

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 7,  
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)

MARCH 29, 2022

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony offering **COMMENTS** on Senate Concurrent Resolution 7.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 7 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.

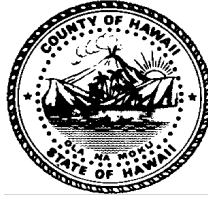
The HI-EMA provided a report to the legislature in regards to SR 51, citing – among other things – a lack of financial and personnel resources to sufficiently coordinate, study, and develop an evacuation plan outside of its CEMP and all-hazards planning. This has not changed for the current legislative 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 Senate Concurrent Resolution 7.

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**HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER ASHLEY L. KIERKIEWICZ**  
25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

March 26, 2022

**Senate Committee Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs**  
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Chair  
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Vice-Chair

**RE: Support for SCR7, Regarding a Preliminary Draft Eruption Evacuation Plan**

Aloha, Chair Nishihara, and Esteemed Members of the Committee on PSM

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support for SCR7, which requests the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency develop a preliminary draft evacuation plan. As representative of the district inundated by lava during the 2018 Kilauea Volcanic Eruption, and having co-lead mobilization of a grassroots emergency response effort, I have firsthand experience with on-the-ground coordination of people and resources.

The best way to react to an emergency is to prepare for it, before it happens. All planning that can be done ahead of time and shared with residents, especially as it relates to preparedness and evacuation, is critical as the stress of an ever-evolving natural disaster, such as a lava flow, impacts one's ability to think clearly and logically.

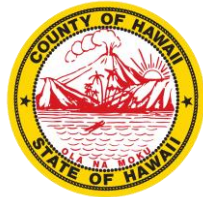
I applaud this measure, and humbly urge your support. Please consider allocation of financial resources to support HI-EMA and the County of Hawai'i's Civil Defense Agency in the development of an eruption evacuation plan for Hawai'i Island. Crisis situations are disruptive. Planning ahead reduces risk and confusion, increases efficiencies in the response and evacuation process, and may even save lives. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Very Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashley Kierkiewicz', written in a cursive style.

Ashley Lehualani Kierkiewicz  
Hawai'i County Council, District 4  
Chair, Committee on Planning • Chair, Housing Agency

**Maile Medeiros David**  
Council Chair  
Council District 6  
(Portion N. S. Kona/Ka'ū /Volcano)



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## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i  
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A  
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

March 28, 2022

Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair  
Honorable Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair  
Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Re: S.C.R. No. 7 – Requesting the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to Develop A Preliminary Draft Evacuation Plan for the Areas Within Lava Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6

Honorable Chair Nishihara and Vice Chair DeCoite:

On behalf of myself and as Councilmember representing the rural districts of South Kona, Ka'ū and Volcano Village (Council District 6), I express my strong support of S.C.R. No. 7 requesting a preliminary draft evacuation plan for Lava Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6.

Due to the fact that Mauna Loa has erupted thirty-three times since 1843, a future eruption puts South Kona and Ka'ū communities at risk should an eruption occur along the southwest rift zone. At this point in time, and due to the 2018 disasters, and the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, it is vital for the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to take proactive steps in developing a preliminary draft evacuation plan.

In 2021 by Senate Resolution No. 51, it was requested of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to develop an evacuation plan, but due to staffing issues, they have been unable to adequately respond.

I concur with the intent and purpose of S.C.R. No. 7 requesting the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency develop a preliminary draft evacuation plan.

Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair  
Honorable Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair  
March 28, 2022  
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Mahalo a nui loa for your favorable consideration.

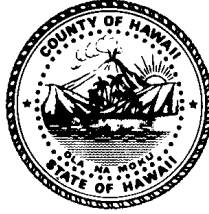
Very truly yours,

*Maile David*

Maile David, Council Member  
Council District 6, S. Kona, Ka'ū, and Volcano Village

cc: [senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senkanuha@capitol.hawaii.gov)

**Dr. Holeka Goro Inaba**  
Council Member, District 8, N. Kona



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Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

March 28, 2022

Committee On Public Safety, Intergovernmental & Military Affairs  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair  
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair

Re: **Support** for SCR7 & SR2 - 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.  
Videoconference Hearing: March 29, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the above referenced Committee,

On behalf of myself and constituents of Council District 8 in North Kona, I express our support for the above referenced resolutions, and submit a brief testimony as follows:

We support these resolutions that would request the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to develop a preliminary draft evacuation plan for the areas within lava zones 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, which include, but are not limited to, South Kona and Ka'ū; and that the preliminary draft evacuation plan be submitted to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of the State Legislature in 2023.

The imminent threat of Mauna Loa and Kīlauea volcanic eruptions to Hawai'i Island warrants the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to expeditiously collaborate with the County of Hawai'i.

Thank you, as we reiterate support for SCR7 and SR2.

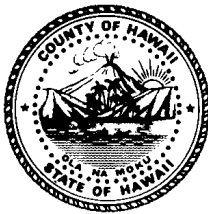
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holeka Goro Inaba".

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DR. HOLEKA GORO INABA, Council Member  
District 8, North Kona

REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



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Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

**LATE**

March 28, 2022

### TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS

COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

ON SCR7, 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

Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

Tuesday, March 29, 2022 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to SUPPORT SCR7. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai'i County Council and Chair of the Hawai'i County Council Climate Resilience and Natural Resource Management Committee.

Kīlauea volcano is currently erupting with lava pouring into the lava lake within Halema'uma'u crater, with a potential eruption on its southwest flank posing a direct threat to Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, as well as the district of Ka'u.

The imminent threat of Mauna Loa and Kīlauea volcanic eruptions to Hawai'i Island warrants the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to expeditiously collaborate with the County of Hawai'i to develop a preliminary draft evacuation plan for lava zones 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6.

There is no current evacuation plan in place specifically for lava zones 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6; and the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency has reported issues with staffing that prevent the agency from adequately responding to the Legislature's request.

For the reasons stated above I urge the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs to Support this measure. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Rebecca Villegas  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council