



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM
‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony
Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, February 28, 2025 at 10:35 a.m.

By

Darren T. Lerner, PhD
Director, Sea Grant College Program,
School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology

And

Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 1559 SD1 – RELATING TO DUNE RESTORATION

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) stands in support of SB 1559 SD1, which seeks to provide funding to the Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to partner with the County of Maui in dune restoration at Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park, Maui.

Hawai'i Sea Grant is committed to supporting nature-based methods to improve and restore ecosystem health throughout the state. Through our extension programs we provide technical expertise and guidance to state and county agencies and community-based organizations to assist with the planning and implementation of dune restoration projects. The funds appropriated by this measure will support an ongoing partnership with the County of Maui Department of Parks and Recreation focusing on public access and dune restoration to support coastal hazard mitigation and community resilience. Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park is especially important to local users for beach access, as the home site for three canoe clubs, and as a culturally vital place including a cemetery.

Hawai'i Sea Grant will work collaboratively with the Department of Parks and Recreation to best support the community in this effort. Additionally, a multi-year funding structure is important to enable acquisition of funds and adequate time for implementation.

In conclusion, we support this bill, provided that its passage does not impact the priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

February 27, 2025

TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee", is written over the printed name and title.

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 28, 2025; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
SB1559, SD1, RELATING TO DUNE RESTORATION**

I **support** this measure to appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to partner with the County of Maui for dune restoration at Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. The proposed dune restoration project would protect Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park, also known as Canoe Beach, as a community asset and help maintain a healthy beach ecosystem in West Maui.
2. The project will increase the resilience of the County's infrastructure by mitigating the effects of climate change.
3. This measure will help maintain public access so that the area may be enjoyed by the community for many years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

ocs:proj:legis:25legis:25testimony:sb1559sd1_paf25-007(32)_mkm



February 26, 2025

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Hawai'i State Legislature
Via Electronic Transmission

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of SB1559, Relating to Dune Restoration
Hearing: Friday, February 28, 2025 10:35 AM CR 211 & Videoconference

To: The Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the
Committee

Surfrider Foundation Hawai'i Region strongly supports Senate Bill 1559 which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program for dune restoration at Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park.

Surfrider Foundation is a grassroots organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our oceans, waves and beaches. Through our Climate Action Program we support initiatives that utilize nature to help fight climate change and protect our coastlines. Surfrider partners with Sea Grant Hawai'i and Maui Parks and Recreation Department on multiple dune restoration projects including Haycraft Beach Park and an emergency dune restoration project at Baldwin Beach Park.

Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park is an important gathering place and ocean recreation site for the Maui community and many Surfrider members. Hanaka'ō'ō is also an important pillar of the Hawaiian outrigger canoe community on Maui- home to the three west Maui canoe clubs, island wide regattas in the summer, and Hawaii Canoe Racing Association State Championship where thousands of paddlers gather from across the state.

In 2021, County of Maui Department of Parks and Recreation conducted a Beach Park Vulnerability and Adaptation Study with TetraTech, Inc. In that study Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park was highlighted as one of the parks with highest vulnerability, with the park infrastructure and viability in jeopardy and low potential to withstand impacts of sea level rise compared to other parks.

West Maui is at the forefront of climate-related impacts in Hawai'i. The proposed Hanakaō'ō Beach Park Dune Restoration is a proactive measure to address the serious challenges posed by sea level rise and coastal erosion. This initiative is aligned with Surfrider Foundation priorities, broader State and County adaptation strategies, the Maui Island Plan, and the West Maui Community Plan, highlighting the commitment to preserving not only the beach and physical infrastructure of the park but also the cultural, subsistence, and recreational values that it supports.

In summary, Surfrider Foundation Hawai'i Region strongly supports SB1559, as a prudent measure to protect an invaluable cultural and community site while also providing a model for statewide adaptation planning and proactive coastal management.

