

SR-34

Submitted on: 3/27/2021 9:02:57 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/29/2021 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kate Logan	Testifying for County of Hawaii - Office of the Mayor	Support	No

Comments:

March 27, 2021

To: Chair of the Senate Committee(s) on Agriculture and Environment (AEN) and Water and Land (WTL)

Regarding: [SCR52](#) and [SR34](#)

Hearing Date: Monday, March 29, 2021 at 1:05 p.m.

As a County of Hawaii employee working on sustainable initiatives for the Office of Mayor, I am writing in support of [SCR52](#) and [SR34](#), that requests the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission and the County of Hawai'i to collaborate to identify sea level rise at Kahalu'u Bay and jointly pursue a master plan to relocate the pavilion at Kahalu'u Bay.

Collaboration and partnerships are critical to realizing a sustainable future for Hawai'i Island. By jointly pursuing a master plan between the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission and the County of Hawai'i, will streamline the work toward identifying sea level rise and plans to relocate the pavilion at Kahalu'u Bay.

Sincerely,

Kate Logan

Executive Assistant

Hawai'i County – Office of the Mayor

Office: 808-961-8029



To: The Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment & Committee on Water & Land
Re: SCR 52 & SR 34
Position: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

Hearing Date: Monday, March 29, 2021, 1:05pm, videoconference

Aloha Chair Senators Gabbard and Inouye, Vice Chair Senators Nishihara and Keith-Agaran and committee members

I humbly request to amend the wording of SCR 52 & SR 34 to read REQUESTING THE HAWAI'I CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION COMMISSION AND THE COUNTY OF HAWAI'I TO COLLABORATE AND APPY THE COASTAL ASSESSMENT AND HAZARD ANALYSIS THAT WILL BE COMPLETED IN AUGUST 2021 BY SEA ENGINEERING LLC OF KAHALU'U BEACH PARK AND JOINTLY PURSUE A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY-BASED MASTERPLAN FOR THE RESTORATION OF KAHALU'U BEACH PARK.

I am the director of the Kahalu'u Bay Education Center, a program of The Kohala Center (KBEC/TKC). KBEC is a partnership between TKC and the County of Hawai'i to revive and revitalize Kahalu'u Beach and Bay Park. The Park is the most popular visitor destination in west Hawaii Island, hosting 400,000 users a year due to ease of access and marine life diversity. Overuse, trampling of live coral, and sunscreen chemicals are degrading this reef ecosystem which is both a key spawning ground for marine life and a regional economic asset.

Since 2006, KBEC has taken a leadership role in the care of the Bay, offering a unique visitor experience that teaches respect for natural and cultural resources through education, public outreach, and research.

In order to sustain Kahalu'u Bay as a gathering place and marine resource for future generations and to implement and expand pono practices, a strategic preservation plan is critical. In collaboration with Hawaii County and Sea Engineering LLC, KBEC/TKC has undertaken a coastal assessment and hazards analysis of the Bay (CAHA). This analysis will consider how ocean trends will affect the nearshore environment in the face of climate change. Once this study is completed then a community-informed master plan for terrestrial restoration and park development can be examined.

The CAHA will include a risk management plan for Kahalu'u Beach Park and Bay because the terrestrial area and park facilities are eroding from storm surges and sea level rise while the marine life is threatened by both human interaction through trampling, sunscreen exposure, and waste disposal and by ocean acidification, ocean heating, and other climate change effects. Scientific research and professional planning are needed to augment on-going stewardship activities if the park and bay are to remain natural resource assets to residents and the visitor industry. A recent NOAA scientific hazard assessment of ecosystem health at Kahalu'u sounds the

alarm, indicating an acute risk for oxybenzone exposure with warnings about runoff, sewage, and overfishing reinforcing the urgency to act to save this key marine ecosystem.

In order to make wise conservation and development investment decisions, we need current information about the forces affecting the bay's marine structure, how those forces are affecting the terrestrial landscape now, and how they are likely to do so in the future. With good data and a carefully crafted master plan, existing educational and stewardship activities can be most effective while future developments to the park facilities and regulations about park and bay use can maximize the potential for conservation and restoration.

Sincerely
Cynthia Punihaole Kennedy
Director
The Kahalu'u Bay Education Center
A program of The Kohala Center