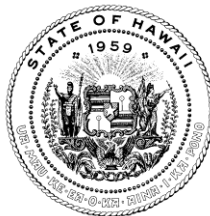


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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

POST OFFICE BOX 621
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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS

Friday, February 15, 2019
10:15 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1134 SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO HEEIA STATE PARK

Senate Bill 1134, Senate Draft 1 proposes to make an appropriation for a He'eia State Park community-based long-range plan and planning and design of the education center for the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve System. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this measure and offers the following comments.**

The Department realizes that this measure is requesting the funding for both the community planning process and a portion of the funds to construct the educational center. In 1993, a Final Environmental Impact Statement and Master Development Plan was prepared by PBR Hawai'i – so it may be warranted to re-evaluate the findings of the 1993 plan which could be possible with the \$250,000 provided for in the measure.

An element to consider is the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund administered by the National Park Service – which mandates that the park be open and accessible for the public for recreational and interpretive opportunities – so any structures such as an educational center built on the property is subservient to this covenant. In addition, the funding for the education center would be far higher than the \$150,000 allocated in this proposal.

The Department also works closely with the community at He'eia. Since 2008, Kama'āina Kids has a volunteer management agreement with State Parks to subsume all park management functions. In addition, the Department is formalizing volunteer agreements with 3 other non-profit, community-based organizations to provide additional interpretive and educational programs for park visitors and to assist with restoration of the banks along He'eia Stream:

The Puakea Foundation of Hawai'i has been perpetuating the tradition of building and repairing koa canoes in the park for decades and is grandfathered into the lease. With private funds, the Puakea Foundation is completing the construction of a halau structure to house the canoes and provide a venue for workshops, educational programs, and interpretive displays.

The Kāne'ōhe Cultural Foundation (KCF) is the non-profit associated with the Kāne'ōhe Canoe Club that is also grandfathered into the lease that has been associated with the park first as a canoe club and more recently as a foundation in 2013. KCF focuses on cultural education around the themes of navigation, outrigger canoe paddings, and canoe repair. Like the Puakea Foundation, KCF utilizes a one-acre site for workshops and educational programs with planning underway to develop interpretive displays for park visitors.

Hui O Ko'olaupoko (HOK) is working on removal of the mangrove along bank of He'eia Stream, planting native species in the cleared areas, and installing interpretive signs to heighten awareness about the importance of a healthy estuarine environment. With grant funding and the support of numerous volunteers, HOK is coordinating their efforts with restoration work further upstream and at He'eia Fishpond.

The Department appreciates the intent of this measure and the opportunity to further discuss how to optimize the future of He'eia State Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting S.B. 1134 SD1 Relating to He'eia State Park
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, February 15, 2019, 10:15AM, Room 211

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 40,000 acres in 13 nature preserves and work in over 30 coastal communities to help protect the near-shore reefs, waters and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnership with government, private parties and communities to protect forests and coral reefs for their ecological values and the many benefits they provide to people.

The Nature Conservancy supports S.B. 1134 SD1, which would appropriate funds for a He'eia State Park community-based long-range plan and an education center for the [He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve](#). State funding in support of the He'eia NERR is annually matched by approximately \$700,000 in federal funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The ahupua'a of He'eia on the island of O'ahu is one of twelve NOAA-designated Sentinel Sites and in January 2017 was designated as the [29th National Estuarine Research Reserve](#). The [He'eia NERR](#) encompasses upland forests and grasslands, wetlands, reefs and seagrass beds, as well as Kāne'ohe Bay—the largest sheltered body of water in the Hawaiian Islands. The NERR designation reflects the community's desire to ensure the protection and sustainable management of valued cultural, historical and natural resources.

He'eia contains a world-class research institution (Hawai'i Institute for Marine Biology) and multiple community organizations including Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, Ko'olau Foundation, Kāko'o 'Ōiwi, Paepae o He'eia, and the He'eia State Park working together to develop and implement effective management strategies in an entire ahupua'a. Collaboration between these organizations coupled with education and outreach to the broader community are recognized as necessary because of the interconnected relationship each ecosystem has to another within the He'eia ahupua'a. Any effect up in the mountains will work its way into the community, into the wetlands and lo'i (traditional wetland agriculture systems), flow down to the coast, into the loko i'a (fishponds), and eventually into the bay and onto coral reefs—affecting people's lives, lifestyles and livelihoods all along the way.

The proposed community-based long-range plan and education center will contribute to greater community engagement and increase local and national support for research, education, and restoration efforts in the region.

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He`eia National Estuarine Research Reserve
Ko`olaupoko, O`ahu, Hawai`i

Testimony on behalf of He`eia National Estuarine Research Reserve
Strongly Supporting SB 1134 SD1
Senate Ways and Means Committee

February 14, 2019

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and the members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,


Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for SB 1134 SD1 relating to He`eia State Park. I am the Reserve Manager for the He`eia National Estuarine Research Reserve (HeNERR), and I am in strong support of this bill.

The HeNERR was officially designated in 2017 after years of effort by the He`eia community and the support of the State legislature, with the Department of Land and Natural Resources as one of our official site partners. He`eia State Park is within the boundaries of the HeNERR, and is an essential component of it.

