



**Department of Land and Natural Resources  
Hawaii State Aha Moku  
State of Hawaii  
Post Office Box 621  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809**

Testimony of  
Hawaii State Aha Moku

Before the House Committee on  
Finance

Friday, February 25, 2022  
12:30 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

**In SUPPORT of  
House Bill 1766 HD 1  
Relating to State Parks**

House Bill 1766 HD 1 appropriates funds out of the state parks special fund to raise the expenditure ceiling of the special fund.

**The Hawaii State Aha Moku (Aha Moku) strongly supports this measure.**

The Hawaii State Aha Moku System encompasses the eight main Hawaiian Islands and supports the traditional and generational knowledge of the people who are connected to each of the 46 moku and 606 ahupua'a. The system was brought forward from the 9<sup>th</sup> century, a time where sustainability and protection of resources ensured existence. It was a time where the focus of the people of the land was on survival.

State Parks encompasses 52 state parks on five of the main Hawaiian Islands. spread out over thirty thousand acres. Aha Moku works with the traditional and generational native Hawaiian practitioners on many of the ahupua'a within these state entities. Each ahupua'a is unique with its own cultural practices, identity and beliefs on the following islands where the State Parks and recreational places are located.

Hawaii State Parks - Akaka Falls (Hamakua Moku), Lapakahi (Kohala Moku), Wailuku (Hilo), Kealahou Bay (marine state park, Kona Moku); 8 recreation areas throughout the island; Kohala State Monument, Lava Tree State Monument (Puna) 16 ahupua'a impacted.

Maui – Halekii-Pihana Heiau State Monument (central Maui touching Wailuku, Hamakuapoko, Kula, Lahaina Moku), six state parks/recreation areas) 12 ahupua'a impacted.

Moloka'i – Pala'au State Park (Pala'au, Ko'olau Moku) five ahupua'a impacted.

O'ahu – Diamond Head Monument (Kona Moku), Iolani Palace (Kona Moku), Royal Mausoleum (Kona Moku); State Parks-Kahana (Ko'olaupoko Moku), He'eia (Ko'olaupoko Moku), Ka'ena (Waianae Moku), Ke'ehi Lagoon (Kona Moku); twelve recreation and scenic areas. 38 ahupua'a impacted.

Kauai – State Parks: Haena (Halele'a Moku), Koke'e (Waimea Moku), Russian Fort (Waimea Moku), Napali (Napali Moku), Polihale (Waimea Moku), Waimea Canyon State Park (Waimea Moku). Nine recreational trails. Thirty Ahupua'a impacted.

Aha Moku brings many of the voices of the native Hawaiian traditional and cultural practitioners of the ahupua'a on which these state monuments, parks, and recreational/scenic places are located forward to State Parks. Their concerns and efforts toward sustainability and perpetuation of each unique place is met by State Parks to the best of their ability. But because of the lack of full-time staff to help manage the individual parks on the different islands; and because the expenditure ceiling for state parks is dangerously low cultural, community, residential and visitor needs are not met.

From a cultural position, currently in most of the State Parks, it is the generational families and resident communities that continue to voluntarily educate the public on the merits of each place. However, this is draining and often conflicts break out. Full-time staff and a workable reservation system could alleviate these public concerns. However, the ceiling of the State Parks Special Fund has not been increased to match the needs of the 52 parks statewide in many years. We believe it is imperative that the ceiling be increased so that resident, community and visitor needs can currently be better met.

**Thank you for the opportunity to submit supporting testimony on this measure and ask that it be adopted.**

Respectfully,

Kawaikapuokalani Hewett, Ka Mea Ho'okumu  
Hawaii State Aha Moku  
808-382-6043  
[kahalelehua@outlook.com](mailto:kahalelehua@outlook.com)

Leimana DaMate, Luna Alaka'i/Executive Director  
Hawaii State Aha Moku  
808-640-1214  
[Leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov](mailto:Leimana.k.damate@hawaii.gov)

Rocky Kaluhiwa, Kahu Nui O Pae'Aina  
Hawaii State Aha Moku  
808-286-7955  
[rockykaluhiwa1122@gmail.com](mailto:rockykaluhiwa1122@gmail.com)

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



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

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**

**Friday, February 25, 2022  
12:30 PM**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 308, Via Videoconference**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1766, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO STATE PARKS**

House Bill 1766, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds out of the State Parks Special Fund to raise the expenditure ceiling of the Special Fund. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) is in strong support of this measure and offers the following comments.**

The purpose of this bill is to increase the Department's Division of State Parks (State Parks) Special Fund (S-312) ceiling to \$12,000,000 by appropriating funds from the special fund to reinvest the revenue derived from out-of-state visitors (and campers, lodgers, concessions and leases) into the state park system to improve the quality of maintenance, management, and public safety and to be more responsive with repairs and maintenance associated with the impacts of visitation and authorized and illicit uses.

