

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

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

**Friday, January 31, 2020
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2484
RELATING TO STATE PARKS**

House Bill 2484 proposes to appropriate funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to purchase ocean safety and rescue equipment for ocean safety officers at state parks. **The Department supports this measure and offers the following amendments.**

The State does not have lifeguard positions and as a result contracts with the four counties to provide lifeguard services at state beach parks under the jurisdiction of the Department's Division of State Parks (Division). The beach parks currently have been identified in collaboration with water safety experts as having both ocean conditions and a volume and types of patronage that warrants the need for trained water safety personnel to be stationed.

Current funding for these contracts has been executed through a creative and now insufficient variety of sources; 1) static general fund appropriations, 2) special fund revenue generated by the Division, 3) revenue generated by the Land Division from lease rents, and 4) a portion of the current Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) allocation. Previously allocated and authorized funds have not been increased since the inception of the original contracts, while lifeguard salaries and State Park operating costs have increased due to: additional park patronage associated with increased tourism, new park units being created, and additional park operations cost associated with inflation.

This measure would enable the Division to support the four Counties with additional and/or replacement equipment needs in collaboration with improving the public safety at these beaches.

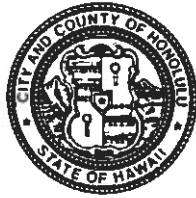
SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,074,200 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for the department of land and natural resources to purchase equipment to be used by state ocean safety officers in the course of their work at state parks; provided that the sum appropriated shall be expended as follows:

- (1) \$228,000 for four new lifeguard towers;
- (2) \$120,000 for eight utility terrain vehicles;
- (3) \$ 64,000 for eight all-terrain vehicles;
- (4) \$144,000 for eight jet skis;
- (5) \$ 13,000 for eight mobile trailers;
- (6) \$260,000 for four four-wheel drive truck;
- (7) \$ 80,000 for eight mobile, long-range public announcement units;
- (8) \$ 5,200 for eighty additional signage to inform visitors of ocean risks; and
- (9) \$160,000 for eight twenty-foot storage containers.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

HONOLULU EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
3375 KOAPAKA STREET, SUITE H-450 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819-1814
Phone: (808) 723-7800 • Fax: (808) 723-7836

KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR



JAMES D. HOWE, JR.
DIRECTOR

IAN T.T. SANTEE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

January 29, 2020

The Honorable Ryan Yamane, Chair
The Honorable Chris Todd, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Water, Land & Hawaiian Affairs
House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Room 325
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Todd, and Members of the Committee:

**SUBJECT: House Bill No. 2484
Relating to State Parks**

The City and County of Honolulu's Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division supports HB 2484, which appropriates funds to DLNR to purchase ocean safety and rescue equipment for ocean safety officers at state parks. This funding would be invaluable in enabling the City and County of Honolulu's Ocean Safety personnel to maintain, and even improve, service at state beaches around Oahu.

Nationwide, Ocean and Water Safety Officers (lifeguards) maintain statistics in several commonly agreed upon categories: beach attendance, preventative actions, emergency medical treatment, and ocean rescues.

The City and County of Honolulu's Ocean Safety Division provides daily service at Kaena Point State Park with one fixed lifeguard tower and mobile service involving the use of Personal Watercraft, or jet ski, response vehicle and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV). In the time period from 2014 to 2018, beach attendance at Kaena Point State Park nearly doubled from 153,968 to 297,179. Correspondingly, our Water Safety Officers now perform more preventative actions: 32,311 in 2013 to 41,401 in 2018 and more rescues: 28 in 2013 to 44 in 2018.

The Honorable Ryan Yamane, Chair
The Honorable Chris Todd, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Water, Land & Hawaiian Affairs
January 29, 2020
Page 2

In addition to the Tower lifeguard service at Kaena Point State Park, the City and County of Honolulu's Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division provides coverage to all state beaches including all State Beach parks Oahu via its mobile response units.

While also accounting for increasing beach attendance and patronage with the increases of visitor arrivals annually, the City and County of Honolulu is preparing to provide Ocean Safety service from dawn to dusk island-wide. This would essentially increase by as much as one-third (1/3), the number of hours currently staffed by Ocean Safety at Tower 50 at Kaena Point State Park, and by its mobile responders for other state beaches around Oahu.

