



HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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Testimony of
SCOTT J. GLENN, Chief Energy Officer

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

10:15 AM

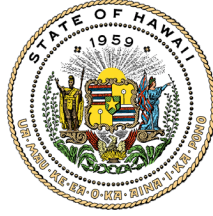
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

SUPPORT
HB 2120, HD1, SD1
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANGEMENT.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) supports HB 2120, HD1, SD1 which updates several sections under 127A to reflect current practices, policies, and procedures of the State Emergency Management Program and prevailing emergency management best practices and adds wording that highlights the intent of the State, Governor, and emergency management agencies to address environmental and climate impacts on emergency management.

Ensuring that the chapter of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes that specifies the responsibilities and authorities of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency is up to date with current practices and updated threats and hazards is important as it will have a positive impact on government and private sector infrastructure preparedness planning and streamline the response following a disaster impacting essential community lifelines, including energy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2120, HD1, SD1
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
BY

Luke P. Meyers
Administrator, Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA)

APRIL 5, 2022

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB2120, HD1, SD1.

House Bill 2120, HD, SD1 Clarifies current practices, policies, and procedures of the state emergency management program and updates it to reflect the prevailing emergency management best practices. Highlights the intent of the State, governor, and emergency management agencies to address environmental and climate impacts on emergency management.

Recent incidents, including the COVID-19 pandemic, have shown that certain elements in chapter 127A, HRS, need to be revised to conform to current emergency management practices, policies, and procedures of the State Emergency Management Program and with the prevailing emergency management best practices.

Sheltering processes in the State have changed and section 127A-19(a), (b), and (c), which address related functions, need updating to clarify the roles of the county emergency management and civil defense agencies to identify, operate, and coordinate sheltering with private and nonprofit organizations.

House Bill 2120, HD1, SD1 would update wording to be in line with the state's, governor's, and emergency manager's focus on climate and environmental issues that impact Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 2120, HD1, SD1.

Luke P. Meyers: Luke.P.Meyers@hawaii.gov; 808-733-4300

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



KENNETH S. HARA
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL

STEPHEN F. LOGAN
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DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2120, HD1, SD1
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

PRESENTED TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON
WAYS AND MEANDS

BY

MAJOR GENERAL KENNETH S. HARA
ADJUTANT GENERAL
DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
AND HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISOR

APRIL 5, 2022

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

I am Major General Kenneth Hara, Adjutant General, Director of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency and Homeland Security Advisor.

The Department of Defense (DOD) provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB 2120, HD1, SD1.

This measure, if passed would, clarify current practices, policies, and procedures of the state emergency management program and updates it with the prevailing emergency management best practices. It also highlights the intent of the State, governor, and emergency management agencies to address environmental and climate impacts on emergency management.

Recent natural and human-caused incidents, including the COVID19 pandemic, have proven that certain elements in chapter 127A, HRS, need to be revised to conform to current emergency management practices, policies, and procedures of the State Emergency Management Program and with the prevailing emergency management best practices across the nation.

Additionally, sheltering processes in the State have changed and section 127A-19(a), (b), and (c), which address related functions, need updating to clarify the roles of the county emergency management and civil defense agencies to identify, operate, and coordinate sheltering with private and nonprofit organizations.

These updates, which include adding language that highlight the state's, governor's and the HI-EMA's focus on climate and environmental impacts on Hawai'i, as well as address the roles of the counties in coordinating sheltering in the event of a disaster are very important to help our emergency management practices stay current and for the safety and security of Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of of HB 2120, HD1, SD1.

MG Kenneth Hara, kenneth.s.hara@hawaii.gov; 808-672-1001
Administrator Luke Meyers, luke.p.meyers@hawaii.gov; 808-733-4300

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR



HIROKAZU TOIYA
DIRECTOR

JENNIFER M. WALTER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

April 4, 2022

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
The Senate
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Room 211
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: Comments and Recommendations for House Bill 2120, SD1
Relating to Emergency Management

The Honolulu Department of Emergency Management (DEM) offers **COMMENTS and RECOMMENDATIONS** on HB2120, SD1, which amends multiple section of HRS 127A to clarify current practices, policies, and procedures of not only the state emergency management program but county emergency management programs.

Section 6 of HB2120, SD1 includes the following amendments HRS 127A-19 subsections (b) and (c):

- (b) County emergency management agencies shall ~~[identify, in]~~ be responsible for the identification, operation, and coordination of sheltering with private and nonprofit organizations engaged in emergency management functions relating to providing shelter or the management or operation of a public shelter under this chapter, locations and facilities suitable for the sheltering of the public and locations and facilities suitable for the sheltering of pet animals.
- (c) The administrator or director of the county emergency management agency ~~[may identify, in]~~ shall be responsible for the identification, coordination [with], and integration of private owners, operators, or controllers of real property, private locations [and], or facilities that are suitable for use as shelters of the public or of pet animals[-:] into emergency sheltering operations."

