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In reply, please refer to:  
File:

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1839 HD1  
RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

REPRESENTATIVE KYLE T. YAMASHITA, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: 2/26/2024

Room Number: 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure may impact the priorities identified in the Governor's  
2 Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department) appropriations and  
3 personnel priorities.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Department supports this measure that seeks to fund long-term air  
5 monitoring in areas impacted by the 2023 Maui wildfires. The type and amount of long-term air  
6 monitoring, which we assume to be post-cleanup/disposal, has not been determined. Our  
7 recommendation is that the air monitoring be guided by the air sampling results (e.g., for each  
8 affected region on Maui, the type and duration of air monitoring would be adjusted according to  
9 the obtained air quality data). We offer the following for discussion.

10 Three types of air monitoring have been used during the post-wildfire cleanup period.

- 11 1) Air quality sampling stations are the most extensive, and expensive, option which collects air  
12 to test for specific pollutants such as asbestos and heavy metals, and requires contracting due  
13 to special equipment and capabilities. During the cleanup phases, where heavy machinery  
14 was disturbing and removing potentially contaminated material, this was a significant method  
15 used in Kula and continues to be used during the cleanup in Lahaina. These stations are  
16 highly accurate but require laboratory analysis and staff to collect, package, and ship  
17 samples, and maintain the specialized equipment. The contract cost for a year of Lahaina  
18 sampling with four stations is over \$4,000,000.00 at a cost of \$1,000,000.00 per station.
- 19 2) Environmental Beta Attenuation Mass monitors (E-BAMs) conduct near-regulatory  
20 monitoring for particulates and provide data that is very accurate. While an E-BAM does not

1 identify specific pollutants as an air sampling station does, particulate matter is important  
2 because it is an indicator of the levels of those pollutants of concern, such as metals, that  
3 attach to ash and dust. Each E-BAM unit costs approximately \$20,000, not including the  
4 costs for operation and maintenance, which would be performed by the Environmental  
5 Health Specialist (EHS) funded by this measure.

- 6 3) PurpleAir sensors continuously test for fine particulate matter. While they are not as  
7 accurate as E-BAMs, they are much less expensive, typically less than \$400 per unit, and  
8 more easily deployed around the community allowing increased geographical coverage.  
9 Moreover, the results from these sensors are readily accessible online (e.g., [fire.airnow.gov](http://fire.airnow.gov)).

10 Just as the monitoring methods differ, so too do the circumstances in each impacted area.  
11 In Kula, where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has completed their debris removal work,  
12 monitoring results which occurred over the duration of the cleanup showed that the levels for  
13 asbestos were non-detectable, the metal levels were very low and all below the levels where  
14 impacts to human health are expected, and the particulates were elevated at times, but were  
15 mainly attributed to activities such as wood chipping of fallen trees and other non-debris removal  
16 activities. As a result, the Department has removed the sampling stations and E-BAM monitors,  
17 but continues to operate PurpleAir sensors at upcountry schools.

18 During the Lahaina debris removal, the Department's contractor is operating four air  
19 sampling stations. The Department supplements that air monitoring by operating approximately  
20 50 PurpleAir sensors and six E-BAMs, two of which belong to EPA and may be removed by  
21 EPA once the Lahaina cleanup is done. The proposed contracted Department cost for the  
22 one-year operation and maintenance of the six E-BAMs is over \$277,000.00. During the cleanup  
23 and as it nears completion, the Department evaluates the data to determine whether current air  
24 monitoring activity is sufficient. The Department believes that air monitoring should continue  
25 throughout the debris removal, which is anticipated to take a year for Lahaina. After the cleanup  
26 ends, if the data indicates good air quality, the expectation would be to end the operation of the  
27 contracted air quality monitoring stations, continue to operate the E-BAMs for a period of time  
28 as a precaution, and maintain PurpleAir sensors at key sensitive areas, such as schools, or other  
29 areas for which continued air monitoring may be beneficial.

1           It should be noted that the one-year contract for the four Lahaina air sampling stations is  
2 scheduled to end on February 28, 2025. If the debris removal work continues beyond that time,  
3 additional funding would be necessary to extend the contract. This could include the last four  
4 months of State fiscal year 2025 and possibly go beyond that time.