Sincerely,

Hanna Lilley
Hawai'i Regional Manager
Surfrider Foundation



Testimony of **Lahaina Strong**
Before the Senate Committee on
Ways and Means

In Consideration of Senate Bill No. 1559 SD1
RELATING TO DUNE RESTORATION

To Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and the honorable members of the committee,

We are writing on behalf of Lāhainā Strong, an organization deeply rooted in our community's resilience and advocacy. Originally formed in 2018 following the Hurricane Lane fire in Lahaina and revitalized after the devastating fires of August 8, 2023, Lāhainā Strong has become the largest grassroots, Lahaina-based community organization, with over 35,000 supporters. Our mission is to amplify local voices and champion community-driven solutions, which are more critical than ever as we continue rebuilding and recovering.

Lāhainā Strong, **strongly supports Senate Bill 1559 SD1**, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii Sea Grant College Program for dune restoration at Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park. This initiative is crucial for preserving one of the few remaining beaches in West Maui where local families can gather and recreate without the overwhelming pressures of tourism. Hanaka'ō'ō Beach (also known as Canoe Beach) holds deep cultural significance and serves as a vital space for outrigger canoe paddling, a traditional practice that connects our community to our heritage.

The focus on nature-based solutions for dune restoration is one we wholeheartedly endorse. This approach aligns with the values and practices of our ancestors, who relied on 'āina-based stewardship to maintain the balance between the land and the ocean. Dunes provide natural buffers against rising sea levels and high wave events, protecting our shorelines without the need for invasive and destructive methods like dredging, which we do not support under any circumstances.

Investing in dune restoration at Hanaka'ō'ō will offer several key benefits:

1. **Preserving Local Access and Cultural Integrity:**

Hanaka'ō'ō Beach is one of the last beaches where local families and canoe clubs can gather without being displaced by commercial tourism activity. Restoring and protecting the dunes will ensure this space remains accessible to the people of Lahaina for generations to come.

2. **Environmental Resilience:**

Healthy dune ecosystems naturally defend against the impacts of sea level rise, coastal erosion, and storm surges. By investing in restoration efforts, we reduce the need for costly and environmentally harmful artificial solutions in the future.

3. **Hub for Research and Community Engagement:**

We envision Hanaka'ō'ō Beach becoming a center for research and education on sustainable shoreline management. Collaborating with the University of Hawai'i's Sea Grant Program and local experts can provide valuable insights into effective, culturally grounded restoration practices that can serve as a model for other coastal communities in Hawai'i.

It is essential that we continue to prioritize 'āina-based solutions that work in harmony with the environment. The long-term protection of Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park will not only safeguard our natural resources but also strengthen our community's connection to the land and ocean. This is a critical opportunity to demonstrate how traditional Hawaiian practices can inform modern coastal management and resilience efforts.

Lahaina Strong fully supports the appropriation of funds for this initiative and urges you to **pass SB 1559 SD1**. Let us work together to protect and restore Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park for the benefit of our environment, our cultural practices, and our local people.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your commitment to our 'āina.

Sincerely,

Lāhainā Strong

Ways & Means Committee

WAMcommittee@capitol.hawaii.gov

RE: SB1559 SD1

Aloha Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments in response to the discussion held by the Senate Committee on Higher Education ("HRE").

The HRE Committee noted at the suggestion of the Department of Land and Natural Resources ("DLNR") that it may be more fiscally efficient to appropriate the funds directly to the County of Maui and have them seek advice from the University of Hawaii Sea Grant College Program ("UHSG"), as needed.

HRE also noted a question raised by UHSG that confirmation from the County of Maui Department of Parks and Recreation ("DPR") is needed to verify that dune restoration is an effort aligned with its priorities.

After consultation with UHSG and DPR the recommendation by DLNR to appropriate the funds directly to the County of Maui, Department of Parks and Recreation with UHSG consultation, is supported by all parties, and the DPR has confirmed that dune restoration and adaptation pathways planning does align with its department's priorities. Please see attached letters of support from both UHSG and DPR for reference.

We support and request funding the project for two fiscal years, as the bill is drafted, since the transfer of state-approved appropriations have at times taken up to 9 months to receive, presenting the challenge to complete a project within the remaining 3 months of a fiscal year before the funds lapse.

