during emergencies. DEM would
be committed to supporting DLNR and other stakeholders to develop and implement
the emergency intervention plan to make our communities as safe as possible.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify in support of
this measure.

Sincerely,


Hirokazu Toiya
Director



P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, Hawai`i 96837-0158
Phone: 927-0709 henry.lifeoftheland@gmail.com

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Rep. Chris Todd, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, January 31, 2020

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Conference Room 325

HB 2031 RELATING TO THE WAHIAWA DAM AND RESERVOIR

Comments

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd, and Members of the Committees

Life of the Land is Hawai`i's own energy, environmental and community action group advocating for the people and `aina for 49 years. Our mission is to preserve and protect the life of the land through sound energy and land use policies and to promote open government through research, education, advocacy and, when necessary, litigation.

Heavy rains cause Lake Wilson (Wahiawa Reservoir) to overflow, whereby some Waialua Communities become flooded.

The 33-mile Kaukonahua Stream goes through Lake Wilson. It empties into the Ki`iki`i stream which then empties into Kaiaka Bay. Heavy rains turn the bay brown, impacting reefs. The issues surrounding the water have been known for decades. Upstream eroded banks pour dirt into the water. Fast moving water brings the dirt to the ocean. As the water speed slows the mouth of the bay becomes siltated.

There are two solutions: (1) upgrade the dam, or (2) to provide firm renewable energy especially during long rainy periods when solar energy output decreases. Lake Wilson, the largest lake in the State, can provide both hydropower and pumped storage hydro. This could help the State to increase its use of renewable energy.

Mahalo, Henry Curtis, Executive Director