

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

MICHAEL A. DAHILIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR



Testimony of

Michael A. Dahilig

Managing Director, County of Kaua'i

Before the

Senate Committee on Transportation

March 17, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

Room 224 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of

SCR 55 / SR 50

**Requesting the Department of Transportation to Convene a Task Force
to Conduct a Feasibility Study on Alternate Emergency Access Routes
and a Second Bridge to Serve the Hanalei, Waipa, and Haena Communities**

Honorable Chair Lee, Honorable Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee:

The County of Kauai offers comments on Senate Concurrent Resolution 55 and Senate Resolution 50 which requests the Department of Transportation to convene a task force to conduct a feasibility study on alternate emergency access routes and a second bridge to serve the Hanalei, Waipa, and Haena communities.

While the County of Kauai is always supportive of opportunities to increase dialogue, we offer concern that not all parties who have interest or would be directly impacted have been included as stakeholders.

In addition, it is not clear whether a second bridge would necessarily facilitate emergency access and may contribute to the unintended consequence of increasing visitor impacts at a time when we are focusing on destination management.

The Hanalei Bridge has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1978 and the Hanalei River was designated an American Heritage River in 1999. Preserving what makes Hanalei and the north shore of Kauai special while strengthening our resiliency should be carefully considered.

We appreciate the Legislature's efforts in addressing this issue and working to improve the safety and quality of life for our residents and the experiences of our visitors.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify with comments on SCR 55 and SR 50.

SR-50

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 12:30:02 PM

Testimony for TRS on 3/17/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Kaaumoana	Testifying for Hui Hoomalu i ka Aina	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

SR 50 is "special interest" legislation that does not reflect accurate community content or process. It does not represent facts of the situation nor a request from the communities it purports to represent. The road at issue is a State and National Historic Corridor (Route #560) and several community organizations specifically engaged in that designation and legally to be included in any proposal impacting it were not consulted prior to the introduction of the resolution and are not included in the suggested task force list.

There is no data regarding health and safety issues pertaining to the closure of this roadway. No one was denied medical attention nor timely evacuation when required during any road closures.

There are several projects currently underway addressing flood mitigation and community disaster resilience.

These missing facts render this legislation in error and are disrespectful of community process and public engagement.

Mahalo for not passing this resolution until these errors are corrected.



Hanalei-to-Ha'ena Community Association
Post Office Box 1072
Hanalei, HI 96714

March 16, 2022

Senate Committee on Transportation
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing Scheduled
March 17, 2022 3:00 pm

Re: SR50 (Emergency Access Route into Hanalei)

Dear Chairman Lee and Members of the Committee:

The Hanalei-to-Ha'ena Community Association (HHCA) **strongly OPPOSES** Senate Resolution 50 **unless** it is amended to address the following two problems.

1. The words "and a second bridge" (currently in SR50's title and "Resolved" clause) need to be removed from the Resolution.

The HHCA has long requested that the Department of Transportation develop a plan for an emergency route into/out of Hanalei Valley. SR50 should focus exclusively on that goal.

References to a second Hanalei River bridge are extremely controversial, and they are not related any of the concerns stated in SR50's "whereas" clauses. Furthermore, they are completely unnecessary: if a second bridge should turn out to be an integral component of an emergency access route, this does not need to be explicitly called out in SR50, any more than SR50 calls out guard rails, embankments, or any other integral components of such a route.

Retaining any reference to a second bridge would be a poison pill that would subvert and divert the proposed task force's focus from SR50's legitimate objective of enhancing public welfare through development of an emergency access route.

2. SR50's proposed list of task force members needs to include the Hanalei-to-Ha'ena Community Association (HHCA) and the Hanalei Roads Committee (HRC).

No community organizations have been more involved over the years in the matters that SR50 desires to address than the HHCA and HRC:

- The HHCA has for more than 30 years taken the lead in addressing community issues, providing open and inclusive discussion forums, and working constructively with state and county governments on the community's behalf.
- The HRC has played the lead role since the 1970s in saving the historic Hanalei River bridge, obtaining historic corridor designations for Route 560, and protecting the historic and cultural attributes of the road and its bridges.

SR50's omission of these two organizations from the proposed task force is astounding.

The HHCA would support SR50 if it is amended as described above.

Carl Imperato, President
Hanalei-to-Ha'ena Community Association

LATE

SR-50

Submitted on: 3/17/2022 10:25:21 AM

Testimony for TRS on 3/17/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rodney M Haraguchi	Testifying for Kauai Taro Growers Association - President	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Kouchi and Senator Lee,

The Taro farmers in Hanalei are still reovering from the disaster flood of 2018, and what was considered a 3 year period of recovery has now continued much longer due to additional floods and the landslide. The landslide made it difficult to haul out the taro from Hanalei, but with the cooperation of the community, production and delivery continued by way of boats across the Hanalei river mouth.

