

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committees on  
HIGHER EDUCATION,  
WATER AND LAND  
and  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Monday, March 18, 2024  
1:30 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 2248, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO BEACH MANAGEMENT ON THE NORTH SHORE OF OAHU

House Bill 2248, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to develop a beach management plan for the North Shore of O'ahu from Sunset Point to the Kapo'o (Sharks Cove) area. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the FY 2025 Executive Supplemental Budget Request.**

The Department supports proactive adaptation planning for the impacts of coastal erosion and sea level rise. The development of a dune and beach management plan follows up on the 2022 findings of the North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group, which was comprised of beach advocates, community members, government officials, and representatives of the University of Hawai'i.

A beach management plan for O'ahu's North Shore presents the opportunity to focus on the ecological health of an iconic beach, and on the preservation of the State's public trust resources by addressing the inevitability of beach migration. The Department appreciates that the management plan will outline concrete adaptation and implementation strategies, and believes that the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program possesses the requisite understanding of both beach processes and of human activity in the area to develop an effective plan.

The Department hopes that a successful plan can provide a template for other communities in Hawai'i that are facing the effects of coastal erosion and sea level rise.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Monday, March 18, 2024 at 1:30 p.m.

By

Charles "Chip" Fletcher, PhD  
Interim Dean

School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology

And

Darren Lerner, PhD  
Director, Sea Grant College Program

And

Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 2248 HD1 – RELATING TO BEACH MANAGEMENT ON THE NORTH SHORE OF OAHU

Chairs Kim, Inouye, and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Kidani, Elefante, and Richards, and members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) and the Climate Resilience Collaborative (CRC) support House Bill 2248 HD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to develop a north shore beach management plan for the north shore of O'ahu from Sunset point to the Kapo'o (Sharks Cove) area.

Hawai'i Sea Grant has developed similar beach and dune management plans for Maui County, Kailua Beach Park and the Hawai'i Dune Restoration Manual as recent examples of similar work.

A common element of coastal management planning involves the evaluation and assessment of climate adaptation pathways, triggers and implementation strategies. This is an important component of any coastal planning effort and has been a consideration for this bill as it would serve to provide professional merit as a comprehensive climate adaptation plan rather than just a beach management plan.

Recent community-oriented working group activity strongly supports the goals and objectives of this measure. [The North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group](#) (NSCRWG) was launched by the Surfrider Foundation, Surfrider's O'ahu Chapter, the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College, and consulting firm SSFM International to proactively address accelerated beach loss and improve community resilience on the North Shore. In 2021 and 2022, the NSCRWG facilitated meaningful, community-driven discussions related to the future of coastal management on the North Shore. The Working Group released a report detailing critical concerns and recommendations for immediate action.

The NSCRWG report details three priority areas of concern as erosion hotspots, including; Rocky Point - Sunset Beach, Laniākea - Chun's, and Mokulē'ia, with identified key strategies including the development of a beach and dune management plan and pilot restoration projects.

This measure, if passed, can serve as an important coastal management, adaptation planning and community engagement model for other coastal communities struggling with coastal hazards and sea level rise and can facilitate improved community-focused coastal planning statewide.

CRC is a multi-investigator research project at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa focused on sea level rise adaptation and climate resilience. CRC is updating coastal models that project the impacts of sea level rise.

Hawai'i Sea Grant's mission is to provide integrated research, extension, and education activities that increase understanding and use of ocean and coastal resources of the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands and support the informed personal, policy, and management decisions that are integral to realizing this vision. Hawai'i Sea Grant is part of a national network of 34 university-based programs associated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that promote better understanding, conservation, and use of coastal resources.

The research that goes into identifying Hawai'i's exposure to sea level rise is coming out of the University of Hawai'i School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology. To maintain our understanding of sea level threats based on the latest science, these researchers need ongoing financial support from the State. CRC would be happy to provide updated sea level rise data and projections to the Committee or any lawmaker upon request.

CRC and Hawai'i Sea Grant support House Bill 2248, provided its adoption does not impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Monday, March 18, 2024, 1:30 P.M.

State of Hawai‘i

State Capitol, Conference Room 309

**TESTIMONY OF BERNIE BAYS IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2248, HD1  
RELATING TO A BEACH MANAGEMENT PLAN ON THE NORTH SHORE OF  
OAHU**

Dear Chairs Kim, Inouye and Gabbard, Vice Charis Kidani, Elefante and Richards, and Committee Members:

I represent the Shoreline Preservation Coalition and my firm is also legal counsel for several clients who own homes on the stretch of beach between Sunset Point and Sharks Cove. I have been a practicing real estate, land use, and zoning law as an attorney in Hawaii for more than 50 years. I offer this testimony in **strong support** of House Bills 2248, and HD1.

