



Hawai'i Convention Center  
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**David Y. Ige**  
*Governor*

**Chris Tatum**  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

Statement of  
**CHRIS TATUM**

Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Tuesday, February 26, 2019  
1:30 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room #308

In consideration of  
**HOUSE BILL NO. 558 HD1**  
**RELATING TO KEKAHA KAI STATE PARK.**

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Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Committee on Finance: the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) **supports** House Bill 558 HD1, which appropriates funds to employ lifeguards and purchase life-saving equipment for Kua Bay in Kekaha Kai State Park.

House Bill 558 HD1 would strengthen the State's community infrastructure, and ultimately, Hawai'i's brand, by making Kua Bay safer for both residents and visitors. Furthermore, HTA is actively involved in supporting State, county and community ocean safety programs, as well as programs focused on education and increasing visitor awareness of dangerous ocean conditions.

It is for these reasons that the HTA **supports** House Bill 558 HD1. We appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony.

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  
FINANCE**

**Tuesday, February 26, 2019  
1:30 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 558, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO KEKAHA KAI STATE PARK**

House Bill 558, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds for the employment of lifeguards and for life-saving equipment at Kua Bay in the Kekaha Kai State Park on Hawai'i Island. **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 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.

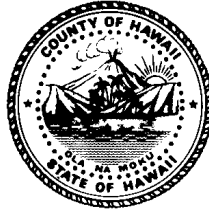
**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**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

**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 25, 2019

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair  
Committee on Finance

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:

**RE: HB 558, HD1 Relating to Kekaha Kai State Park**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 558, HD1, 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.

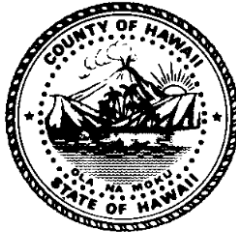
Please act favorably on HB 558, HD1, including the recommendations for funding set forth in the WLH Committee report. Please also consider putting the proposed funding in your House version of the State budget. The need for these services has been recognized for years, but never seems to quite make the cut.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim  
MAYOR

Harry Kim  
Mayor

Wil Okabe  
Managing Director



Gregory Henkel, Chair  
Ralph Yawata, Vice Chair  
Robert Becker, Member  
Kyle Keamo, Member  
Donna Payesko, Member  
Marcella St. Ambrogio, Member  
Scott Susman, Member

**COUNTY OF HAWAII**  
**Fire Commission**

101 Pauahi Street, Suite 9 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720  
Phone: (808) 932-2950 • Fax: (808) 932-2949

**Hawaii County Fire Commission**  
**Testimony**

House Finance Committee

Hearing: February 26, 2019 @ 1:30 p.m.

To: House Finance Committee

From: Hawaii County Fire Commission

Re: HB558  
Relating to appropriation for lifeguards at "Kua Bay"

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Thank-you for the opportunity to offer comments from the Hawaii County Fire Commission in STRONG SUPPORT of the appropriations request included in House Bill 558 to appropriate funding for lifeguards and equipment at Kua Bay, Kekaha Kai State Park, North Kona District, County of Hawaii.

In recent years, our State has expended significant resources to improve the facilities at the beach park commonly called "Kua Bay" including paved roads, showers, improved comfort stations and stair access to beach. The park is now easily accessible for all to visit. As a result of these improvements, Kua Bay is now heavily visited by many locals and tourists on any given day. This increase in use, coupled with an often dangerous shore break, necessitates the need for ocean safety patrols at the beach to keep beachgoers safe. The other local beach parks that see this level of use have lifeguards and the time has come for the funding to be approved to place lifeguards at Kua Bay.

This appropriation of public resources is necessary to keep our community safe.

Thank you.

GREGORY HENKEL  
CHAIR

# Hawai'i State Association of Counties (HSAC)

Counties of Hawai'i, Maui, Kaua'i, and City & County of Honolulu

25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 (808) 961-8018 [www.hawaiicounties.com](http://www.hawaiicounties.com)

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February 25, 2019

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

FROM: Valerie T. Poindexter, President

SUBJECT: HEARING OF FEBRUARY 26, 2019; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB558 HD1; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR STATE LIFEGUARDS

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Hawai'i State Association of Counties in full support of HB558 HD1 that appropriates funds for the employment of lifeguards and for life-saving equipment at Kua Bay in Kekaha Kai State Park, on the island of Hawai'i.

Kua Bay is located in a remote location in West Hawaii 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 Hawaii 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.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**HB-558-HD-1**

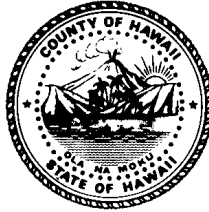
Submitted on: 2/23/2019 8:45:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2019 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

**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 25, 2019

### COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ry J. K. Cullen, 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.  
FIN - February 26, 2019 at 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 308

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 the heavily-visited Kua Bay. 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. Once again, we urge you to approve a measure to do so, for the sake of Hawai'i Island residents and visitors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Eoff".

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

KE.wpb

**HB-558-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2019 1:27:54 PM

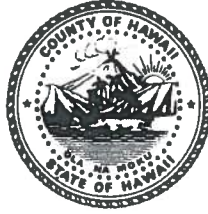
Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2019 1:30:00 PM

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

Comments:



REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



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

## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

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

February 25, 2019

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS  
COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON HB558 HD1, RELATING TO KEKAHA KAI STATE PARK  
Committee on Finance  
Tuesday, February 26, 2019  
1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room 308

Aloha Chair Luke, and Members of the Committee:


I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 558 HD1, relating to Kekaha Kai State Park. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai'i County Council and Chair on the Committee of Public Safety.

The purpose of this measure is to save lives and prevent injury at Keakaha Kai State Park (Kua Bay) by appropriating funds for the employment of lifeguards and for life-saving equipment at 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 Finance to support this measure as well. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.

  
Rebecca Villegas,  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council