There is a need to address how to prevent this in the future, but also the health and safety of the Hanalei community to be able to have access in and out of Hanalei during any type of diaster. The current Hanalei bridge which is the gateway to Hanalei continues to serve it's purpose, however, it does create a bottleneck and when a disaster such as a tsunami, community parents rushing in and out of Hanalei, other residents, tourists and businesses trying to evacuate will create chaos without an alternate route that would alleviate the bottleneck.

Please consider this resolution and we commend Senator Kouchi and Senator Lee for stepping up to address this situation for the north shore community.

Mahalo nui loa,

Rodney Haraguchi

SR-50

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 11:30:49 AM

Testimony for TRS on 3/17/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael G Ching	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Since 2017, access in/out of Hanalei town has been a challenge with multiple period of road closure. I support to begin a study for alternative route in/out of Hanalei should there be another landslide or natural disaster that affect the road way between the Hanalei Plantation Road and the Hanalei Bridge.

Thursday, March 17, 2022
3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Aloha Committee on Transportation, Senator Chris Lee, Chair and Senator Lorraine R. Inouye,
Vice Chair

Please amend SR 50 to remove reference to study a second bridge

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON ALTERNATE EMERGENCY ACCESS ROUTES ~~AND A SECOND BRIDGE~~ TO SERVE THE HANALEI, WAIPA, AND HA'ENA COMMUNITIES.

I support convening a task force to conduct a feasibility study on alternate emergency access routes, but am in opposition to the addition of the study including a second bridge.

The Hanalei road corridor was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003 and is on the State and National Register of Historic Places . The goals have always been preservation of the pace and scale of the Hanalei heritage road, protection of rural, environmental and scenic values, and continued safety . Adding a second bridge is in conflict with preservation of the Historic Highway Corridor . Wainiha, Waipa, Hā'ena are low lying coastal communities that experience frequent flooding. When the road is flooded in Hanalei(the bridge does not flood, it is the roadway), Hā'ena to Hanalei also experience flooding. Adding more connectivity to flooded areas increases the hazards to residents and visitors.

Hālana ka Mana'o Reflections, from the 2018 Kauai Floods, details

... significant impacts of the April 2018 flood event took place on the north shore; a rain gauge near Waipā on the North Shore recorded 49.69 inches of rain between April 14-15, the most rainfall recorded in a 24-hr period in U.S. history where at least a dozen landslides closed 8 miles of Kūhiō Highway between Waikoko (just after Hanalei) and Wainiha, cutting off all vehicle access to Hā'ena and Wainiha. In total, 26 sites along the two line highway were flagged for emergency repairs. This included 17 areas where landslides had covered the road with dirt rocks and fallen trees, in places as high as the powerlines. Repairs to the two-lane highway cost \$40 million, and the road was not fully open without restrictions until June 17, 2019.

We do not need more connectivity to these low lying areas, we do not need a second bridge. Please remove *A Second Bridge* from the study.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Caren Diamond
Kaimanacd22@yahoo.com

SR-50

Submitted on: 3/16/2022 11:39:06 AM

Testimony for TRS on 3/17/2022 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hermina Morita	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

March 16, 2022

Dear Chairman Lee and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Resolution 50. First of all, I want to disclose that I am a board member of The Hanalei Initiative one of the listed taskforce participants in this resolution. However, today I am testifying as an individual and longtime Hanalei resident.

I cannot support this resolution in its present form. It appears that the resolution attempts to conflate two distinct issues, one urgent involving public health and safety and the other controversial, complex and will be a lengthy and in-depth process.

I believe there is community wide concern to proactively address an alternate emergency route before another catastrophic event like the March 2021 Hanalei Hill landslide closes Kuhio Highway and isolates the Hanalei-Haena communities again. This is an urgent matter to address health and safety issues and promotes community resiliency. This should be the sole focus of an amended resolution.

While proponents of this resolution in its current form may want a feasibility study for a second bridge to Hanalei, the discussion of a second bridge is more controversial and complex. A second bridge would negate the community's standing long range planning goals and objectives, codified in Kauai County ordinances, and an implicit stated desired to protect and preserve the Kauai north shore's historic, iconic scenic and cultural landscape, where the Hanalei Bridge, a national monument, is viewed as the gateway to this rural transition. Highway Route 560, which begins near the present Hanalei Valley Lookout, is a state and national historic corridor.

A second bridge should be discussed separately and any justification for a feasibility study must accurately reflect these codified, long range planning goals and objectives and make a compelling argument why it is necessary to forego a collective and longstanding community vision so motives are transparent. Addressing a potential emergency situation should not be the catalyst to give up on all past community planning efforts.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to express my view.

Sincerely,

Hermina "Mina" Morita

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