Please appropriate the original proposed amount of \$250,000.00 to the County of Maui Department of Parks and Recreation who will work with UH Sea Grant and Maui Nui Resiliency Hui to implement the project.

To that end, may we humbly request the following amendments to satisfy all objectives for this appropriation:

SECTION 1.:

"...The legislature further finds that, for effective dune restoration, the park needs further technical guidance and assistance **through adaptation pathways planning and** in using the tools of dune restoration to create productive dune habitat and to restore dunes and ecosystem services."

SECTION 2.:

"There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of **\$250,000.00** or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for dune restoration and **adaptation pathways planning** at Hanaka'o'o Beach Park."

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the ~~University of Hawaii~~ County of Maui for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3.:

“This Act shall take effect on ~~July 31, 2050~~ July 1, 2025.”

Mahalo,

Kai Nishiki and Sarah Freistat Pajimola, Executive Directors,

Maui Nui Resiliency Hui

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
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Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

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WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 7, 2024

Hawaii Climate Commission
Honolulu, Hawaii

To Whom It May Concern,

**SUBJECT: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED HANAKAO'O
BEACH PARK DUNE RESTORATION PROJECT**

As a resident of West Maui and a member of the Maui County Council, I am writing to lend my support to the proposed Hanakao'o Beach Park Dune Restoration Project.

Parks, and especially beach parks, are part of the county's critical infrastructure and serve as an important gathering place for our community. Now, more than ever, West Maui needs and cherishes spaces that allow us to gather together and find respite. Hanakao'o Beach Park, in particular, plays a special role in our community. It is home to all West Maui canoe clubs and one of the most popular beaches for our residents.

The proposed dune restoration project would protect this community asset from erosion while maintaining public access and a healthy beach ecosystem. The project represents more than a chance to minimize the impacts of climate change; it embodies a progressive approach to increasing the resilience of our infrastructure.

I am proud to stand behind this project and look forward to witnessing its positive impact on the people of Maui. Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (808) 270-5504 or tamara.paltin@mauicounty.us.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tamara A. M. Paltin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

TAMARA PALTIN
Councilmember

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director

PATRICK S. MCCALL
Director

SHANE T. DUDOIT
Deputy Director



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
COUNTY OF MAUI
700 HALI'A NAKOA STREET, UNIT 2
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov

March 8, 2024

Honolulu Climate Commission

To Whom It May Concern:

Since 2020, the County of Maui Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has been working on a plan to address climate change and specifically for sea-level rise at our beach parks. Our department prepared a Park Vulnerability and Adaptation Study in November 2021 with assistance from TetraTech, Inc.

The study described six adaptation strategies, which were elaborated upon in subsequent phases. The overall recommendations for Hanakao'o Beach Park now include restoring its natural shoreline and habitat, relocating the park outside of hazard areas, and revegetating with native plants, shrubs, and grass species.

The grant request, to restore the dune system at Hanakao'o Beach Park, is consistent with the policies and actions in our plan and as a result, we support the application. We look forward to working with the applicants, especially because it maintains public access and existing traditional uses.

Please feel free to contact me at Patrick.S.Mccall@co.maui.hi.us or (808) 270-7230 should you have any follow-up questions.

Sincerely,

PATRICK S. MCCALL
Director of Parks and Recreation

c: Shane T. Dudoit, Deputy Director
David Yamashita, Planner VI

PSM:DYM:lnm



University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program

2525 Correa Road • HIG 238 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822 • Phone: (808) 956-7031 • <http://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu>

School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology

March 7, 2023

Hawaii Climate Commission
Honolulu, Hawaii

To Whom It May Concern:

The University of Hawaii Sea Grant College Program (Hawaii Sea Grant) would like to express support for and commitment to the proposed project to restore dunes in Hanakao'o Beach Park.

