

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2760

January 31, 2022
1:00 p.m.
Room 229 and Videoconference

RELATING TO TRAILS

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 2760 provides resources to support the Na Ala Hele statewide trail and access program by appropriating \$167,383 in general funds for FY 23 and establishes a permanent Land and Access Specialist position and a permanent Abstractor position to support the Na Ala Hele program.

B&F notes that the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

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
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CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
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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 Senate Committee on
WATER AND LAND

Monday, January 31, 2022
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 229

In Consideration of
SENATE BILL 2760
RELATING TO TRAILS

Senate Bill 2760 proposes to appropriate moneys for the establishment of a permanent full-time equivalent land and access specialist position and a permanent full-time equivalent abstractor position within the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department), Division of Forestry and Wildlife Nā Ala Hele program for the protection and expansion of public trail access statewide. **The Department supports this measure and provides the following comments.**

The land and access specialist position will be a vital component of the administrative staff, serving to coordinate planning and environmental and cultural compliance efforts statewide. Currently, the bulk of current funding for the program comes via the Federal Highways Administration's Recreational Trails Program and is used primarily for maintenance. Working with our federal partners, we are moving toward using this funding for both new recreational trail development and enhancing current recreational opportunities while protecting adjacent natural and cultural resources. This new effort appropriately requires compliance with myriad state and federal laws. This position will fill this role.

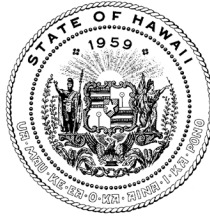
The Nā Ala Hele program currently has one (1) full-time abstractor position statewide, whose responsibility is to conduct title research to document culturally unique historic trails, primarily when the Department is called upon to review land use requests, often as these uses relate to development, compile reports on their findings, providing the Department sound legal footing for commenting on incoming development proposals. The workload is staggering. The addition of a second abstractor position will double the Department's capacity to carry out this critically important resource protection function.

The Department, and the community at large, recognizes the State's current diminished capacity to adequately manage and maintain existing forest recreation resources. We would encourage the Legislature to, as additional funds become available, appropriate funding for additional staff positions for the Nā Ala Hele program to generate enhanced capacity to develop and maintain trails and associated infrastructure, creatively recruit and manage volunteer groups, and address action items identified in the island-based Destination Management Action Plans, developed in coordination with the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, to promote regenerative tourism for the protection of Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources as a means to provide a higher-quality recreational experience for all users.

In addition to enhanced funding for staffing, we would respectfully request an additional one-time appropriation of \$2,000,000 in operating funding to address a severe backlog in deferred maintenance on trails and other forest and outdoor recreation resources to include enhanced facilities and support infrastructure in areas impacted by escalating recreational use. Trails across state have seen an unprecedented increase in traffic, driven in part by social media exposure, resulting in trail degradation due to heavy use and minimal maintenance. Staff reductions have hampered the Department's ability to properly maintain recreational facilities and features and the impact to adjacent natural areas. Recent surveys indicate a desire on the part of the public for additional parking, restroom facilities, maintenance of existing trails, and availability of new trails. We respectfully ask that as funding becomes available this committee strongly consider our request to help protect our natural and cultural resources, and provide enhanced outdoor recreation opportunities to residents and visitors, and in a way that is respectful of adjacent communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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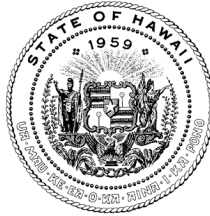
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SB-2760

Submitted on: 1/28/2022 8:35:26 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/31/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Klayton Kubo	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Support