

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'AINA



KEITH A. REGAN
COMPTROLLER
KA LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

MEOH-LENG SILLIMAN
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA 'OIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
OF
KEITH A. REGAN, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE COMMITTEES ON

**GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY**

MARCH 14, 2024, 3:20 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 225 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL
H.B. 2696, H.D. 1

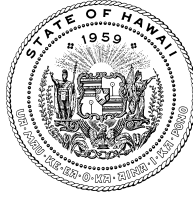
RELATING TO LAHAINA WILDFIRE RECOVERY.

Chairs McKelvey and Aquino, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki, and Members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.B. 2696, H.D. 1.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) appreciates the intent and offers **comments** on H.B. 2696, H.D. 1 which establishes the Lahaina Recovery Oversight Commission within DAGS to oversee and guide the recovery of Lahaina from the 2023 wildfires and requires the Office of Enterprise Technology Services to assist in establishing a website for the Commission.

DAGS is committed to assisting with the recovery of Lahaina and defers to testimony provided by the Office of the Governor.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



LATE

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Senate Committees on Government Operations & Labor and Technology

Thursday, March 14, 2024

3:20 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

With Comments

H.B. No. 2696 HD1, Relating to Lahaina Wildfire Recovery

Chairs McKelvey and Aquino, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki, and members of the Senate Committees on Government Operations & Labor and Technology:

The Office of the Governor offers the following comments on H.B. No. 2696 HD1, Relating to Lahaina Wildfire Recovery.

The Office of the Governor is open to this concept identified in this potential legislation provided that there is no negative fiscal impact on the executive budget package. We thank the authors of HD1 for adding the State Disaster Recovery Coordinator as a non-voting member in the proposed Lahaina Recovery Oversight Commission to support the Maui Fires Recovery and Resiliency Efforts under Section 2(c). This change will ensure continued coordination among all stakeholders involved in recovery. The companion bill S.B. No. 2979 SD1, made a similar amendment, but included the State Disaster Recovery Coordinator as a voting member, which should be considered in further discussions related to this potential legislation.

We also suggest the following amendment to Section 2(g) to ensure the proposed Commission would receive the benefit of the lessons and experience of the seven Recovery Support Functions amassed since the Maui wildfires:

(g) No later than December 31, 2024, the commission shall establish standards for the recovery, including identifying relevant issues for analysis; establishing goals for rebuilding Lahaina, Maui; and drafting metrics to measure progress toward achieving the goals. The commission shall consult with the community and policy leaders in developing the standards and metrics required by this subsection as well as the previous work of the Recovery Support Functions (RSFs).

Testimony of Office of the Governor
H.B. No. 2696 HD1
March 14, 2024
Page 2

For context, the State of Hawai'i State Disaster Recovery Coordinator has the role of coordinating and planning for recovery and resiliency efforts for the Maui Wildfire impacts in support of the County of Maui. This contrasts with emergency response which is led by HI-EMA under Emergency Support Functions.

Last fall the Governor identified seven RSFs and their corresponding State Leads. The RSFs include: Natural Resources & Cultural Resources RSF coordinated by Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources; Community Planning and Capacity Building RSF coordinated by Office of Planning and Sustainable Development; Housing RSF coordinated by Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation; Infrastructure RSF coordinated by Hawai'i Department of Transportation; Economic RSF coordinated Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism; Public Health & Healthcare Services RSF coordinated by Hawai'i State Department of Health; and Social Services RSF coordinated by Hawai'i Department of Human Services. These RSFs and their state leads have been working closely with County of Maui, federal partners, and private organizations.

This approach—a State Coordinator coupled with RSFs—is consistent with the National Disaster Recovery Framework, a FEMA structure and process developed from the collective experience of disaster recovery managers nationwide. If you have any questions on the role of State Disaster Recovery Coordinator or the State RSFs, we ask that you contact Luke Meyers, State Disaster Recovery Coordinator, for further information and a dialog on this proposal during the legislative session.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



Testimony of **Lahaina Strong**
Before the Senate Committees on
Government Operations, and
Labor and Technology

In Consideration of House Bill No. 2696, HD1
RELATING TO THE LAHAINA WILDFIRE RECOVERY

To Chair McKelvey, Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Moriwaki 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. Lahaina Strong has been at the forefront of relief and advocacy efforts, including initiating the "Fishing for Housing" camp, which has been in operation for over seventeen weeks along Kaanapali Beach, highlighting the need for dignified housing for Lahaina fire victims. 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 offers comments on HB2696, which establishes the Lahaina Recovery Oversight Commission ("Commission") within the State Department of Accounting and General Services to oversee and guide the recovery of Lahaina from the 2023 wildfires.

During this legislative session, several bills emerged intending to establish a new entity to oversee the recovery and rebuilding efforts in areas devastated by the 2023 wildfire, raising concerns about potential duplication of efforts already undertaken by county or state authorities. While acknowledging the necessity of coordinated efforts, it's essential to avoid redundancy and promote synergy among existing initiatives. Among these bills, HB2696, HD1 stands out for its approach in striking a balance between streamlining efforts and avoiding duplication. By creating the Lahaina Recovery Oversight Commission, HB2696, HD1 aims to unite state and county endeavors, thus

leveraging existing resources and expertise while fostering collaboration with local stakeholders. This bill's emphasis on comprehensive vision, public engagement, and integration of diverse perspectives positions it as a pivotal tool for effective recovery management without duplicating existing efforts, making it a promising solution to navigate the complex post-disaster rebuilding landscape.

