

**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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Statement of
SCOTT GLENN, Interim Director
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, April 5, 2023, 2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration of
SB 1136, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO STATE PARKS

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) offers comments with strong concerns on SB 1136, SD1, HD1, Relating to State Parks.

OPSD appreciates the intent of SB 1136, SD1, HD1, to address the complaints of Maui residents who have been unable to find parking spaces at Makena State Park. However, OPSD is concerned that carrying capacity studies are not the most effective way to improve the parking situation at Makena State Park for residents. OPSD agrees with DLNR that implementing parking improvements to reserve a sufficient number of free parking spaces for residents would be much quicker with better results.

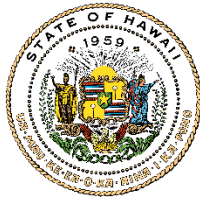
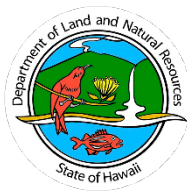
If the House Committee on Finance is inclined to move this measure forward for further discussion, OPSD respectfully requests that the term "carrying capacity study" be replaced with "parking improvement analysis and actions" and OPSD be replaced with DLNR wherever these terms occur in the HD1.

OPSD defers to DLNR for other strategies to improve the parking situation at Makena State Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Wednesday, April 5, 2023
2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1136, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO STATE PARKS

Senate Bill 1136, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1 proposes to require the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to conduct a study of the carrying capacity of Mākena State Park in Maui County and appropriates funds. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) respectfully does not believe the study is necessary and provides the following comments.**

The Department appreciates this measure's intent to better support Mākena State Park, agrees that the parking situation needs to be improved and spaces need to be set aside for local residents, and asks that State Parks be allowed to keep its focus on implementing parking improvements rather than diverting staff time to conduct or oversee a study. State Parks has never performed a carrying capacity study for the 3 park units, including Ha'ena State Park, Wai'ānapanapa, and Diamond Head State Monument that currently have advanced reservations.

The Department is initially addressing the Mākena parking situation with paving and striping of the shoulder areas of the entry road that now get congested with parked cars. The Department is examining an exterior fence option to restrict access from outside the park boundary – a prerequisite to an advanced reservation system. The other 3 park units with reservations have a single control point for entry, reserve sufficient stalls for local residents, and keep parking free for local residents.

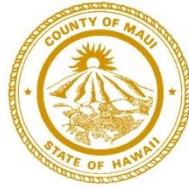
When State Parks rebids the parking contract by the end of the year, a reservation system based on lot turnover can be established that sets a temporal capacity over the span of a day and will ensure that there will always be parking for local residents as well. These limits can be adjusted to allow for more resident parking and entry on weekends and holidays to support free, non-reservation-based access for our local residents. We believe this is a more prudent course of action to establish a parking reservation system at Mākena.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
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

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

KEKUHAUPIO R. AKANA
Managing Director



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April 4, 2023

TO: Honorable Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Honorable Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor

DATE: April 4, 2023

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB 1136, SD1, HD1, RELATING TO STATE PARKS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this Act is to appropriate moneys for the department of land and natural resources to conduct a carrying capacity study, which will be submitted before the legislature convenes for the regular session of 2024.

I **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Access to Makena State Park is an ongoing concern for Maui residents due to an excess of visitor traffic. This measure supports means to ensure that residents' public access to these important community assets will be preserved.
2. The measure will reduce the impact of humans on the health and abundance of natural resources, cultural resources, and native species within the park.

For the foregoing reasons, I **SUPPORT** this measure.

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:48:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Moran	Kihei Community Association (KCA)A	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and members of the FIN committee. We are in support of this measure. For over a decade our all volunteer unfunded, non-profit community org., Kihei Community Association (KCA) participated as a stakeholder of the Oneloa Coalition. The group met monthly with State Parks concerning the welfare of Makena (Oneloa) State Park in South Maui. While many aspects were discussed, and there was not always consensus on each, there was unity on this matter of carrying capacity. Until this matter is decided, it is challenging to decide specifics on other matters.

At times true carrying capacity is confused with vehicle parking capacity., as if finding more parking spaces increases capacity of this State facility. In reality this leads to overburdening the rural chartacter of the Park. We need to address this now. While we worked with some great indivuduals at State Parks, we support the Planning & Sustainable Development as better suited to conducting this study.. We ask for your support, Mahalo

Mike Moran President KCA

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:47:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucienne de Naie	Sierra Club Maui Group	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Sierra Club Maui strongly supports a carrying capacity study for Makena State Park, Maui's most popular State beach.