5           The Department has placed PurpleAir sensors around the temporary disposal site in  
6 Olowalu. We recommend that air monitoring at Olowalu be expanded through the use of E-  
7 BAMs while disposal and temporary storage occurs. This would provide additional data in  
8 determining whether increased air monitoring would be needed going forward. The Department  
9 believes that additional air monitoring would also need to be assessed and implemented when the  
10 Lahaina debris is moved from the temporary Olowalu site to the final permanent disposal site,  
11 once that has been determined.

12           Finally, we request that the EHS I position be amended to an EHS IV. The Department  
13 of Human Resource Development does not provide for hiring into EHS I positions and all air  
14 quality monitoring EHS positions in the Department are level IV positions. The EHS IV is  
15 needed to assist with duties to set up and maintain air quality monitoring equipment, review and  
16 validate data, and investigate and assess any spikes or unusual occurrences in the air quality  
17 being monitored. Indications are that recent events such as wildfires, including those that  
18 occurred in Lahaina, Kula, Olinda, and Mililani, will increase as climate change impacts weather  
19 patterns and adds to the demand on Department monitoring and response resources. Moreover,  
20 other natural events, including volcanic eruptions, can also occur, requiring additional air  
21 monitoring to assess air quality and protect public health. During unpredicted events, staff are  
22 taken away from their regular duties and the program must catch up later or risk falling into  
23 noncompliance with federal regulations.

24 **Offered Amendments:** The Department respectfully suggests the following revision. Addition  
25 appears as underlined and deletion appears as ~~strikeout~~.

26           SECTION 2, page 2, lines 16-18: “(1) \$       annually for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
27 permanent environmental health specialist ‡ IV position;”

28           Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Council Chair  
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair  
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore  
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers  
Tom Cook  
Gabe Johnson  
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Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez  
Shane M. Sinenci  
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins




Director of Council Services  
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

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February 24, 2024

TO: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair, and  
Members of the House Committee on Finance

FROM: Alice L. Lee  
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 26, 2024; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1839, HD1, RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this measure, which would appropriate funds for monitoring of air quality for communities impacted by the Maui wildfires.

I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. It advances the health and safety objective of protecting Maui County residents from health issues caused by air degradation from the 2023 wildfires and recovery efforts.
2. The House Environmental Remediation Working Group recommended funding and support to further ongoing monitoring, sampling, and testing activities in West Maui.
3. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine urge further research into the chemistry of urban wildfires and the harmful long-term health impacts to people in urban areas.
4. The World Health Organization concluded that when wildfires impact urban areas, the materials burned contain more toxic chemicals than from wildfires that consume wood and other natural material.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.

ocs:proj:legis:23legis:23testimony:hb1839\_hd1\_paf24-002(72)\_dmr



Testimony of **Lahaina Strong**  
Before the House Committee on  
**Finance**

In Consideration of House Bill No. 1839 HD1  
RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

To Chair Yamashita, Chair Kitagawa, and the honorable members of the committees,

We are writing on behalf of Lahaina Strong, an organization that was initially formed in 2018 following the Hurricane Lane fire in Lahaina and re-energized last year after the devastating Lahaina fires on August 8. Our organization is the largest grassroots, Lahaina-based community organization, with over 20,000 supporters, engaged in emphasizing the importance of local voices and community-driven solutions.

**Lahaina Strong stands in support of HB1839 HD1**, a bill that appropriates funds for long-term monitoring of air quality for communities impacted by the Maui wildfires, as well as support for research efforts to better understand the environmental concerns linked to urban fires.

Both Lahaina and Kula, Maui suffered immense environmental impacts from last year's wildfires, and the bill's focus on ongoing assessment aligns with the critical need to address the lingering repercussions on our community's well-being.

We commend the diligent efforts of the House of Representatives' Environmental Remediation Working Group in thoroughly understanding the nuanced challenges faced by Maui after the fires. Their commitment to deriving comprehensive recommendations is a testament to their dedication to the welfare of our communities.

