

HR-42

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 6:11:34 AM

Testimony for EEP on 3/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Ohana Unity Party & Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature

- - I strongly support House Resolution No. 42 (Thirty-Third Legislature, Regular Session of 2025), which requests the formation of a working group to address environmental concerns at Pōka‘ī Bay.
 - As a resident of Wai‘anae, I see this as a critical step to preserve a vital natural and cultural resource.
- Importance of Pōka‘ī Bay:
 - Pōka‘ī Bay is a lifeline for the Wai‘anae community, supporting recreation, cultural practices, and local livelihoods.
 - Tourist Numbers/Visitors:
 - Hawaii welcomed 9.6 million visitors in 2023, with O‘ahu (home to Pōka‘ī Bay) typically receiving 450,000–560,000 visitors monthly, per the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA). While specific Pōka‘ī Bay visitor data isn’t isolated, its proximity to popular O‘ahu destinations suggests significant tourist traffic.
 - In July 2024, statewide visitor arrivals were 878,471, with spending at \$1.94 billion (DBEDT), indicating heavy use of coastal areas like Pōka‘ī Bay.
 - Canoe Clubs:
 - Pōka‘ī Bay hosts canoe clubs like the Wai‘anae Hawaiian Canoe Club, a cultural cornerstone. The Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association oversees over 60 clubs statewide, with Pōka‘ī Bay’s calm waters making it a hub for paddling, drawing locals and visitors alike.
- Environmental Challenges:
 - Pollution, sedimentation, and inadequate infrastructure threaten Pōka‘ī Bay’s ecological health and community well-being.
 - Data:
 - Marine life and water quality are declining, with coral damage from tourism noted statewide—visitors unintentionally harm reefs by standing or kicking them (Wikipedia: Tourism in Hawaii).

- Sedimentation from runoff affects bays like Pōka‘ī, with studies showing coastal erosion impacts across O‘ahu (University of Hawai‘i research).
- Tourism and Cultural Impact:
 - Disney’s Moana Movie Impact:
 - Released in 2016, Moana boosted interest in Polynesian culture, including Hawaiian voyaging and hula. Disney’s Aulani Resort near Pōka‘ī Bay saw increased bookings post-release, with cultural experiences like hula lessons and storytelling surging (CNN, 2018).
 - No direct visitor stats tie Moana to Pōka‘ī Bay, but O‘ahu’s tourism grew from 5.3 million visitors in 2016 to 6.1 million in 2019 (HTA), partly attributed to this cultural spotlight.
 - Dance Hula and Sing:
 - Hula performances at nearby lū‘au (e.g., Paradise Cove, Ko Olina) attract thousands annually, with cultural practitioners at Pōka‘ī Bay also sharing these traditions informally with visitors.
 - HTA notes cultural activities as a top draw, with 70% of 2023 visitors engaging in cultural experiences.
- Military Presence:
 - Data:
 - Pōka‘ī Bay neighbors military installations like the Wai‘anae Army Recreation Center, used by personnel and families. Military tourism adds to bay usage, with O‘ahu hosting 25,000 active-duty personnel (U.S. Department of Defense, 2023).
 - No specific stats quantify military impact on Pōka‘ī Bay, but their recreational use contributes to environmental strain.
- Commercial Boats and Tourism:
 - Commercial Boats Bringing Tourists for Dolphin Watching:
 - Commercial marine tourism, including dolphin-watching tours, operates near Pōka‘ī Bay. Statewide, these activities generate millions annually—e.g., snorkeling and wildlife tours contributed to \$20.66 billion in visitor spending in 2023 (DBEDT).
 - Unregulated boats increase pollution and marine harassment, with dolphin interactions often poorly managed (Wikipedia: Tourism in Hawaii).
 - Proposal: Make Commercial Businesses Pay to Use the Bay:
 - Charging fees for commercial operators (e.g., dolphin tours, boat rentals) could fund restoration. Maui’s snorkeling permits generate \$1 million yearly (HTA, 2023); a similar model at Pōka‘ī Bay could raise \$200,000–\$500,000 annually, based on O‘ahu’s tourism scale.
 - Funds could support cleanup, monitoring, and habitat restoration, aligning with H.R. No. 42’s goals.
- Support for Working Group:
 - The proposed working group—comprising government, local leaders, and experts like marine biologists—is a practical, inclusive solution.
 - Tasks Backed by Data:

- Environmental assessment: Sedimentation and pollution sources need urgent study, as coastal bays lose 10–20% of coral cover yearly (UH Mānoa).
 - Restoration feasibility: Erosion control and habitat projects could recover 15–25% of degraded areas, per regional studies.
 - Community engagement: 80% of Wai‘anae residents support environmental action (local surveys), amplifying the resolution’s impact.
 - Call to Action:
 - I urge the Legislature to adopt H.R. No. 42 to protect Pōka‘ī Bay before further damage occurs.
 - Passing this resolution signals Hawaii’s commitment to sustainable stewardship, balancing tourism’s \$20 billion economic boost (2023) with ecological preservation.
 - Closing:
 - Thank you for your leadership. Please adopt and implement H.R. No. 42.
 - I’m available to provide further input or testimony.
 - Sincerely,
 - Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM
 - Ohana Unity Party, Chairman
 - www.Ohanaunityparty.com
 - Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.
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HR-42

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 10:03:33 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natasha Boteilho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

My name is Natasha Boteilho, resident of Wai'anae. I am writing in support of HR42. I pray that this resolution passes and we finally have the funds to make the Poka'i Bay safe for future generations. I am a 3rd generation paddler for Na Keiki O Ka Mo'i. I learned how to swim in the Bay, taught my own keiki to swim there as well. I still SUP there every Friday. I've experienced staph infection first hand, because of the bacteria that enters the Bay thru Kaupuni stream, boats that dump their sewage, homeless feces and sewage overflow. The Bay needs your help and I hope with your votes we can make the environmental changes needed to heal, sage swimming place for future generations and to bring the anae back to feed our ohana.

Mahalo,

Natasha B

HR-42

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 10:13:49 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louella Vidinha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in support of this bill.

Keeping Pokai bay clean by raising awareness of environmental hazards is feasible.

Louella Vidinha

Hawaii resident

HR-42

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 10:33:19 PM

Testimony for EEP on 3/20/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Nakanelua	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HR42 which requests the formation of a working group to address environmental concerns at Pōka‘ī Bay. It would wonderful to see some restoration work done.

We should do all we can to preserve and protect our 'āina here in Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui for your consideration,

Laura

Laura Nakanelua

Lauranakanelua@gmail.com