Mahalo

Lucienne de Naie

Chairperson

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:55:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Albert Perez	Maui Tomorrow Foundation, Inc.	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the committee. Thank you for hearing this important bill.

In the 1980s when the Wailea-Mākena area began experiencing rapid growth, developers made plans to build beachfront condos at Oneloa (or Big Beach), which was then a long, isolated stretch of sand surrounded by kiawe. Realizing what was at stake, citizens began a successful effort to convince the Legislature to acquire the land. The result is Mākena State Park, now one of the most popular beach parks on Maui. The waters offshore are still some of the cleanest in the state, and endangered hawksbill turtles are known to nest there.

Today this park is under immense pressure as a result of increasing tourism numbers. Residents are often unable to find parking, as every available space is often taken up. As a result, people are parking outside the paved parking areas, and State Parks’ proposed response has simply been to try to accommodate that demand by paving new parking areas without knowing the capacity of this beautiful natural area to absorb impacts. A carrying capacity study is needed to determine whether the Park’s environmental, cultural, psychological or social carrying capacity have been exceeded. If such a study is not conducted, Mākena State Park will be at risk of losing its ‘sense of place’ due to the impacts of overtourism on the ecosystem and landscape. Many would argue that this has already occurred, but there is no objective way of knowing without conducting a carrying capacity study.

The Division of State Parks has already taken action to manage overtourism on Kaua‘i, through its adoption of the Hā‘ena State Park Master Plan. This plan aims to improve the long-term management of the park and visitor satisfaction by implementing transportation and parking management practices; as well as establishing a target for a reduction in the number of daily visitors.

Similarly, in recent years crowding at Waianapanapa State Park near Hāna had impacted the adjacent community and overall visitor experiences. In response, a reservation system was launched, with fees for visitor entry and parking, while Hawai‘i residents are still able to park there for free.

On the State Parks web site for Waianapanapa, State Parks Administrator Curt Cottrell is quoted as saying, “Quality over quantity is our new target in management.” Mākena State Park deserves the same consideration, and a carrying capacity study for this park will be a good first step.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development has conducted several carrying capacity studies in the past, and is an appropriate choice to perform this study as well.

I urge you to support this important bill.

Mahalo

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:21:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 5:53:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Tekula	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a long time Maui resident who frequents Mākena State Park with my family and with friends on a regular basis.

Mākena State Park was established as a result of dedicated community action to create a state park at Mākena instead of allowing development near the shoreline. Since then, Mākena State Park has been one of the most popular beach parks on Maui among both residents and visitors. Due to over tourism and the increasing tourism volume at Mākena State Park, residents are often unable to access the park due to lack of parking. Additionally, the park is at risk of irreparable harm due to overuse and lack of action to monitor the number of people who can access the park daily.

I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of a carrying capacity study to ensure that this public resource is **RESPONSIBLY** stewarded for future generations.

Mahalo nui.

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:55:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Young MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,the carrying capacity of this beautiful area in Maui should be done and funds should be released to pay for this really important study so that we can manage tourism in this area as the area is becoming overrun and damaged by usage and we need to get a handle on this before it's too late. please pass this important legislation for Makena and Maui and Hawaii. Mahalo

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 11:04:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Reed Gach	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Given over tourism and the greater tourism volume at Mākena State Park, this area is at risk due to overuse and lack of controlling how many people can access the park daily without causing damage to this fragile environmental resource.

I am in support of Bill HB702/SB1136 because it would require the Department of Land & Natural Resources to study the capacity of how many people at Mākena State Park can be handled safely without any environment impact. This is a first step in ensuring that Mākena State Park is well-managed. Both Waiā'anapanapa State Park and Hā'ena State Park have a daily visitor limits which enforced by a reservation system. Mākena State Park deserves similar protocols to preserve and protect its natural beauty.

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 11:19:56 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
megan powers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As someone who has enjoyed Makena Beach since 1970 and witnessed the changes (good and bad). I am in strong support of this bill to do a carrying capacity study of Makena State Beach Park.

We also need to do one for each island.

Thank you,

Megan Powers

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 6:46:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mele Stokesberry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mākena State Park, Mākena, "abundance" in 'ōlelo Hawai'i, the area my mo'opuna wears the name of because it's my son's favorite place - we desperately need a carrying capacity study at Mākena State Park, in order to help determine the amount of use the park can handle long-term. This is a critical first step in ensuring that Mākena State Park is well-managed and sustained for future generations to enjoy.

