

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N.S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on  
WATER AND LAND  
and  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Monday, February 10, 2025  
1:05 PM

State Capitol Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

In Consideration of  
SENATE BILL 1459  
RELATING TO HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS ON DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES LANDS

Senate Bill 1459 is an Administration bill authored by the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) requesting \$2.5 million for FY25-26 and \$2.5 million FY26-27 to continue clean-up of homeless encampments on Department-managed lands. **The Department strongly supports this bill.**

This bill will ensure that the Department does not have to divert limited operating funds to address the significant challenges posed by homeless encampments on Department lands.

The Department regularly cleans about 22 sites, the majority of which – 20- are on O'ahu, with two sites on Maui. In addition, Kaua'i has scattered sites that are not on a regular rotation as the camps are not always occupied. Hawai'i Island is also not cleaned regularly, although complaints about the areas around Wailoa River are increasing. In general, campsites on Department lands are difficult to access, and labor-intensive to clean.

Last year, the Department spent 129 days conducting homeless campsite cleanups, representing 61% of available cleanup days. Currently the Department shares both funding and the contracted clean-up crews with the Department of Transportation, which allows for the efficient use of resources.

The Department employs a 0.4 FTE Homeless Coordinator, and 1 FTE DOCARE officer assigned to manage homeless clean-ups. The Department follows state guidelines for notification that an encampment will be cleared and for storage of personal possessions. Department staff work with outreach workers throughout the state to ensure those who want services have access to outreach workers. The Department has also provided land throughout the state for 'Ohana Zones and Kauhale.

Despite our efforts, homelessness remains a persistent challenge. It is important to note that the staffing costs for cleanup activities are currently funded through operational funds and are not part of this request.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Senate Bill 1459.

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



RYAN I. YAMANE  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

February 9, 2025

TO: The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
Senate Committee on Water and Land

The Honorable Senator San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 1459 – RELATING TO HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS ON DEPARTMENT OF  
LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES LANDS.**

Hearing: February 10, 2025, 1:05 p.m.  
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this administration measure and agrees with the testimony of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). DHS does not have a budget request to fund DLNR's efforts to address encampments on its lands that aim to maintain public safety and preserve Hawaii's natural resources.

**PURPOSE:** This measure appropriates funds to DLNR to conduct its clean-up work associated with homeless encampments, including the removal and storage of homeless individuals' property, on state lands managed by the DLNR.

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