The proposed funding for long-term monitoring of air quality is not just a financial allocation but a recognition of the enduring responsibility to safeguard the health and safety of our residents. The wildfires have left lasting impacts on our environment, and a

continued commitment to monitoring ensures that we can address emerging concerns and implement proactive measures for the well-being of our community members.

Moreover, we appreciate the bill's support for research efforts aimed at better understanding the environmental concerns linked to urban fires. This forward-thinking approach aligns with Lahaina Strong's mission of fostering a resilient and sustainable future for Lahaina. By investing in research, we can pave the way for informed decision-making and targeted interventions that address the unique challenges posed by post-wildfire environmental dynamics.

In conclusion, Lahaina Strong stands in full support of House Bill 1839 HD1 and its appropriations for vital long-term monitoring and research initiatives. We thank the Environmental Remediation Working Group for their comprehensive approach, and we believe that this bill, if passed, will contribute significantly to the ongoing recovery and resilience of Lahaina.

Mahalo for your commitment to addressing the pressing needs of our community.

Sincerely,

Courtney Lazo, Jordan Ruidas & Pa'ele Kiakona

Lahaina Strong



# Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

To: House Committee on Finance  
Hon. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Hon. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Re: HB 1839 HD 1 RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Hearing: Monday, February 26, 2024, 2:00 p.m., Room 308 & videoconference

Position: Strong Support

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i (DPH) strongly supports HB 1839 HD1. HD 1839 HD 1 appropriates funds for long-term monitoring of air quality for communities impacted by the Maui wildfires, as well as support for research efforts to better understand the environmental concerns linked to urban fires.

The PLATFORM OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAI'I as adopted at the 2022 State Convention on May 28, 2022, states as follows:

## ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

Protect and preserve Hawai'i's environment and achieve energy sustainability. Advance measures to re-establish a healthy climate and environment for humans and fellow species, including actions to urgently address climate change. Work towards 100% renewable clean energy goals.

*We believe that all people have the right to live in a clean, healthy and safe environment. We believe that the preservation of our natural environment and its ecological well-being is essential to ensuring a safe, healthy, bountiful life for future generations in Hawai'i. We support policies that create a more sustainable society. We support the restoration, preservation, and protection of native ecosystems.* [Emphasis added.]

We believe in the resource management principles outlined in the Public Trust doctrine of the Hawai'i State Constitution. We support policy that incorporates indigenous resource-management practices and technologies such as the Ahupua'a System in modern urban planning and development to create an ecologically sustainable balance between the needs of the people and the rights of nature.

We believe that a key part of a sustainable and self-sufficient future for Hawai‘i lies in achieving energy independence through a transition to clean renewable energy sources. We support policies that eliminate our dependence on fossil fuels and other dirty energy sources. We support policies that expand access to public transportation and encourage transit-oriented development and walkable communities.

Based on the DPH Platform, the Environmental Caucus supports this measure as monitoring air quality ensures the well-being of residents. Wildfires release harmful pollutants, including particulate matter (PM), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and carbon monoxide (CO). Long-term monitoring will help to identify trends, assess risks, and implement timely intervention to protect public health.

Further, urban fires have significant environmental consequences. They release greenhouse gases, contribute to climate change and harm ecosystems. Research through long term monitoring data can provide insights into mitigating these impacts and developing sustainable fire management strategies. Long-term monitoring data can guide the development of air quality standards and emergency response protocols.

Long-term monitoring data and research enhances our understanding of fire behavior, smoke dispersion, and pollutant transport. It fosters innovation in firefighting techniques, early warning systems, and pollution control technologies.

