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GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



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ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR OF  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
KAHU HO'OMALU PŪULIA

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA**  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
4204 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
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STATE OF HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 358,  
RELATING TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
**PUBLIC SAFETY**

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

JANUARY 29, 2025

Aloha Chair Bellati, Vice-Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a testimony to **SUPPORT** House Bill 358.

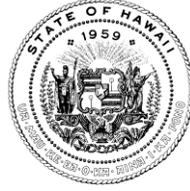
The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency endorses any and all initiatives aimed at strengthening public buildings, particularly in our efforts to improve the state's preparedness against hurricane winds.

HIEMA's mitigation projects reflect our commitment to making concerted efforts and proactive investments in the safety and resilience of our communities.

HIEMA supports this measure, with the understanding that its passage will not negatively impact the priorities outlined in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a testimony in support of House Bill 358.

James Barros: [james.barros@hawaii.gov](mailto:james.barros@hawaii.gov); 808-733-4300



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I**  
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DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HOOKELE

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**Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the**  
**House Committee on Public Safety**  
**Wednesday, January 29, 2025**

**9:00 a.m.**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 411 and via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:**  
**H.B. 358, RELATING TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

Chair Au Belatti and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gordon Ito, and I am the Insurance Commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Insurance Division. The Department supports the intent of this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to require all public buildings, including public school buildings, constructed after January 1, 2026, to be designed to withstand category five hurricanes and be used as shelters in the event of an emergency.

The Department supports the intent to take proactive measures towards ensuring Hawaii's public buildings will be able to protect its residents during an emergency and serve as a safe space in the aftermath.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 01/29/2025

**Time:** 09:00 AM

**Location:** 411 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Public Safety

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Bill Title:** HB 0358 RELATING TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS.

**Purpose of Bill:** Requires all public buildings, including public school buildings, constructed after January 1, 2026, to be designed to withstand category five hurricanes and be used as shelters in the event of an emergency.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) is providing comments on HB 0358.

The Department agrees that Hawaii is vulnerable to natural disasters and more shelters are needed; however, the proposed bill to require all public buildings to be constructed to withstand Category 5 hurricanes and to be used as shelters should consider the feasibility of this measure.

The current Hawaii State Building Code includes life safety design criteria for enhanced hurricane protection areas (EHPA) in high occupancy state- and county-owned buildings occupied during hurricanes of up to Category 3. High occupancy is defined as 300 or more occupants. To meet EHPA design requirements to withstand a Category 3 hurricane restrooms are required to be accessible from the interior, the facility must withstand projectiles, emergency generator power must be provided, a higher level of structural integrity is factored in, and other design considerations have to be met. The Department would have to overhaul the design requirements for school facilities and greatly increase the cost to design and construct any school building to withstand a higher Category 5 hurricane. In addition, the current Hawaii State Building Code does not include requirements for a building that can withstand a Category 5 hurricane in Appendix U, Hawaii Hurricane Sheltering Provisions for New Construction, Section 430 State- and County-Owned Public High Occupancy Buildings - Design Criteria for Enhanced Hurricane Protection Areas.

The Department would also request greater specificity on the type of public facilities impacted. For example, covered play court structures are not fully enclosed so it would not be a desirable shelter

during a hurricane but would still be required to meet the requirements under the proposed bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on HB 0358.

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



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

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

**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII'**  
**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

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY**

H. B. 358

JANUARY 29, 2025, 9:00 AM  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE AND CONFERENCE ROOM 411, STATE CAPITOL

RELATING TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS.

Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.B. 358.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) appreciates the intent of this measure, which requires all public buildings, including public school buildings, constructed after January 1, 2026, to be designed to withstand category five hurricanes and be used as shelters in the event of an emergency.

DAGS offers the following **comments**:

- Consideration should be given to exempting public building types for which the associated design and construction standards would be excessive, such as, but not limited to, carports and material storage sheds at corporation yards.
- It should be expected that adherence to the design and construction standards

required to withstand category five hurricanes will involve substantial increases in project costs. Projects currently under design and intended to begin construction on or after January 1, 2026, may not have sufficient appropriated funding to accommodate the increased costs of compliance. Therefore, consideration should be given to revising the measure's language to provide that such compliance will be required on projects for which appropriations were made in the legislative session of 2026.