Hawaii Sea Grant is one of 33 Sea Grant programs nationwide that comprise a functional network within our nation's universities and colleges. Hawaii Sea Grant's goal is to promote enhanced understanding, conservation and wise use of marine and coastal resources for sustainable coastal economies. We have a twenty-four year long partnership with the County of Maui to provide on-site specialized expertise and technical assistance to support planning, decision making, and outreach related to coastal and climate resilience activities.

In my role as Extension Faculty with Hawaii Sea Grant, and more specifically as the Coastal Dune Restoration Specialist, I and my co-workers assist a variety of stakeholders by providing technical assistance and guidance. We regularly work with coastal property managers interested in using the tools of dune restoration to create productive dune habitat, and restore dunes and the ecosystem services they provide. We work regularly in beach parks throughout the county, and Hanakao'o is an excellent place to conduct dune restoration as it will provide resilience and infrastructure protection from high wave events, as well as moderate and provide a natural buffer against the effects of sea level rise.

Sea Grant will be providing technical guidance, assistance with restoration native plant choices and dune layout and design. We will work closely alongside project managers to ensure a successful restoration project that meets the needs and desires of the local community which includes park users, canoe clubs, lineal descendants of the area and long-time residents.

Please consider this proposal with our enthusiastic support! If it would be helpful to your deliberations, please feel free to reach out with questions to wcrile@hawaii.edu or (808) 357-3689.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wesley Crile".

Wesley Crile; Extension Faculty, Coastal Dune Restoration Specialist
University of Hawaii Sea Grant College Program
County of Maui Planning Department

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program supports an innovative program of research, education, and extension services directed to the improved understanding and stewardship of coastal and marine resources of the state, region, and nation.

Science serving Hawai'i and the Pacific since 1968.

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 6:45:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Lomeli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support of Senate Bill 1559 SD1**, which funds dune restoration at Hanaka‘ō‘ō Beach Park. This work is important to protect our coastline from sea level rise and high waves while keeping the park a safe and welcoming place for our community.

Hanaka‘ō‘ō is more than just a beach—it’s where we gather, practice our culture, and paddle. It is home to all West Maui canoe clubs and an essential space for our families. Now more than ever, we need to take care of our parks and shorelines so they remain for future generations.

Dune restoration is a natural, low-impact way to protect our beach while keeping it open for cultural and recreational use. This funding will help ensure the work is done right.

We urge your **support for SB1559 SD1** to protect our community’s connection to this special place.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to Lahaina’s recovery.

Kathy Lomeli

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 6:45:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Gourley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support of Senate Bill 1559 SD1**, which funds dune restoration at Hanaka‘ō‘ō Beach Park. This work is important to protect our coastline from sea level rise and high waves while keeping the park a safe and welcoming place for our community.

Hanaka‘ō‘ō is more than just a beach—it’s where we gather, practice our culture, and paddle. It is home to all West Maui canoe clubs and an essential space for our families. Now more than ever, we need to take care of our parks and shorelines so they remain for future generations.

Dune restoration is a natural, low-impact way to protect our beach while keeping it open for cultural and recreational use. This funding will help ensure the work is done right.

We urge your **support for SB1559 SD1** to protect our community’s connection to this special place.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to Lahaina’s recovery.
Thomas Gourley

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 10:02:53 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Annalise Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB1559. Hanako'o beach is a treasured pathway between the ocean and residents of the westside of Maui. As a paddler, I can personally appreciate what canoe beach has done for me. I know that I am one of hundreds who feel this way. That small patch of shoreline is an integral part of our Lahaina. A place where we as a community can gather and care for one another. It's a place where we go to paddle, to celebrate birthdays or to grieve loved ones. Everything under the sun. Our climate is only continuing to change and we need to do everything we can in our power to protect places like this. I hope to see this bill passed and many others like it for the sustainable future of our Hawai'i.

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 10:33:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Keala Fung, I am from Honolulu with family and loved ones in and from Lahaina. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 1559 SD1, which funds dune restoration at Hanaka'o'o Beach Park. This work is important to protect our coastline from sea level rise and high waves while keeping the park a safe and welcoming place for our community.