This is the Department's top priority in the supplemental budget.

For decades, State Parks has been struggling financially to deliver quality management and service for a globally patronized park system. In the 1990's the State Parks general fund budget topped out at 8 million dollars and had a staffing base of almost 200. In the subsequent decades and up to now, general fund appropriation is at approximately 10 million dollars – only a 2 million dollar increase in general funds over 20 years. Since the 1990's, staffing has decreased to a current of 128, new park units have been added or are now patronized beyond management expectations at the inception of the State Parks.

While CIP has been sought and approved for upgrades and new improvements, there is a 42 million dollar backlog in routine repair and maintenance not eligible or subject to CIP. The State Parks fleet is aging, virtually all the vehicles in the fleet are previously owned government surplus vehicle purchased at auction prices. The Division's last new truck was purchased in 2014. Equipment needs to be purchased for optimized maintenance of grounds and facilities. Funding for the 5 county lifeguard contracts has always been a challenge and a variety of funds have been used to cover the current 4.2 million dollar cost.

Revenue was peaking in 2019 (even with the previous fees) due to record tourism visitation. This enabled State Parks to hire a legal fellow to implement a total restructuring of Chapter 13 -146 Hawaii Administrative Rules related to fees. During the pandemic and statewide closures, State Parks initiated a robust parking and entry fee increase for out of state visitors, and a modest but realistic and fair increase in camping and lodging fees with a rate differential for residents and out of state visitors. The rate increase was set in anticipation of an eventual return of tourism, which rebounded sooner than anticipated in early 2021.

After decades of fiscal austerity, State Parks is poised – barring future pandemic disruption for revenue collection – to achieve relative self-sufficiency for variety of statewide system operating costs, contract services, and upgrade vehicles and equipment, improve quality and public safety – while initiating a plan to address the deferred maintenance of facilities.

In 2020 there were 48 special funded positions that were at risk due to the complete disruption of special fund income. These were converted to general funds, and a drastic reduction of the Special Fund spending ceiling was implemented. With all positions general funded, the Legislature stabilized State Parks payroll, and the Department prefers to stay with this means of financing for salary costs for the next fiscal year. It is too soon to project, but there is a future fiscal year opportunity to expand the staffing with new income – but this must be tempered with caution and assurance of rollover savings. With economic stability and additional tactical fee expansion or increases, State Parks may be able to re-grow staffing prudently. With an approximate balance of 9 million dollars in the State Parks Special Fund (S-312) by the start of the third quarter, the fiscal projection of 12 million dollars is a very tenable target for the ceiling increase.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**HB-1766-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2022 12:14:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2022 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Alan Carpenter	DLNR	Support	Yes

Comments:

I am available for questions to DLNR. Please allow me Zoom access.

**HB-1766-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2022 12:39:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2022 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Robert K. Masuda	DLNR	Support	Yes

Comments:

I am available for questions to DLNR. Please allow me Zoom access.

**HB-1766-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2022 12:30:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2022 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Kapua Medeiros	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Finance Chair and Committee members,

I am in SUPPORT of both HB1766 HD1 and HB2446 HD1 which would allow for the hiring of more DLNR positions.

As the Chair of the Waimānalo Neighborhood Board #32 Parks and Recreation Committee, I can testify as to the need of more Officers available to insure that our State Parks are being kept safe from Desecration, Bon fires, Litter, Large Rager Gatherings, Overfishing, Dumping of harmful chemicals that kill our Sealife and Corals, Harmful Acts toward our Honu and Seals, as well as many more, including Off Roding of Motorized Vehicles on Parks and Beaches.

All of these actions are dangerous for other park users as well as our fragile environment. Having more DLNR officers available will increase their ability to catch, cite, and arrest those that continually Disobey the laws.

Again I ask that you Support the Funding of these two Bills HB1766 HD1 and HB2446 HD1.

Me ke Aloha nō,

Kapua Medeiros

**HB-1766-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2022 12:41:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2022 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Sandee Moniz Pa	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

This bill is needed for the lack of manpower is vital to enforcement protection which is severely lacking as violations occur flagrantly daily because such violators know the shortage and gamble breaking the laws getting away with it. Illegal bonfires, commercial activity, drug activity are a constant problem on the coastlines and parks. Gates and vlocks are in disrepair. We need an on site Park Ranger in Hūnānāniho previously referred aa Sherwoods. Our DLNR shortage is stressful for current necessary demands to enforce. Magalo for reading Chair & committee.

Kapohuolahaina Pa Moniz



**HB-1766-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2022 9:55:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/25/2022 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Jody M Green	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this Bill.Mahalo