We need a comprehensive and actionable beach management plan for this iconic stretch of beach. Each year we see the negative impacts of coastal erosion on this iconic beach. However, we have not been able to develop and implement an effective beach management plan. The current situation is unworkable—at times the public is not able to enjoy the beach; and property owners are left to develop their own ineffective and undesirable fixes in order to save their homes.

A diverse consensus among stakeholders is in support of this Bill. Solutions cannot be effectively developed on a parcel-by-parcel basis. A comprehensive plan needs to be developed to preserve this beautiful and famous beach that is enjoyed by both locals and tourists.

HB 2238, and HD1 will develop that comprehensive plan and will carry forward the work of the North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group. The Working Group’s “Adaptive Coastal Management Recommendations, Actions and Strategies” Report, released in October 2022, identified several “critical concerns,” including:

- Absence of a comprehensive coastal erosion strategy and long-term vision for the North Shore;
- Damaged and limited public beach access due to erosion, beach loss, and inappropriate response measures;
- Lack of options and transparent, publicly-shared guidelines for homeowners impacted by shoreline erosion; and
- Lack of a cohesive policy framework and financing mechanisms for managed retreat.

The Report noted that “Working Group members overwhelmingly agreed on the importance of identifying adaptation options, including exploring short-term solutions like sand management and dune restoration,” and recommended that elected and agency officials develop a beach management plan. This Bill provides for the development of such a beach management plan.

The House Bill initially provided that \$30,000,000 be budgeted for this study. However, by working with Dolan Eversole at the University of Hawaii Sea Grant College, the cost of the study has been paired down to \$5,000,000.

Obviously that appropriation should be effective July 1, 2024. We have already waited much too long to begin this important study.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 2248 and HD1.

Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Bernard Bays*

Bernie Bays

**HB-2248-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 12:44:11 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/18/2024 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ted Bohlen	Testifying for Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!



3/17/2024

Senate Committees on Higher Education, Water and Land, and Agriculture and Environment  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Kim, Chair Inouye, Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Higher Education, Water and Land, and Agriculture and Environment Committees,

**Position: Support HB2248 - North Shore beach management and climate adaptation plan**

The Surfrider Foundation, Hawai'i region, is testifying in **strong support of HB2248**, relating to the creation of a North Shore beach management plan.

From 2021-2022, the Surfrider Foundation, O'ahu Chapter, SeaGrant, and SSFM International convened the North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group (NSCRWG),<sup>1</sup> a group of stakeholders on the North Shore, to discuss the imminent threats of sea level rise and proposed solutions. Of our 6 recommendations, two specifically discussed the immediate need to develop a beach management and adaptation plans:

**Recommendation #4. Develop a beach and dune management plan for North Shore beach parks and accessways, including guidelines that may be transferable to efforts fronting privately owned lands**

**Recommendation #5. Develop a comprehensive climate change and sea level rise vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategy for the North Shore**

It is evident that comprehensive beach management and adaptation plans are not only warranted, but immediately needed to ensure that we can proactively approach the impacts of climate change and sea level rise. HB2248 allocates funds and resources to a problem that we should have begun addressing in a more comprehensive manner decades ago. Given the immense challenge of private property being built too close to the ocean coupled in an area that is undergoing long-term erosion, we need plans and we needed them yesterday. It is our hope that the plans developed by this bill will serve as a prototype to be replicated to other areas around the state.

In Hawai'i, beaches are an integral part of our way of life. While it is easy to discount projects such as this, HB2248 supports plans that are integral to ensuring that we have beaches for the next generation. Surfrider Foundation spent over \$20,000 of our nonprofit funds to bring the North Shore Working Group to fruition. We now ask the state to do their share and support HB2248 and the requested appropriations.

The Surfrider Foundation is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our ocean, waves, and beaches. Surfrider maintains a network of over 150 chapters and academic clubs nationwide, including 3 chapters in the Hawaiian Islands. The Surfrider Foundation focuses on many aspects of the environment such as coastal protection, plastic pollution, and water quality. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony in support of HB2248, submitted on the behalf of the Surfrider Foundation's 3 Chapters in Hawai'i and all of our members who live in the state and visit to enjoy the many coastal recreational opportunities offered by all of the islands' coastlines.