Hanaka'o'o is more than just a beach--it's where we gather, practice our culture, and paddle. It is home to all West Maui canoe clubs and an essential space for our families. Now more than ever, we need to take care of our parks and shorelines so they remain for future generations.

Dune restoration is a natural, low-impact way to protect our beach while keeping it open for cultural and recreational use. This funding will help ensure the work is done right.

We urge your support for SB1559 SD1 to protect our community's connection to this special place.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to Lahaina's recovery.

Keala Fung

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:10:30 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lana Albright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, everyone

I am writing in full support of Senate Bill 1559 SD1 which funds dune restoration at Hanakaõo Beach Park.

This is so important for our community as it is a gathering place for our community. It is a place that provides us with connection, communication and unity, not just with the ocean but within ourselves and neighbors.

This is needed to protect our coastline from sea level rising/high waves while keeping it a safe place for the community.

This is low impact/ natural way of protecting this coastline that means so much to all of us!
Please support this with us.

Mahalo for your time,

Lana Albright

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 7:00:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen J Comcowich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

Please support SB1559 SD1 to fund dune restoration at Honaka'ō'ō Beach Park, aka Canoe Beach.

This is an important project for community resilience and higher education on Maui. From my experience with similar projects this will fund scientists who live and work in the Maui community to work with and educate community members about dune restoration and the importance of native plants. Kids get on the ground experience that can inspire future careers.

As the West Maui Coastline has become lined with hotels this stretch of beach between Lahaina and Kā'anapali has become an even more important community gathering area. It is where we have 1st birthday parties and funerals, where any day residents can go and find friends hanging out. This beach hosts all the Canoe Hales for West Maui, offering both comraderie and competition.

Please support and fund this opportunity to come together to restore and protect this important asset for West Maui.

Mahalo for you time and support for SB1559,

Karen J. Comcowich

Lahaina, HI

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:00:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Acosta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support of Senate Bill 1559 SD1**, which funds dune restoration at Hanaka‘ō‘ō Beach Park. This work is important to protect our coastline from sea level rise and high waves while keeping the park a safe and welcoming place for our community.

Hanaka‘ō‘ō is more than just a beach—it’s where we gather, practice our culture, and paddle. It is home to all West Maui canoe clubs and an essential space for our families. Now more than ever, we need to take care of our parks and shorelines so they remain for future generations.

Dune restoration is a natural, low-impact way to protect our beach while keeping it open for cultural and recreational use. This funding will help ensure the work is done right.

We urge your **support for SB1559 SD1** to protect our community’s connection to this special place.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to Lahaina’s recovery.

Joseph Acosta

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:17:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda Schaefer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support of Senate Bill 1559 SD1**, which funds dune restoration at Hanaka‘ō‘ō Beach Park. This work is important to protect our coastline from sea level rise and high waves while keeping the park a safe and welcoming place for our community.

Hanaka‘ō‘ō is more than just a beach—it’s where people gather, practice their culture, and paddle. It is home to all West Maui canoe clubs and an essential space for our families. Now more than ever, we need to take care of our parks and shorelines so they remain for future generations.

Dune restoration is a natural, low-impact way to protect our beach while keeping it open for cultural and recreational use. This funding will help ensure the work is done right.

We urge your **support for SB1559 SD1** to protect our community’s connection to this special place.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to Lahaina’s recovery.

Amanda Schaefer

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:48:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heidi Sherman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support of Senate Bill 1559 SD1**, which funds dune restoration at Hanakao Beach Park. Dune restoration can help restore native habitat.

It is my understanding that this project does not involve trucking in sand from other sources. I am not aware of environmental or cultural concerns.

I have been doing topo beach surveys at Kaanapali Beach and Hanakao since 2015 to understand beach change. I think that the historical removal and flattening of dunes along Kaanapali Beach and the replacement of the dunes with lawn and landscaping is one of several factors leading to ongoing erosion into the lawn and landscaping along the shoreline.

I recently started a website that includes photos and graphs:

KaanapaliBeachStudy.org

There is also community discussion on Kaanapali Beach Study Facebook Group.

