



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 35,  
REQUESTING THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO DEVELOP A  
PRELIMINARY DRAFT EVACUATION PLAN FOR THE AREAS WITHIN LAVA ZONES 1,2,3,4,  
AND 6

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
**PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**  
BY

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

APRIL 20, 2022

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony offering **COMMENTS** on House Concurrent Resolution 35.

House Concurrent Resolution 35 requests the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to develop a preliminary draft evacuation plan for the areas of Hawai'i County within lava zones 1,2,3,4, and 6.

While an evacuation plan is a necessary element of comprehensive emergency management strategy and tactics, it cannot be developed in isolation. The HI-EMA maintains a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and does all-hazard planning including Alert & Warning.

As dictated by the National Incident Management System, which guides emergency management across the nation, all emergency response begins and ends at the local level. Evacuation plans are best laid out by the county responsible for the roads, emergency and public safety response personnel, and sheltering, with the support and coordination of state emergency management.

Since the approval of Senate Resolution 51 in the 2021 legislative session HI-EMA has participated in multiple meetings with Hawai'i County Civil Defense, the United States Geological Survey, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the National Park Service to discuss numerous aspects of an eruption affecting Hawai'i island.

The HI-EMA provided a report to the legislature in regards to SR 51, citing – among other things – a lack of financial and personnel resources to sufficiently coordinate, study, and develop an evacuation plan outside of its CEMP and all-hazards planning. This has not changed for the current legislative session as the HI-EMA continues to manage response and recovery for multiple incidents with limited financial and personnel resources. As part of the State CEMP, the HI-EMA is developing a Volcano Operational Support Plan that should meet the intent of this request. Due to the continued COVID-19 Incident and the upcoming hurricane season, current resources will be challenged to provide a detailed document by the date requested.

If passed, the time and effort used to respond to this measure could negatively impact emergency management efforts and response for ongoing and future emergencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony offering comments on House Concurrent Resolution 35.

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**HCR-35**

Submitted on: 4/18/2022 9:47:16 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/20/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Becky Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Having an evacuation plan in place is not only a necessity, it is long overdue. The population on Hawaii island is increasing and the increase is larger and more rapid in the higher risk lava zone districts. Having lived in Florida and experienced several mandatory evacuations, I can tell you that even with 4-lane highways at hand, there was not enough roadway or time to evacuate people and many ended up riding out a hurricane sitting in their vehicles stuck in gridlock traffic. In the case of a lava inundation, riding out the risk in your vehicle is simply not viable. You not only need ample roads to give people a chance to evacuate, but you need the ability for first responders to go into the at risk areas at the same time. This island is simply not prepared. Please do not procrastinate any further and do what is necessary to safeguard the people of Hawaii County.

**HCR-35**

Submitted on: 4/18/2022 5:35:04 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/20/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Julia Lindbergh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in favor of the HCR35 Bill that representative Ilagan has proposed. Thank you. Julia Lindbergh, RN

**HCR-35**

Submitted on: 4/18/2022 12:01:09 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/20/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Allen Bartolome	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair DeCoite and members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs.

Thank you for the opportunity for to provide testimony for HCR 35. I am a life-long resident of Pahoia, Hawaii. The State of Hawai'i and in specific, the County of Hawai'i is one of the most disaster-prone counties in the nation. Our district was under the threat of lava two times in the past two years. We need a comprehensive plan to better prepare for volcanic events in the event it threatens populated areas.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in this matter.

Respectfully,

Allen Bartolome

**HCR-35**

Submitted on: 4/19/2022 7:20:24 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/20/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Barbara Cigainero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair and Members: Thank you for the opportunity to write in support of HCR 35 relating to an evacuation plan for areas of Hawaii Island. I live in a very large subdivision known as Hawaiian Paradise Park. It is one of the largest subdivisions in the country. In the mornings when people are leaving the subdivision for work we are all trying to get onto Hwy 130 typically to drive to Hilo. It is the only route available. The back-up of traffic in the subdivision during rush hour can result in anywhere from 30-60 minutes just to get out of the subdivision. If we had an emergency related to weather, lava, earthquake or some other man-created disaster the amount of traffic trying to leave the subdivision and get onto to Hwy 130 would be overwhelming and result in cars being trapped in gridlock for hours at a time. People will panick and the danger will be heightened. This situation would add to the danger of getting the population to safety.

This is an avoidable or at least a manageable crisis if an evacuation plan was developed. Please do not leave us stranded in the way of harm. I ask for your support of this legislation. Mahalo for your consideration.

Barbara Cigainero, Keaau, HI 96749

**HCR-35**

Submitted on: 4/19/2022 8:54:58 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/20/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Renee Rabb	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I live in Lava Zone 3. We need an evaluation plan in advance of a disaster. This is just good public policy.

Mahalo,

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI 96749