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GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
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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

Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Thursday, March 31, 2022
1:30 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 3027 SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO BEACHES

Senate Bill 3027, Senate Draft 2 proposes to amend Section 226-11(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to add that it will be the policy of the State to “develop a statewide beach assessment study and beach and shoreline restoration and conservation plan to regularly assess beach and shoreline erosion and develop feasible beach and shoreline restoration or conservation options.” **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) acknowledges the value that such a study would have and offer the following comments.**

The Department currently has data on where the significant areas of shoreline erosion are, based on historical erosion mapping projects that have been regularly updated since circa 2011. The proposal appears to overlap with these existing efforts. A statewide beach assessment study and restoration and conservation plan would also require significant fiscal resources. As Section 226-11, HRS, focuses on objectives and policies for land-based, shoreline, and marine resources, the Department suggests that such a study might better be considered by including it as part of the budget process with appropriate funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, March 31, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

By

Darren T. Lerner, PhD
Director, Sea Grant College Program,
School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology

And

Charles “Chip” Fletcher, PhD
Dean, School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology

And

Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 3027 SD2 – RELATING TO BEACHES

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) and the Climate Resiliency Initiative (CRI; formerly Coastal Geology Group) supports the intent of SB 3027 SD2. This legislation proposes to amend the Hawai'i State Planning Act, Section 226-11 Hawai'i Revised Statutes to include the development of a statewide beach assessment study and a restoration and conservation plan. Hawai'i Sea Grant offers the following comments and suggestions to strengthen this Bill.

1. It is not clear that inclusion of this amendment in the Hawai'i State Planning Act, Section 226-11, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, is the most appropriate place for the proposed amendment. It is also not clear that an amendment to an existing statute is necessary in order to achieve the development of such a plan.
2. The requirement to conduct the beach assessment and development of restoration and conservation plan appears to be unfunded with no lead agency identified in the Bill.
3. Data on historical shoreline change exists for most of the state and is regularly updated by the University of Hawai'i CRI researchers, this data compliments the intent to develop a statewide beach assessment.
4. The statewide reach for such an assessment and plan may be too large and not appropriate considering the scale and detail necessary for such an effort. Instead Hawai'i Sea Grant suggests a smaller, regional pilot study and plan in order to demonstrate the model and achieve outcomes in a shorter and more appropriate timeframe.
5. Long term beach conservation planning, maintenance and management should be part of larger comprehensive and cooperative planning efforts among a range

of state and county agencies and communities. Coastal community adaptation measures including strategic or phased relocation of coastal development and infrastructure should be included in coastal management plans and will improve community resilience to coastal hazards and sea level rise while conserving and restoring beach environments.

6. The amendments included in this bill focus attention to the need for assessment of beach and shoreline restoration but fail to recognize the importance of maintenance and restoration of the coastal dunes as a primary buffer to coastal hazards. Inclusion of the terms “coastal dune systems” would broaden the scope of the implied restoration efforts (see suggested amendments below).
7. The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources developed and the Land Board adopted the Coastal Erosion Management Plan (COEMAP) in the year 2000¹. This statewide resource on managing coastal erosion is in need of an update and might be a good policy tool to utilize in order to implement the goals of this measure.
8. An area of demonstrated need for a regional beach assessment and plan is at Sunset Beach on the North Shore of O'ahu, where recent beach erosion is currently immanently threatening dwellings as it has repeatedly in the last several years and has triggered emergency erosion control by private landowners.

In addition, Hawai'i Sea Grant offers suggestive language to the new statutory material described under Section 1(b)(10):

“(10) Develop a statewide ~~beach and~~ [coastal] assessment ~~study and~~ [for] beach and shoreline [coastal dune system] restoration and conservation ~~plan to~~ [that] regularly assess[es] beach and shoreline [dune] erosion and develop ~~feasible~~ beach and shoreline [coastal dune system] restoration or conservation ~~options~~[plans].”

Hawai'i Sea Grant's mission is to provide integrated research, extension, and education activities that increase understanding and use of ocean and coastal resources of the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands and support the informed personal, policy, and management decisions that are integral to realizing this vision. Hawai'i Sea Grant is part of a national network of 34 university-based programs associated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that promote better understanding, conservation, and use of coastal resources.

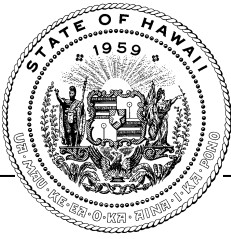
The Climate Resiliency Initiative (CRI) is a newly-established Congressionally-funded applied research program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. CRI is an affiliation of researchers, technicians, undergraduate, and graduate students spread across campus working on challenges related to climate change. CRI researchers conduct investigations of sea level rise and community design, increasing resiliency to extreme weather events, projecting future climate stresses and shocks, marine and reef impacts,

¹ <https://climateadaptation.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/COEMAP1.pdf>

and better understanding community exposure to rising heat, storms, and drought. This requires cross-disciplinary and integrated research investigation on a range of spatial and temporal scales

Hawai'i Sea Grant and the CRI supports the intent of SB 3027 SD2 to develop a beach assessment study and restoration and conservation plan and recommend consideration of the above mentioned amendments.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Thursday, March 31, 2022
1:30 PM
Via Videoconference and State Capitol, Conference Room 308
in consideration of
SB 3027 SD2
RELATING TO BEACHES.

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

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **appreciates the intent of SB 3027 SD2 and offers comments.** OPSD understands from clarifications during decision-making in the prior committee that the intention of SB 3027 SD2 is for an entity to develop a statewide beach assessment study and beach and shoreline restoration plan to regularly assess beach and shoreline erosion. OPSD recognizes that this significant undertaking will require appropriate funding. OPSD suggests SB 3027 SD2 be further considered in session law or added as a proviso to the FY22-23 budget.

The OPSD's Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program has long recognized the value of beaches and public access and the pressures on these resources from coastal erosion, development, and sea level rise. In addition to funding past studies and beach management plans, the CZM Program has obtained funding for an initiative that will contribute towards the intent of this measures and recently contracted services to explore shoreline management from an alternative approach to today's parcel-by-parcel decision making by developing a methodology to establish a regional approach that takes into consideration the environmental conditions for the state's diverse shorelines, including beaches.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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David Y. Ige
Governor

John De Fries
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES

Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

March 31, 2022
1:30 p.m.
State Capitol
via videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL NO. 3027 SD2
RELATING TO BEACHES

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Committee on Finance.

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) appreciates the opportunity to offer these comments on SB3027 SD2, which compels the development of a statewide beach assessment study and a beach and shoreline restoration and conservation plan.

HTA's work is framed by four interacting pillars: Natural Resources, Hawaiian Culture, Community, and Branding – the last of which is dependent upon the strength of the first three. The health of our environment, our people, and our economy is inextricably tied to the health of our beaches and shorelines. As such, we are in strong support of the intent of this legislation.

We recognize and appreciate the hard work of many entities on studying, understanding, and planning for sea level rise, erosion, and the related coastline changes in different areas across Hawai'i. A statewide approach makes sense to help understand the magnitude of the issue and the scale of the solutions needed. We encourage consideration of comments from the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development in seeking the most efficient and expeditious way to complete this important study and plan.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments on SB3027 SD2. Mahalo.