Mahalo for your time,

Heidi Sherman

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 9:12:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Cravalho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support of Senate Bill 1559 SD1**, which funds dune restoration at Hanaka‘ō‘ō Beach Park. This work is important to protect our coastline from sea level rise and high waves while keeping the park a safe and welcoming place for our community.

Hanaka‘ō‘ō is more than just a beach—it’s where we gather, practice our culture, and paddle. It is home to all West Maui canoe clubs and an essential space for our families. Now more than ever, we need to take care of our parks and shorelines so they remain for future generations.

Dune restoration is a natural, low-impact way to protect our beach while keeping it open for cultural and recreational use. This funding will help ensure the work is done right.

We urge your **support for SB1559 SD1** to protect our community’s connection to this special place.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to Lahaina’s recovery.

Sarah Cravalho

LATE

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 3:29:48 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bianca Isaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB1559 and dune restoration at Hanaka‘ō‘ō Beach Park, Lahaina.

Bianca Isaki

LATE

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 9:25:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brendan Joanou	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairman Dela Cruz, Vice Chairwoman Moriwaki, And Committee Members,

RE. Testimony in Support of SB 1559

My name is Brendan Joanou and I am a graduate student at the UH Manoa Thompson School of Social Work. The views I express here are my own and do not necessarily reflect the stance of the larger School and University. I am testifying in support of SB 1559 which will allow for funds to be allocated to University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program for dune restoration at Hanakao'o Beach Park.

Caring for the aina has always been a core value for the people of Hawai'i. For many years we have seen the health of this ecosystem be threatened and harmed by pollution, over development, and climate change. It is important for us to take as many steps as possible to mitigate these damages, and allow the land a chance to recover. Providing funds for the Sea Grant College Program can be one of these measures that will help to strengthen the health of the Hanakao'o coast, and to promote stewardship of the land in the local community

For these reasons I am testifying in support of SB 1559, as it is an important step in preserving the aina.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Brendan Joanou,

Social Work Student

LATE

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 9:25:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Roberts	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this effort to protect our coastline from sea level rise and keeping the park a safe place for the community.

LATE

SB-1559-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 9:42:56 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2025 10:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jen Mather	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jen Mather, and I submit this testimony in strong support of SB1559 SD1. My ‘āina kūpuna is Lahaina although I no longer reside there.

Hanaka‘ō‘ō Beach Park, or Canoe Beach, is more than just a recreational site—it is the heart of Maui Komohana's paddling community and a gathering place deeply rooted in our island's cultural traditions. For generations, it has been home to canoe clubs that perpetuate the practice of heihei wa‘a (canoe racing) and serve as a piko (center) for keiki, kūpuna, and all who come to learn and connect with the ocean. These waters were once part of large ‘ōpelu fishing grounds that Lāhainā and Kā‘anapali were reknowned for, lost forever because of changes that came too fast and we were not allowed to affect. But hopefully this time we can save one of the recreational uses of this area through place based, culturally appropriate land management.

As someone who has been connected to this beach, I have personally witnessed the impacts of coastal erosion and sea level rise on this treasured space. The encroaching tides have not only diminished the sandy stretches where canoes launch but have also threatened the stability of the shoreline and the safety of our community gathering spaces. Without intervention, we risk losing an irreplaceable part of Maui Komohana's identity.

SB1559 SD1 represents a critical step toward resilience. By funding dune restoration at Hanaka‘ō‘ō Beach Park in partnership with the University of Hawai‘i Sea Grant College Program, this measure embraces a nature-based approach that balances ecological health with the cultural and recreational needs of our community. Restored dunes will provide essential coastal protection, mitigating the effects of climate change while preserving access for future generations of paddlers, families, and cultural practitioners.

I urge the Legislature to pass this bill and ensure that the spirit of Hanaka‘ō‘ō endures. Those of us who cherish this coastline depend on proactive stewardship. We have a kuleana to act now before further damage erodes not only the sand but the very traditions that bind us to this ‘āina.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,
Jen Mather