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

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



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
AND REHABILITATION**  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalu Kalaima  
a Ho'oponopono Ola*  
1177 Alakea Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**TOMMY JOHNSON**  
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**Melanie Martin**  
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**Pamela J. Sturz**  
Deputy Director  
Correctional Institutions

**Sanna Muñoz**  
Deputy Director  
Rehabilitation Services  
and  
Programs

No. \_\_\_\_\_

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 358  
RELATING TO DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

by  
Tommy Johnson, Director  
Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

House Committee on Public Safety  
Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair

Wednesday, January 29, 2025; 9:00 a.m.  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, State Capitol, Conference Room 411

Chair Au Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) supports the intent of House Bill (HB) 358, which seeks to require all public buildings, including public school buildings, constructed after January 1, 2026, to be designed to withstand category five hurricanes and be used as shelters in the event of an emergency.

Under DCR are eight (8) correctional institutions throughout the state that house justice involved individuals. We are currently in the planning phase for proposed relocations of the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC), the Kauai Community Correctional Center (KCCC), and the Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC). We support that design of these correctional facilities must withstand Category five hurricanes, however, because we are responsible for the care and custody of justice involved individuals, our capacity to provide shelter for others is very limited.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony supporting the intent of HB 358.



# Hawai'i Climate Advisory Team

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair  
Representative Kim Coco Iwamoto, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Public Safety

From: The Climate Advisory Team

RE: **HB358 - Relating to Disaster Preparedness - In Support**  
Wednesday, January 29, 9:00 a.m.; Conference Room 411 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Au Belatti, Vice Chair Coco Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on HB358 relating to disaster preparedness. We **support the intent** of this measure because as the frequency and severity of hurricanes increase, adequate shelters must be available to and prepared for residents in the event of a disaster. The CAT has recognized that 64% of O'ahu's single-family homes lack hurricane protection, and the proposed bill would ensure all residents in need of shelter have a safe place to go.

We, the undersigned members of the Governor's Climate Advisory Team (CAT), support the intent of this bill. It aligns with the CAT's near-term recommendations to promote community resilience through pre-disaster coordination and fortifying Hawai'i's structures against wind damage, which we believe is critical to ensuring the health and safety of Hawai'i residents. For further information about the CAT's recommendations for community resilience, please refer to [Section 3.4 of our Policy Recommendations on Climate Disaster Resilience, Recovery and Funding](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before your committee **in support of the intent** of HB358.

With aloha,

The Climate Advisory Team

**HB-358**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:45:32 PM

Testimony for PBS on 1/29/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Kioni Dudley	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

HB358

I am Dr. Kioni Dudley. Let's talk about our real situation. We've never had a hurricane hit O'ahu head-on. So we had come to believe that hurricanes never would. Then came climate change awareness, just a few years back. And we became aware that with warming seas, the spawning area for hurricanes over by Mexico had moved northward. And now Hawaii is in the path for hurricanes crossing the Pacific. We've had hurricanes brush the Big Island. Last year we had one pass just north of O'ahu. They're coming. So where will you go? The Oahu Dept. of Emergency Management tells us they have places of refuge for 100,000 people in a Cat 1 or 2 hurricane. But they expect 200,000 to need places to go. That means 100,000 people will have no place to go even in a Cat 1 or 2 hurricane. Will you be one of those 100,000 people? What about your kids? Where will they go? Will your family die?

Now I've only mentioned shelters for a Cat 1 or 2. When a Category 3, 4, or 5 hits, we don't have a single shelter that will hold up. There's **no place for anyone** to go. What will you do? How can you save your family?

This bill would require that all new schools and public buildings be built to withstand Category 5 hurricanes. Again, Cat 5s are coming. This is just a start. But at least it is a start.

There are a few additional words that I strongly recombined putting into the bill. The bill says that the new buildings would have to withstand a Category 5 hurricane. That should be "Category 5 hurricanes with winds of 200mph. Further, people stay in a hurricane shelter for a whole day or longer. They need to be able to reach bathrooms. So I would add "and have interior passages to bathrooms." Section II (d) should be amended to state that "All public buildings, including public school buildings constructed after January 1, 2026 shall be designed to withstand category five hurricanes **with winds of 200 mph, and have interior passages to bathrooms**, and be used as shelters in the event of an emergency.

Please think about not just yourself and your family. Think about future generations. We have a real obligation to them to start building now. Please vote for this bill.