While these amendments are generally consistent with current emergency management practices, the language appears to codify and place the sole responsibility of emergency shelter operation on county emergency management agencies. In practice, resources and support are often required from state agencies in order for us to effectively operate emergency shelters during times of crisis. We often use the term "whole community" in emergency management, and in this instance, we truly need the

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
April 4, 2022
Page 2

whole community to include not only county agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private organizations, but the resources and capabilities of state agencies.

In situations where we need to operate emergency shelters, counties are often heavily engaged in many other emergency response function such as coordinating alert and warning, evacuation, search and rescue, law enforcement, and emergency medical services to name a few. By no means am I suggesting that state agencies do not have other functions to perform during emergencies, but providing resources for emergency shelters, beyond the physical facilities, should be understood to be a shared responsibility between county and state agencies.

While counties are currently responsible for the identification, coordination, and operation of emergency shelters, current practice also includes direct coordination between counties and certain state agencies such as Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Education (DOE). Because public health is a state responsibility and none of the counties have health departments, counties rely on DOH to provide health resources to the shelters. Because DOE is the primary provider of shelter facilities in most large scale emergencies, DOE has provided the personnel required to make the facilities available. Emergency shelters have historically been understaffed, and an activation in anticipation of a major hurricane would most certainly be constrained by the shortage of staff. With the combined resources of the state and the counties, this shortage is not an inevitability.

In order to prevent amendments proposed in HB2120, SD1 from being interpreted as absolving state agencies from providing support for emergency shelter operations, we'd like to suggest a further amendment to HRS 127A-19 subsection (b) as follows:

(b) County emergency management agencies shall [~~identify, in~~] be responsible for the identification, operation, and coordination of sheltering with private and nonprofit organizations and state agencies engaged in emergency management functions relating to providing shelter or the management or operation of a public shelter under this chapter, locations and facilities suitable for the sheltering of the public and locations and facilities suitable for the sheltering of pet animals.

Emergency management takes the whole community and state agencies need to be a part of the solution, not only during actual emergencies but during "blue-sky" days as we plan, train, and exercise in preparation for emergencies. We are fortunate to have collaborative partners at the State, but codifying county responsibilities in the manner currently proposed in HB2120, SD1 may lead to unproductive interpretation of HRS127A in the future that diminish our collective capacity to protect the people we serve. The language suggested above would keep the primary responsibility for emergency shelters with the counties but make explicit the requirement and expectation of coordination between county emergency management agencies and state agencies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Hirokazu Toiya
Director



The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 5, 2022, 10:15 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference, State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB2120 HD1, SD1

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

My name is Stephanie Easley and I am testifying on behalf of the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS). **We are in support of HB2120 HD1, SD1, *Relating to Emergency Management*** which seeks to update and clarify language including how the State, Governor, Counties, and emergency management agencies address emergencies. As the Committee recognizes, impacts from climate may result in substantial damage or loss to the environment, separate from and in addition to damage to the population or property. In certain circumstances, that environmental damage is best responded to by the Governor or a mayor under emergency management authorities. We strongly support the amendments to chapter 127A of the Hawaii Revised Statutes to add damage to the environment as a criteria for using emergency authorities.

Further, CGAPS has worked to assist agencies and non-governmental organizations to [prepare for emergency response to high-impact invasive species](#). Some invasive species pose such a high risk that new detections may require an immediate response using some of tools available through Hawaii's emergency authorities, to quickly contain and eradicate an invasive species because it is likely to cause unacceptable impacts on the environment. One hypothetical example is if the coral-killing disease known as “Stony Coral Tissue Loss” appears on Hawai‘i reefs. This disease was first seen on a reef in Florida in 2014 and is now killing more than 30 different species of reef-forming coral across 330 miles of Florida reef, and has also spread to other reefs in the Caribbean area. To date, tens of millions of coral have been killed, changing nearshore marine environments, local economies, and the ability of those reefs to protect shorelines from storms. It is not clear whether we could eradicate this disease, even if we detected it early. However, CGAPS and its partners strongly believe that every effort should be made to eradicate it if it does appear. The proposed language in this bill could really help.

We ask that the Committee considers clarifying that the intention of the amendments made by HB2120 HD1, SD1 include permitting the Governor and, when appropriate, the mayor of a county to use emergency authorities to respond to a particularly damaging invasive species. In summary, there is a solid and growing body of research that shows the synergistic effects between climate change and invasive species. Therefore, mitigation plans, including emergency authorities, must include a clear mechanism for response.

Mahalo for your time and consideration of our comments.

Aloha,
Stephanie Easley
CGAPS
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