The HeNERR is founded in a belief that Hawai`i can be an example for the world, and the efforts to restore the *ahupua`a* of He`eia can be a model for Hawai`i. The primary purpose of the HeNERR is to conduct the research needed to guide restoration efforts, and to educate the public about the value of healthy and functioning *ahupua`a*. In this regard, an education center is absolutely essential for the fulfillment of our mission, but it would be irresponsible to plan such a facility in the State Park without it being incorporated into a long-range, community-based plan. It is for this reason that we are supportive of this bill.

One important point that this committee should be aware of is that my program can access and bring in substantial amounts of federal monies towards the construction of facilities — including but not limited to an education center — within the State Park. I cannot make such requests, however, until we have plans in place for construction. Passing this bill will open the door to bring in even more federal support into the community of He`eia.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,



Kawika Winter, Ph.D.

Reserve Manager, He`eia National Estuarine Research Reserve



KO`OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

February 15, 2019

TO: Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
& Members, Ways & Means Committee

FROM: Alice P. Hewett, President
Ko`olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

RE: S.B. 1134, S.D. 1 – Relating to He`eia State Park – SUPPORT

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

The Ko`olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club offers its strong support for S.B. 1134, S.D. 1, relating to funding for a community-based, longrange plan for the future of He`eia State Park and including plans for an education center for the He`eia NERRS program.

Established in 1937, our civic club is the largest Hawaiian organization in the Kane`ohe bay region, and we take great interest in the important cultural resources of our community.

In recent months, we inquired with state parks officials regarding such a longrange plan for the park, and their response was that the current tenant for the park is putting together their own plan for the park. Our club has reached out to the Board of Land & Natural Resources and asked to be included in any planning for the future of this park because it has high importance not just to our members but to our entire community.

The park includes valuable historic sites and the banquet hall is actually located on Kalaeulaula Heiau at Kealohi Point, which is the leina – or leaping off point – where Hawaiians in ancient times believed their spirits were judged on the lives they had led.

We urge your support by passing this bill and providing the funding needed to reinforce the community's role in our state's public park properties.

Mahalo for this opportunity to offer our mana`o.

The Ko`olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club was established in 1937 and is one of the largest in the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs nationwide. Ko`olaupoko HCC is a not-for-profit community organization dedicated to preserving and perpetuating the history, heritage and culture of Native Hawaiians and providing leadership and scholarships. Its membership is open to people of Hawaiian ancestry and those who are "Hawaiian at heart."



Ko`olau Foundation

P. O. Box 4749
Kane`ohe, HI 96744

February 15, 2019

To: Sen. Donovan Delacruz, Chair
Sen. Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
& Members, Committee on Ways & Means

From: Aaron Mahi, President
Ko`olau Foundation

Subject: Testimony in Support of S.B. 1134, S.D.1 – He`eia State Park

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

The Ko`olau Foundation strongly supports Senate Bill 1134, Senate Draft 1, which would provide funding for a community-based, longrange plan for He`eia State Park and for an education center for the He`eia National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Our foundation has long advocated for preservation of historic sites and cultural properties, and the valuable cultural areas of this park – also known as Kealohi – are important to our Hawaiian community and to the broader Kane`ohe bay region.

Unfortunately, this park has evolved into a focus on recreational and commercial uses, with little or no regard for the rich cultural resources of the heiau, Kala`eulaula, or of the leina at Kealohi Point. This “leaping-off” point is legendary in the Kane`ohe bay region.

We wish to emphasize that the longrange, community-based plan for this park should engage and involve the partner members of the He`eia NERRS, which includes both agency and grassroots community organizations with generational ties to the lands of Kealohi and the waters of Kane`ohe Bay.

We urge your concurrence and approval of this request for funding.

Mahalo for your consideration of our mana`o.

SB-1134-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2019 7:13:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/15/2019 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kristen Kane	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

this is the first that current land use partners at Heeia state park have heard of an intent for the NERR facilities to be located at the park, and that is very concerning that a so called "community based plan" did not discuss this with the current organizations occupying Heeia state park and doing all types of positive community and environmental work. How would the NERR facility and occupation of the park affect us? Not to mention that the current land leasee, Kamaaina Kids has already fundraised and spent a significant amount of money to plan and build a pavillion for community use in the exact spot the NERR facility is proposing to be built.

LATE

SB-1134-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/14/2019 1:51:53 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/15/2019 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Randy Miyashiro	Testifying for Kamaaina Kids	Comments	No

Comments:

As the current leaseholder of the park, Kama`aina Kids supports any effort to provide community planning and additional funding intended to enhance the park's offerings to the public. To date, Kama`aina Kids has raised \$180,000, over the course of 3 fundraising events, for the specific purpose of rebuilding a structure in place of where the pavilion once sat. Of the funds already raised, \$36,000 has been spent on permits.

Kama`aina Kids plans to host a fourth fundraiser in November of 2019, and anticipates raising another \$60,000 (based on the performance of past fundraisers) to put towards the construction of a new pavilion. Additionally, on February 14, 2019, Kama`aina Kids met with a local architect to initiate the design process for this project. The plans for the new pavilion is to build a structure similar in appearance to the canoe hale recently constructed by the Puakea Foundation, which would create a covered, open space available to the community. While the design and costs of the structure has changed over time, Kama`aina Kids' intentions and commitment to rebuilding a communal space has not. Although funds have already been set aside and steps taken in the design process, Kama`aina Kids remains open to public input and working with other Community Based Organizations on the planning and development of an Education Center, or any other project that furthers the restoration and cultural preservation of Heeia State Park.