

To: House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
RE: SB2841 HD1 in strong support
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325
March 21, 2024; 2:05 pm

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

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2841 HD1** relating to Water Safety Day. I strongly support this bill to establish May 15 of each year as Water Safety Day to spread awareness of the drowning pandemic and to educate Hawai'i's youth about becoming safer in and around the water.

Drowning is the [leading cause of death](#) in Hawai'i for keiki ages 1-14, and Hawai'i ranks second in the nation for the rate of drowning among residents. No statewide education program in schools exists to teach children this essential life skill. Community organizations such as the International Water Safety Foundation and the American Red Cross know that water safety can be taught as a life skill. When children learn water safety skills and education, it could lessen the number of child drowning fatalities. Swimming proficiency in multiple aquatic skills is a way to stay safe in the water and also a requirement of personal aquatic safety competency by the [American Red Cross](#).

All children who grow up in Hawai'i need access to life-saving aquatic safety skills. Creating more awareness of the importance of learning these skills is a step in the right direction toward healthier and safer keiki who live on our islands. This initiative is a vital step towards preventing drownings, saving lives, and protecting the well-being of our keiki. Mahalo for your support of this bill.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Mai Hall, M.Ed.
Children's Health Coordinator



To: Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair
Re: Notice Hearing – SB 2841, HD1 RELATING TO WATER SAFETY DAY
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2024
Time: 2:05 pm
Place: Via Videoconference
Conference Room 325

My name is Lisa Dau and I represent the Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition, a non-profit since 1995, comprised of broad-based representation from more than 150 organizations, agencies, and individuals committed to preventing injuries to children and youth in Hawaii.

KIPC SUPPORTS SB2841, HD1 RELATING TO WATER SAFETY DAY that designates May 15 of each year as Water Safety Day. Supporting Water Safety Day is a day to spread drowning awareness and water safety education by any means possible. May 15 is also International Water Safety Day and this bill will link with worldwide efforts on the importance of water safety and drowning prevention.

Water is one of life's true joys. It surrounds our islands; it can bring us together and be a source of lifelong memories. Water can be dangerous and deadly, and requires our respect. Drowning is the single leading cause of death of children ages 1-4 in Hawaii and across the nation. Hawai'i has the second-highest drowning rate for residents in the nation (behind Alaska) and is the leading cause of death of Hawai'i children aged 1-15. Drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death for adult tourists.

KIPC is the lead agency and partner for Hawai'i Water Safety Coalition (HWSC), a group of leaders from the government, nonprofits, and the community working together to promote water safety in Hawaii. Drowning is silent and can happen as fast as 30 seconds. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of child drownings occur with at least one (1) adult present. HWSC's goal is to decrease child drownings by bringing awareness and education to the forefront of our community. Having May 15 designated as Water Safety Day, alongside International Water Safety, will help bring awareness to this serious situation in our state and our visitors in Hawaii. This is why KIPC supports SB2841.

Thank you,
Lisa Dau, RN, MBA, BSN
Injury Prevention Coordinator

SB-2841-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/21/2024 9:27:01 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/21/2024 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Fairchild	Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I'm writing in strong support of SB2841 to make May 15th the official Water Safety Day in Hawaii. May 15th is International Water Safety Day and is designed to help spread global awareness of the ongoing drowning pandemic, and to educate the youth in becoming safer in and around water. It is a day to spread drowning awareness and water safety education by any means possible. The lack of water safety education has propelled drownings worldwide. Locally, drowning is the leading cause of death for Hawaii keiki ages 1-15 and Hawaii ranks second in the nation for rate of drowning among residents. A designated water safety day would be a great way to engage local schools and community groups in talking about water safety right before the summer vacation months.

Mahalo,

Sarah Fairchild

Executive Director

Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation

SB-2841-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2024 7:21:47 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/21/2024 2:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessamy Town Hornor	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas and Vice-Chair Takayama and members of the committee,

As a bereaved mother and spouse who has lost loved ones to drowning, I am writing again in support of establishing Hawaii Water Safety Day, May 15th, with a start date as soon as possible.

May 15th is already International Water Safety Day, and Washington and California passed similar bills that have been helpful in generating momentum on drowning prevention efforts, especially for children. We need to do something to elevate this issue statewide and this is simple way to do so.

For reference I have included the laws below. I know both parents behind these laws and they have done good work in their respective states with these platforms.

WA Yori's Law :

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1750&Initiative=false&Year=2023>

CA Roxie's Wish:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220ACR39

Please consider passing this bill into law in honor of Mark and Mina Hornor as well as others who have lost their lives to drowning here in Hawaii.

Best,

Jessamy Town Hornor

Coordinator, Hawaii Water Safety Coalition

Founder, Ocean Safety 'Ohana