

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3226

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 17 2022

RE: H.B. No. 2446
H.D. 2
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Water and Land, to which was referred H.B. No. 2446, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Appropriate funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to establish positions in parks administration and operation (LNR 806) to implement visitor reservation systems in Hawaii state parks; and
- (2) Appropriate additional funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources from the State Parks Special Fund for purposes of state park management.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Kaua'i Visitors Bureau, Historic Waimea Theater and Cultural Arts Center, and Maui Hotel and Lodging Association. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance.



Your Committee finds that Hawaii has the least staffed state park system in the United States at one hundred twenty-eight positions and in the bottom five in funding. For decades, the Division of State Parks has been struggling financially to deliver quality management and service for a globally patronized park system. In recent years, staffing has decreased, from a peak of two hundred in the 1990s, to the current one hundred twenty-eight, while new park units have been added and are now patronized well beyond management expectations at the inception of the state parks. In addition, despite approval for capital improvement projects aimed for upgrades and new improvements, the Department of Land and Natural Resources currently has a \$42 million backlog in routine repair and maintenance not eligible or subject to capital improvement project funding. The lack of upgrades and new improvements places a continued strain on aging fleet vehicles, equipment, and maintenance for state parks. While the Division of State Parks is posed to achieve relative self-sufficiency, additional, critical funding sources are needed to address the maintenance backlog and staffing shortages.

Your Committee has amended this measure by inserting an effective date of July 1, 2022.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water and Land that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2446, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2446, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Water and Land,


LORRAINE R. INOUE, Chair