This measure ensures sufficient funding as the City and County's Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division continues and expands its coverage at Kaena Point State Park, and at other state beaches around Oahu.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,



John K. Titchen
Chief of Ocean Safety
City & County of Honolulu

HB-2484

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 11:12:43 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ron Bregman	Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services	Support	No

Comments:

It is critical to maintain the current level of lifeguard service provided at this particularly hazardous, coastal recreational area. Due to the recent, tragic loss of lives at this location, serious consideration should be given to the expansion of current services. This particular geographical area presents unique challenges to emergency responders due to it's isolated location, limited ocean access points and exposure to large winter storm systems. This bill will provide much needed funding to purchase essential equipment utilized to save lives and allow lifeguards to continue performing rescues and to prevent more drownings from occurring.

HB-2484

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 7:20:34 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

HB-2484

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 2:19:51 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Harold Teshima	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill. Please continue to support our C&C Lifeguards. They put their lives on the line everyday and are expected to do so much with so little. Help these hero's save lives! Our visitors and our communities deserve it. Mahalo

HB-2484

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 9:30:37 PM

Testimony for WLH on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James S. Garland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It is imperative that the City & County of Honolulu Ocean Safety/lifeguard Division place lifeguards at Kaena Pt. which will save lives and keep residents/tourists out of harms way. The current time for lifeguards, HFD, our an ambulance to get to Kaena Pt. is too long when a child or Kupuna have gotten into trouble in the ocean in this area with a very good likely chance of getting killed - please vote "yes" on this measure.

Thank you,

James S. Garland

Testimony of
Jon Okudara
on
H.B. No. 2484
Relating to State Parks
House Committee on Water, Land & Hawaiian Affairs
Friday, January 31, 2020, 9 a.m.

I strongly support H.B. No. 2484, which makes an appropriation to provide ocean safety officers with the equipment and facilities that they need to provide ocean safety and rescue work at state parks.

With millions of residents and visitors using public beaches and the near-shore waters, the counties are tasked with providing vital lifeguard services at state beach parks where the county and the Department of Land and Natural Resources mutually agree that the services are necessary.

The counties are responsible for the recruitment, training and deployment of the ocean safety officers. The responsibility of the ocean safety officers is to provide the preventative actions and rescue services to prevent drownings. This requires the funding of the equipment for the designated state parks that are necessary to meet the challenges of the responsibilities assigned, which H.B. 2484 proposes.

For these reasons I support H.B. No. 2484.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



HAWAIIAN LIFEGUARD ASSOCIATION

January 30, 2020

The Honorable Ryan I Yamane, Chair,
The Honorable Chris Todd, Vice-Chair,
And Members
Committee on Water, Land and Hawaiian Affairs
House of Representatives
The Thirtieth Legislature 2020
State of Hawaii

LATE

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Todd, and Members:

RE HB 2484 RELATING TO STATE PARKS

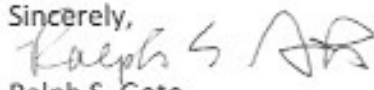
The Hawaiian Lifeguard Association (HLA) is the statewide nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to support the efforts of the over 400 professional lifeguard personnel who ensure the safety of the millions of visitors and residents who visit our beaches each year.

The HLA strongly supports HB 2484, which provides funding for essential lifesaving equipment at state parks. It should be noted that the state does not provide lifeguards at state parks, but contracts with the counties to provide services at designated beach parks on each island. There are no "state ocean safety officers," but rather, county lifeguards who are stationed at state beach parks popularly used by the public. i.e., Keawaula (Kaena Point) on Oahu, Hapuna on Hawaii Island, Makena on Maui, and Ke'e on Kauai.

Lifeguards assigned at these beaches need the equipment to properly oversee the safety of beach patrons. All-terrain vehicles, personal watercraft, trucks and trailers are all pieces of equipment essential to ensure that the lifeguards can perform their primary job function of saving lives.

Once again, the HLA is in strong support of HB 2484 and urges your committee's approval of the measure. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony

Sincerely,


Ralph S. Goto

For the Board of Directors

Post Office Box 283324, Honolulu, HI 96829 Telephone: (808) 479-1610
<www.hawaiianlifeguardassociation.com>