Accordingly, we urge you to **PASS** this measure as investing in air quality monitoring and research is essential for safeguarding public health, preserving the environment, and building resilient communities in the face of wildfire challenges.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

*Melodie Adyja* [legislativepriorities@gmail.com](mailto:legislativepriorities@gmail.com)

*Alan B. Burdick* [burdick808@gmail.com](mailto:burdick808@gmail.com)

Co-Chairs,  
Environmental Caucus of the  
Democratic Party of Hawai‘i



**HB-1839-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 4:12:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe DiNardo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Support of HB1839 HD1

Hi, my name is Joe DiNardo. I have been a toxicologist since 1976 and I have worked with Hawaii on sunscreen issues since 2017. It is essential that Hawaii fund environmental testing because the amount and type of toxic materials that are available in the air, water and soil have significantly increase over the last few decades. Specifically, chemicals like PFAS can travel over 25 miles in the air with some of these chemicals staying in the air for up to 9 months. Additionally, some of these PFAS chemicals can last in the soil/water for up to 184 years and in human blood for up to 70 years. The EPA is tragically behind in protecting US citizens from chemical pollution - they are proposing a 4 parts per trillion (ppt) Maximum Contamination Level (MCL) for just drinking water for two PFAS chemicals - PFOA and PFOS. The dose that causes kidney cancer IN HUMANS is 0.007 ppt for PFOA and 1 ppt is the cancer causing dose for PFOS in animals. That is approximately 400 TIMES higher than the cancer dose that is KNOWN to produce human cancers and 4 times the levels that causes cancer in animals. In toxicology setting a dose this high above the carcinogenic levels would “normally” be call stupidity ... you cannot set a dose that is higher than the known cancer dose in humans and expect to protect the population!

The National Academies of Science committee found “SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE of an association for the following diseases and health outcomes: decreased antibody response (in adults and children), dyslipidemia (in adults and children), decreased infant and fetal growth, and increased risk of KIDNEY CANCER (in adults). AND found LIMITED OR SUGGESTIVE EVIDENCE of increased risk of BREAST CANCER (in adults), liver enzyme alterations (in adults and children), increased risk of pregnancy-induced hypertension (gestational hypertension and preeclampsia), increased risk of TESTICULAR CANCER (in adults), thyroid disease and dysfunction (in adults), and increased risk of ulcerative colitis (in adults).”

Maui, when last checked in 2022 it had approximately 1,600,000 ppt of PFOS in the ground water (Kahului Airport) ... that is 1.6 MILLION times above the dose that causes cancers in animals? With that said, Hawaii should also be moving towards testing the blood levels of its citizens. The EPA has finalized Method 1633 which establishes reasonable testing limits to identify 40 different PFAS analytes (there are tens of thousands of PFAS chemiclas). This is the correct method to use to identify risk to people.

Lastly, PFAS are only one of the many environmental contaminants that we are all dealing with ... other toxic chemicals like Mercury can travel up to 1,000 miles in the air, so perhaps focusing on Maui is good, but testing all of the Islands would be better ... FYI ... Pearl Harbor had 2,000,000 ppt of PFAS (again, this is MILLIONS of times above the dose that causes significant health issues and CANCERS) ... I cannot emphasize enough the level of toxic chemicals (PFAS, Bisphenols, Phthalates, Heavy Metals, Pesticides ... etc.) that industry and the federal government has allowed us to be exposed.

Please support environmental testing of at least PFAS chemicals and please consider testing your citizens blood levels ... this is a significant problem that many States are having to deal with ... we must stop CHEMICAL POLLUTION if we all wish to continue living on this planet.

Mahalo for all your efforts Please support HB 1839 HD1 ... Most Sincerely, Joe DiNardo  
(jmdinardo@aol.com)

**HB-1839-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 6:26:16 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong support for HB1839 HD1, that appropriates funds for long-term monitoring of air and water quality for communities impacted by the Maui wildfires, as well as support for research efforts to better understand the environmental concerns linked to urban fires. These are crucial efforts for the community's well-being and to ensure a just recovery for Maui.

