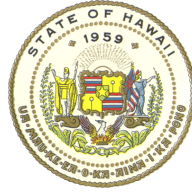
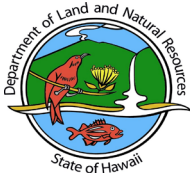


DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**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 Committees on  
WATER AND LAND  
and  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**Friday, April 1, 2022  
1:10PM**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Via Videoconference**

**In consideration of  
SENATE RESOLUTION 24  
REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT AN AUDIT OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES'  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION**

Senate Resolution 24 requests the State Auditor to conduct a performance audit of all the programs within the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department). **The Department appreciates the intent of this resolution and offers comments.**

Senate Resolution 24 specifically directs the State Auditor to examine and evaluate:

- (1) Whether the SHPD has adequate staffing and resources to conduct timely project reviews;
- (2) Whether the review and response to submittals is completed within the timeframes established by rule;
- (3) Current project review practices, including efforts to identify categorical exemptions, historic properties and districts that should have special protections or treatment, identification of types of sites that do not require permit review, filing systems, and efforts to streamline processes such as the inadvertent discovery process for burial sites;
- (4) Record retention methodologies;
- (5) Standardization of monitoring protocols, including the establishment of cultural impact assessment guidance;
- (6) The actions, initiatives, and performance of the State Historic Preservation Division to address the existing project review backlog; and

**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**M. KALEO MANUEL**  
ACTING 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

(7) Any recommended improvements, including proposed legislation, to update, redefine, or realign SHPD's mission and organization based on balancing cultural and historic preservation with the State's evolving land development needs.

The Department is aware that there are issues within the operation of SHPD. It is the Department's view that many of those issues arise from insufficient staffing and funding. Given those constraints, the Department believes that SHPD works as effectively as possible. In addition to handling a workload that significantly exceeds resources, with the support of Governor Ige and the Legislature SHPD has already digitized approximately 40% of its reports and project review documents. It has also developed and launched the Hawaii Cultural Resources Information System (HICRIS). HICRIS automates project submittals, and when fully implemented will allow SHPD staff to process, track, and respond more efficiently and effectively to both project reviews and information requests. HICRIS will also serve as SHPD's digital archive accessible to SHPD staff, project consultants and planners, and officials in other agencies who need to access historic preservation data. The Department believes that once fully implemented HICRIS will help expedite project reviews and promote improved decision making in project planning and review. SHPD is also in the process of amending its regulations focusing on simplifying and clarifying language, streamlining processes, and ensuring that they are more effective in avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating harm to Hawaii's historic properties.

The Department notes that the Governor's budget request includes significant increases in staff and resources for SHPD, which should, over time, help to resolve the issues SHPD has in addressing its workload.

The Department is concerned about the amount of time and effort the SHPD staff may have to expend in assisting with the audit called for in this resolution taking them away from regular duties, such as project reviews. Furthermore, if the State Auditor's budget does not include funds for the performance audit envisioned in Senate Resolution 24, neither Department nor SHPD have funds to pay for an audit. Funding for such an audit is not included in the Governor's budget request.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.