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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
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SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
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DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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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 Senate Committee on
WATER AND LAND

Wednesday, March 30, 2022
1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 177/SENATE RESOLUTION 170
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR THE FEASIBILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS
OF A DIVISION OF OCEAN AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 177/Senate Resolution 170 requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to conduct a needs assessment for the feasibility and effectiveness of a Division of Ocean and Coastal Management within the Department. **The Department appreciates the intent of these resolutions and offers the following comments.**

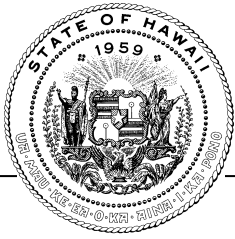
Hawaii's interlinked coastal environments include reefs and nearshore marine environments, beaches, rocky intertidal areas, and backshore dunes and wetlands. Properly managing these interlinked environments requires a holistic management approach that is also flexible to address localized conditions and community priorities. It is also crucial to recognize that management challenges on our beaches and other coastal environments inevitably relate back to how we've developed our shorefront lands. Sea level rise and climate change further emphasize the urgency of improving our management approaches for addressing increasing coastal hazards and ecological damage statewide.

The Department commends the recognition that sea level rise and climate change are threatening Hawaii's coastal resources and communities and agrees that a major restructuring of the current regulatory framework will be required if we wish to optimize our chances of mitigating the effects of climate change on sea level rise and our coastal and lowland areas. Current jurisdictional boundaries that bifurcate the coastal zone have often resulted in inconsistent and ineffective

management of beach and ocean resources, and shorefront development. This style of bifurcated regulation functioned in the past, balancing needs between agencies, but has since become antiquated due to increasing pressures on these resources and threats to shorefront development due to the acceleration in sea level rise. The Department believes that regulatory functions must align across coastal environments to better recognize the interconnected nature of these systems.

Finally, the Department must emphasize that it does not currently have the resources to provide the caliber of assessment required to provide such a comprehensive and far-reaching assessment.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these measures.



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

DAVID Y. IGE
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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
Wednesday, March 30, 2022
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

in consideration of
SCR177 / SR170
**RELATING TO REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL
RESOURCES TO CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR THE FEASIBILITY AND
EFFECTIVENESS OF A DIVISION OF OCEAN AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT
WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES.**

Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **strongly opposes SCR177 and SR170** which requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources to conduct a needs assessment for the feasibility and effectiveness of a Division of Ocean and Coastal Management which would be the designated state coastal management agency and be responsible for implementation and administration of the Hawaii Coastal Zone Management Program.

OPSD serves as the lead agency for the Coastal Zone Management Program established under HRS Chapter 205A and is opposed the inclusion of the CZM Program in such a needs assessment for a new division for the following reasons:

- 1) Transfer of the administration of the CZM program to another department may jeopardize federal funding to the State. The CZM Program is primarily funded through a cooperative agreement with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office for Coastal Management, which must approve all changes to the CZM Program and federal funds budget.
- 2) Shifting the coordination of sea level rise adaptation from OPSD to a different department is **contradictory** to Act 45, SLH 2020, which added sea level rise adaptation to OPSD's mandate to coordinate among state agencies regarding climate change adaptation and sustainability. In 2020, OPSD's enabling statute HRS Chapter

225M-2(6), added sea level rise adaptation to OPSD's mandate to read, "Coastal and ocean policy management [.] and sea level rise adaptation coordination."

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these resolutions.