We need to limit tourism throughout ALL of Hawai'i Nei. It's gone too far! People come from everywhere like this place is an on-going carnival, to be used, there's no respect.

Support and pass SB1136.

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:25:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Madolin Wells	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Because of increasing tourism, the park is at risk of irreparable harm due to overuse. Monitoring the number of people who can access the park each day and establishing limits is critical to its longterm sustainability.

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:44:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marty Martins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please Send Forward the Bill Requesting a Mākena State Park Carrying Capacity Study. I am in favor of it.

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:52:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lily Diamond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB1136 as a way to move forward sustainably on an island pushed far beyond its capacity to host tourists. This kind of decisive action must be taken statewide in order to reverse the trend of exploitative land-use we are currently in.

thank you for your careful consideration.

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:21:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chanel Souza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

I am writing in strong support of SB1136. My family goes back three generations calling Kihei our home. As a Kihei girl and native hawaiian, Oneloa holds a special place in my heart. It is where I go to kapu kai and get away from the busy touristy town. I visited last week thursday and was overwhelmed with the amount of tourist there. I had 3 different tourist families literally 7ft around me in every direction. I watched as tourists at third entrance wandered into the bushes to use the bathroom on our iwi kupuna. :(It ended up being a stressful, sad beach day and makes me want to never return there because I can't stand to watch it happen.

I ask you to please prioritize locals and our lifestyle before profit. Malama our wahi pana and our people (living and unliving)

Mahalo nui, Chanel Souza

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:32:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Summer Starr	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Finance Committee,

A Carrying Capacity Study for Mākena is long overdue. It is Common Sense to approve this measure and support continued efforts to protect our island's precious and abused resources.

Respectfully,

Summer Starr
Upcountry Maui, District 12

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:50:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Travis White, I work as a Ocean Safety Officer for the county of Maui and I am stationed at Oneloa. The Amount of tourist at Oneloa on a daily basis is staggering. I've seen the toll it takes on the parks resources; the parking, the trash (in and out of the water), as well as our EMS personnel (MFD, EMT) also the law enforcement from PD to DLNR. Not to mention it has wetlands that should be protected for native habitat and vegetation. We are constantly trying to keep the tourist out of areas with known burial ground, and trampling on native vegetation. I would feel safe in estimating that 95% of the medical cases we have either injuries from the waves or intoxication induced medical issues are from tourist. Which in turns burdens our only hospital. Please pass this bill and allow the place to remain a piece of Maui that can become untouchable at times to certain individuals. Once it hits a certain point there is no fixing what has been done. Mahalo for your service and hope this reaches you well.

sincerely,

Travis White.

Testimony on SB1136

Aloha I am Rev. Dennis Barger. I have been a retired Presbyterian minister for 11 years on Maui, HI.

I strongly support the initiative of study to establish a carrying capacity study on Makena State Park (aka Oneloa Beach). This beach/park was created because Maui residents wanted it. Increased tourism has impacted the quality of the beach experience there.

Please take this one small step to protect this valuable natural resource. I used the park and beach frequently until it became overcrowded and hard to find parking. Please develop a plan to preserve the quality of this land.

D.F. Barger, Kihei, Maui

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 1:37:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diego	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1136 because the integral South Maui cultural and natural resources at Mākena State Park are in serious danger from overtourism. Mākena State Park has become so popular that the parking lot is nearly always full; with the large amounts of tourists and a lack of monitoring, Mākena State Park is at a heightened risk of irreparable damage. Additionally, Maui residents, especially Kanaka Maoli lineal descendants of the area, are prevented from accessing an area that generations of their ancestors have accessed for centuries.

A carrying capacity study at Mākena State Park will ensure that the park is sustainably managed for all interested tourists, and especially the residents and Kanaka Maoli of South Maui. This study will determine the adequate amount of use the park can sustain and what adequate management will entail in order to prevent overuse and irreparable damage to cultural and natural resources.

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 4:07:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Neal Halstead	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Yamashita and Members of the Committee

I respectfully request you defer this measure. It is not well thought out nor based on fact.

Currently, there are few amenities at Makena Park - a few port-a-potties, a couple lifeguard stations which are not regularly staffed and a beaten up parking lot. In fact, the only amenitie at the Park is the staff person who ensures all tourists pay \$10 a person to park and the rangers who close the gates to the nude beach each day.

I have no objection to paying to park and visit the Makena State Park, in fact, I consider it a privilege.

But, I would hope to see some investment of my parking dollars at the park.

Mahalo for your time

Neal Halstead

SB-1136-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 8:49:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/5/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a priority for our community on Maui. Mahalo