Sincerely,

Lauren Blickley  
Hawai'i Regional Manager  
Surfrider Foundation

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<sup>1</sup> <https://hawaii.surfrider.org/northshoreworkinggroup/>

**HB2248 HD1 HRE/WTL/AEN Hearing**  
Monday March 18, 2024 1:30 pm

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the HRE/WTL/AEN Committees,

I write in **strong support of HB2248 HD1**. I have lived on the North Shore of O‘ahu for over thirty years including several years residing and raising my family in the “Kammies”/Ke Nui Road to Kapo‘o neighborhood, the erosion “hot spot” that is addressed by this bill.

A surprisingly **diverse group of stakeholders** support this bill – from conservationists to beachfront homeowners – groups that do not always find common ground, but, on this bill, it seems we can -- an **unusual positive consensus** that the Legislature should recognize and support.

Particularly in the past decade, this spectacular beach has experienced **severe episodic erosion**, causing hazards to homeowners, beachgoers, and the integrity of the beach/dune ecosystem. The erosion is only getting worse with sea level rise and less predictable swell direction and strength, undermining the frontage and foundations of homes built on a once-stable sand dune.

I think everyone recalls the shocking headline in [February 2022](#) *“As beach disappears, house collapses into ocean on Oahu’s North Shore.”* This photo shows the unfortunate modest beach house -- owned by a local family -- that fell into the ocean, sending a **distress signal** to our community and around the world.



Based on the Legislature’s passage of **Act 16 (2020)**, which wisely prohibited new shoreline hardening structures shoreline across the state, new approaches must be explored to balancing the protection of our beaches and long-term adaptation (including possible relocation) of beachfront homes.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources has – correctly, in my view -- taken **strong enforcement** action against illegal and expired shoreline erosion control measures – such as seawalls, concrete pours, rocks, sand bags, and black fabric “burritos” and tarps. But DLNR can address these serious issues only “parcel by parcel,” creating **frustration and efficiency problems** for DLNR, the homeowners, and the beach. The beach and public suffer for months if not years while fines and removal orders are contested by homeowners who feel their homes are at risk.



Just a few weeks ago, I helped our community coordinate the fourth “**burrito debris clean up**” work day at this beach to cut up and remove deteriorated heavy black “burrito” fabric and broken sandbags from illegal shoreline installations. This debris is **impeding public access and posing serious hazards** to the public and marine life.

During our cleanup on Saturday January 25, over 20 volunteers (including beachfront homeowners), used knives to cut up and remove **three pickup-truck loads** of dangerously strewn burrito fabric and debris in this eroding stretch of shoreline:



In short, particularly in this North Shore “hot spot,” a **cohesive plan is desperately needed** to provide options to the community and homeowners, and to protect the public trust. **UH Sea Grant** knows this area and community very well, including through participation in the **2022 North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group**, and is the ideal entity to lead the development of an “action plan” (not just a “study”) that would evaluate and clarify pathways forward.

This plan, supported by our highly motivated community and diverse stakeholder groups, could be a **model for addressing other erosion “hot spots” across the State**. Even if only “Phase 1” of the ideal plan can be funded this Session with approximately \$400,000, that would be a significant start toward solutions. **Please support HB2248 HD1.**

Mahalo nui,

Denise Antolini  
59-463 Alapi’o Road  
Pūpūkea, HI 96712

**HB-2248-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2024 2:42:27 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/18/2024 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Uilani Naipo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of this measure. Many of us coastal communities can benefit from the outcome of this beach management and climate adaptation plan for the North Shore.

**HB-2248-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2024 10:56:57 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/18/2024 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kathleen M. Pahinui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chairs Kim and Inouye and Committee Members -

I strongly support this bill for the North Shore beaches. Erosion and climate change are taking a toll and we need a comprehensive plan to address these issues.

Mahalo,

Kathleen M. Pahinui

Waialua Resident, North Shore, O‘ahu

**LATE**

**HB-2248-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 7:25:50 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/18/2024 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
glenn wachtel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs and Committee on HRE/WTL/AEN,

I write in **STRONG SUPPORT** for HB2248HD1.

I have been a resident of Sunset Beach and Kammies for over 30 years and a former Ocean Safety Officer with the City & County of Honolulu with my tenure mostly stationed on the North Shore and in particular the Sunset/Kammies, Ehukai and Ke Waena areas.

Just like most beaches around the State with the increase in tourism and usage these beaches need to be properly managed, maintained and taken care of just like the many City parks that are used for the same purposes. They cannot just be left used, unmanaged and left to erode away and disappear. HB2248HD1 does this. By supporting HB2248HD1 to implement a beach management program for the North Shore this will go a long way to save our precious resource for both visitors and locals alike. This is a much needed **FIRST** step to properly maintain and manage our shoreline.

I strongly urge the members of each of the committees to support this bill to save our beaches.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

-Mahalo,

Glenn Wachtel

Sunset Beach