HB2696, HD1 distinguishes itself from the Lele Community District (SB 3381) bill in several key aspects, aligning more closely with our preferences for effective oversight and recovery management.

HB2696, HD1 mandates that West Maui members of the commission must have been residing in Lahaina at the time of the 2023 wildfire event, ensuring representation with firsthand experience of the disaster's impact.

As written, HB2696, HD1 is a 13-member body, of which 10 are Maui County residents or representatives. Six out of 13, or less than half, are specifically Lahaina residents at the time of the wildfires. This number should be raised to 7 by ensuring that 1 of the 2 members of the Maui County Council is the Councilmember who holds the West Maui residency seat. It is also imperative to ensure diverse representation on the Lahaina Oversight Commission, to foster inclusivity and equitable decision-making that reflects the rich cultural tapestry of Lahaina's residents.

Additionally, HB2696, HD1 emphasizes transparency by requiring that meetings be held publicly, fostering community engagement and accountability.

Finally, the bill's sunset clause, causing the commission to cease existence in 2030, ensures a finite duration for oversight, preventing prolonged bureaucracy and encouraging timely action. These provisions collectively make HB2696, HD1 a more favorable option for overseeing Lahaina's recovery efforts compared to the bill seeking to establish a Lele Community District.

We have been informed by advocates of the alternative proposals aimed at establishing an overseeing body for Lahaina's recovery and redevelopment that such an entity is essential to ensure the proper utilization of earmarked funding amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars, specifically designated for Lahaina's recovery, while also incorporating input from the Lahaina community.

Should the creation of an overseeing entity prove necessary, it could be beneficial to consider integrating a special fund provision into this bill as an amendment. Such a fund

could play a pivotal role in efficiently mobilizing resources, thereby guaranteeing sustainable and adequately funded reconstruction efforts. By earmarking both State and private sector funds for Lahaina's recovery, we would demonstrate a steadfast commitment to addressing the needs of our affected community, facilitating targeted investments in crucial areas such as housing, infrastructure, environmental restoration, and economic revitalization. Furthermore, the establishment of a dedicated special fund would afford flexibility in resource allocation, enabling prompt responses to evolving challenges and opportunities throughout the rebuilding process. In essence, creating a special fund would symbolize solidarity and unwavering support for Lahaina's residents as we embark on the journey toward recovery and renewal.

In summary, we believe that HB2696, HD1 could present a balance between state and local interests, empowering Lahaina residents while leveraging state support for a coordinated, inclusive, and effective recovery effort.

Mahalo for your attention and commitment to the well-being of our community.

Sincerely,

Jordan Ruidas, Pa'ele Kiakona & Courtney Lazo

Lahaina Strong

LATE



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS and
LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 225
Thursday, March 14, 2024, 3:20 P.M.

To The Honorable Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Government Operations
To The Honorable Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair
The Honorable Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Labor and Technology

COMMENTS ON HB2696 HD1 RELATING TO LAHAINA WILDFIRE RECOVERY

The Maui Chamber of Commerce would like to offer **COMMENTS on HB2696 HD1**.

The Maui Chamber of Commerce supports the intent of this bill. We note there seems to be a great deal of overlap between this bill and the already established Maui Economic Recovery Commission (MERC), which has nearly 100 participants. The MERC may likely meet the guidelines of what is detailed in this bill. The MERC will have a website and out-facing presence which may include goals, reports, and metrics. If there are accountability activities missing or additional individuals that you feel should participate, since the MERC has already been established and work is underway, our recommendation would be to consider broadening the MERC to add or strengthen accountability measures and additional expertise as needed.

We wholeheartedly agree that the rebuilding of Lahaina is critical to Maui and our state. It is imperative we be focused, transparent, accountable, and timely, with accurate reporting. This will allow for quick action to make adjustments if we are behind or off the mark and move forward in a positive direction.

We appreciate the forward thinking of this initiative. **We hope that the state would consider merging the duties and responsibilities noted in this bill with already existing and operating Maui Economic Recovery Commission.** Therefore, enhancing an effort that is already making progress.

The Chamber looks forward to continued discussions on this and other related bills to find the best possible solutions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer **COMMENTS ON HB2696 HD1**.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

HB-2696-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2024 7:13:52 AM

Testimony for GVO on 3/14/2024 3:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keoni Shizuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee,

I stand in support of HB2696.

The committee that is formed will serve as a central point of knowledge, bringing together information from both the State and the County, allowing for good communication and dissemination of information both to and from the community. With all the efforts occurring, this seems like a good idea and can definitely help to bring together the community and the efforts occurring, as well as provide valuable feedback about the efforts from the community.

I also appreciate the requirement that the committee meetings be held publicly, as transparency is needed and this bill emphasizes that.

I do suggest, however, that the bill be amended to increase the number of West Maui community members on the committee to hold seven seats, rather than six, of the thirteen commission member seats. The Lahaina community should make up more than half of the commission.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Keoni Shizuma