I urge you to PASS this important measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1839-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 9:45:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Riley Bond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I am writing to express my strong support for HB1839 HD1, which appropriates funds for long-term monitoring of air quality in communities impacted by the Maui wildfires, with a particular focus on Lahaina. As a mother deeply invested in the well-being of our people, I believe that ensuring clean air and a healthy environment is paramount for the long-term health and safety of our community.**

**It is crucial that we take proactive measures to monitor air quality and conduct thorough research to understand the environmental concerns linked to urban fires, especially in areas like Lahaina where our families reside.**

**Investing in air quality testing and research will not only provide valuable data to assess immediate risks but also help us develop strategies to mitigate long-term effects on public health and the environment.**

**I urge you to support HB1839 HD1 and prioritize the health and safety of Lahaina residents. Our keiki and kupuna deserve clean air to breathe and a healthy environment to thrive in.**

**Mahalo for your attention to this critical issue.**

**Sincerely,**

**Riley Bond**

**HB-1839-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 10:34:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tamara Paltin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Yamashita and Vice Chair Kitagawa,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on HB 1839 HD1 I am in strong support of appropriating funds for long term monitoring of air quality for communities impacted by the Maui wildfires, as well as support for research efforts to better understand the environmental concerns linked to urban fires as we are seeing this devastation more and more frequently it would be beneficial moving forward to have more information regarding qir monitoring and long term effects associated with after effects of this type of magnitude of wildfire/urban fire after effects.

Mahalo for your service and commitment to our communities,

Tamara Paltin

# Support for HB1839

To Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and the honorable members of the committees,

I am writing to express my **strong support for HB1839**. Recognizing the necessity of conducting air quality testing, as well as contaminant testing, to monitor short- and long-term risks to the community and environment is a crucial step forward.

Both Lahaina and Kula on Maui faced significant environmental impacts from last year's wildfires. Allocating resources to address immediate risks and also to ensure a comprehensive understanding of potential long-term impacts on human health and the ecosystem is vital at this point for our community.

The proposed funding for long-term monitoring is a recognition of our enduring responsibility to safeguard residents' health and safety. By supporting research efforts, the bill takes a forward-thinking approach to better understand environmental concerns linked to urban fires, contributing to a resilient and sustainable future for our community. In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support HB1839 and its appropriations for vital monitoring and research initiatives.

Thank you for your commitment to addressing the pressing needs of our community.

Sincerely,

Katie Austin

**HB-1839-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 3:04:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jessica dos Santos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable Members of the Hawai`i Legislature,

As a concerned citizen deeply invested in the well-being of our communities and environment, I am writing to express my strong support for H.B. No. 1839, H.D. 1, which addresses the critical need for long-term monitoring of air quality in areas impacted by the devastating Maui wildfires of August 2023.

The findings and recommendations of the House of Representatives' environmental remediation working group underscore the urgent necessity of proactive measures to address the unique environmental challenges posed by urban wildfires. Unlike natural wildfires, urban fires release a myriad of toxic chemicals and contaminants into the air, endangering both human health and ecosystem integrity. Materials such as household appliances, vehicles, and construction materials burned in these fires leave behind residues that can persist and pose significant risks to our communities long after the flames have been extinguished.

It is imperative that we allocate resources for comprehensive air quality testing and contaminant monitoring to assess both the immediate and long-term impacts of the Maui wildfires. By investing in long-term monitoring efforts, we can better understand the extent of environmental damage, mitigate potential health risks, and develop informed strategies for remediation and prevention.

The appropriation outlined in H.B. No. 1839, H.D. 1, demonstrates a commitment to safeguarding the health and well-being of Hawai`i's residents and ecosystems. Allocating funds for expanding air sampling efforts in communities like Kula and Lahaina will enhance our capacity to monitor air quality effectively and ensure that timely interventions can be implemented as needed.

Furthermore, supporting research efforts to better understand the environmental concerns linked to urban fires is a proactive step towards building resilience and preparedness in the face of future challenges. By fostering collaboration between state departments and research institutions, we can advance our knowledge base and develop evidence-based policies to protect our environment for generations to come.

In light of the significant public interest served by this Act and its alignment with the needs of our communities, I urge you to vote in favor of H.B. No. 1839, H.D. 1. By prioritizing

environmental stewardship and investing in proactive measures, we can ensure a healthier, more sustainable future for Hawai`i.

Thank you for your attention to this crucial issue and for your commitment to the well-being of our state.

Sincerely,

Jessica dos Santos



**HB-1839-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 7:46:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lorena Martinez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1839 HD1. Please continue prioritizing public health.

Mahalo,

Lorena Martinez  
Resident of West Maui

**HB-1839-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 6:13:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tarsis Rich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT