

**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

**Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
WATER AND LAND**

**Thursday, April 10, 2025  
9:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 411**

**In consideration of  
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 119, SENATE DRAFT 1  
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO  
CONVENE A KAILUA BAY ADVISORY WORKING GROUP.**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 119, Senate Draft 1 requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to convene a Kailua Bay Advisory Working Group. **The Department offers the following comments.**

Operation of Kailua-Kona Pier is currently under the Department's Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR). The facility includes a cruise ship port, an offshore mooring area, a boat launch ramp, vessel loading/unloading areas, a vessel washdown, and a comfort station. The number of daily users at Kailua-Kona Pier is typically around 150-250, and this number increases when cruise ship tenders utilize the area as a secure loading and unloading zone. When cruise ship loading/unloading occurs, cruise ship operators hire private security guards.

The Department notes that DOBOR currently collaborates with many Kailua-Kona Pier users for management strategies, including area hotels and businesses. The Department recognized that people have concerns about public safety across the State due to unlawful activities taking place in DOBOR facilities after-hours and subsequently implemented emergency rules in late 2024 to designate hours of operation for small boat harbors and boating facilities. Under these emergency rules, DOBOR was able to establish closure hours for Kailua-Kona Pier from 10:30pm to 4:30am. DOBOR is currently working on implementing a permanent version of the rules authorizing DOBOR facility hours of operation, which would provide an effective enforcement tool and help to deter criminal activity.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**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  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS



TESTIMONY OF  
**CAROLINE ANDERSON**  
Interim President & CEO  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND**

Thursday, April 10, 2025  
9:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Room 411

In consideration of  
**SCR 119 SD1**  
**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO CONVENE A KAILUA BAY  
ADVISORY WORKING GROUP**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is pleased to comment on SCR 119 SD1, which requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to convene a Kailua Bay advisory working group.

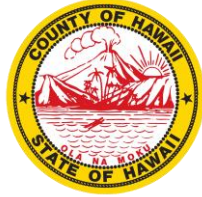
The 2021 Hawai'i Island Destination Management Plan, created by HTA, identifies specific hotspots—popular areas or sites that attract visitors but may also lead to overcrowding, congestion, resource degradation, safety hazards, and negative experiences for both residents and visitors. Kailua Pier is highlighted as one of these hotspots, facing issues related to homelessness, parking, and traffic.

Effective management is essential, and the multiple jurisdictional oversight highlights the importance of a collaborative approach to efficiently address these challenges. By adopting an inter-jurisdictional approach, we can enhance communication, foster coordinated oversight, and improve conditions at Kailua Pier for everyone involved.

HTA welcomes the opportunity to participate in the Kailua Bay advisory working group and help develop positive, sustainable solutions for this important cultural, historical, recreational, and commercial asset of Hawai'i Island.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our comments.

REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



PHONE: (808) 323-4267  
FAX: (808) 323-4786  
EMAIL: [Rebecca.villegas@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:Rebecca.villegas@hawaiicounty.gov)

## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

*West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A  
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740*

TESIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS COUNCIL MEMBER

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

ON SCR 119 SD1 RELATING TO DLNR; DOBOR; Kailua Pier

House Committee on Water and Land

April 8, 2025

Chair Hashem and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong **support** for SCR119 SD1 on the proposed measures to address the ongoing challenges at Kailua-Kona Wharf, also known as Kailua Pier. This iconic location is not only a vital part of West Hawaii's cultural and historical heritage but also serves as a key economic drive for the region.

Kailua Pier is a significant gateway for visitors arriving by cruise ship, bringing thousands of tourists to our shores annually. The Pier is central to West Hawaii's economy, supporting local businesses, fostering community engagement, and providing a hub for ocean-based recreation. It holds deep cultural importance, connecting residents and visitors to the traditions and practices that define our community.

However, despite its importance, the Pier faces ongoing challenges that must be addressed. Issues related to homelessness, safety, and sanitation have become persistent concerns, impacting both public access and the overall visitor experience. Vandalism and facility damage further exacerbate these problems, leading to rising maintenance costs and disrupting services. These challenges not only strain State and County resources but also affect the livelihoods of local businesses dependent on a clean and welcoming environment.

The management of Kailua Pier spans multiple agencies, complicating efforts to address these challenges effectively. I support the creation of a Kailua Bay Advisory Working Group to ensure coordinated oversight and sustainable management of the Pier, thus helping to preserve its cultural significance and improving public safety and accessibility.

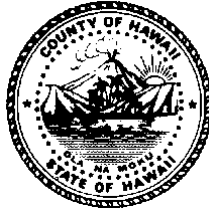
Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you have any questions, please contact me at, (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Villegas', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rebecca Villegas  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

**C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.**  
*Mayor*



**William V. Brillhante, Jr.**  
*Managing Director*

**Merrick Nishimoto**  
*Deputy Managing Director*

## *County of Hawai'i ~ Office of the Mayor*

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KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
Phone (808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

TO: Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
Rep. Rachelle F. Lamosao, Vice Chair  
COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

FROM: C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D., Mayor

DATE: April 9, 2025

SUBJECT: **IN SUPPORT OF SCR 119, SD1, REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO CONVENE A KAILUA BAY ADVISORY WORKING GROUP**

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer my **strong support** for Senate Concurrent Resolution No. SCR119, SD1, which requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources to convene a Kailua Bay Advisory Working Group.

Kailua Pier and the surrounding area of Kailua Bay are central to the identity and wellbeing of the West Hawaii community. As a site of deep cultural and historical significance-home to Ahuena Heiau and once the royal residence of King Kamehameha I, the bay is not only a sacred place, but also a dynamic community hub. It serves vital roles in recreation, commerce, cultural practice, and tourism, supporting livelihoods and heritage.

The Kailua Bay Advisory Working Group will play a crucial role in ensuring that the voices of the local community, Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioners, business owners, and visitors are heard and respected in decision-making. The groups work will help preserve and sustain Kailua Pier for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**SCR-119-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/8/2025 4:36:15 PM

Testimony for WAL on 4/10/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ross Wilson Jr.	Kailua Village Business Improvement District	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Kailua Pier is the piko of Historic Kailua Village. It has historical and cultural significance to our community and all of Hawaii.

The pier welcomes cruise ship visitors weekly throughout the year and iconic events including the Queen's Race and IRONMAN World Championship headquarter there.

Getting all of the various stakeholders together in a structured forum to discuss and solve issues is the pono way.

Mahalo,

Ross Wilson Jr.

Executive Director

Kailua Village Business Improvement District



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April 8, 2025

RE: SCR 119 SD1: Requesting the Department of Land and Natural Resources to Convene a Kailua Bay Advisory Working Group.

Dear Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the House Committee on Water & Land,

Founded in 1968, the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce works to enhance the quality of life for our community through a strong, sustainable economy on Hawai'i Island. With 460 member businesses and organizations, our mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

The Kona-Kohala Chamber **strongly supports** SCR 119 SD1: Requesting the Department of Land and Natural Resources to Convene a Kailua Bay Advisory Working Group.

Kailua Pier is a vital economic engine for West Hawai'i. It supports ocean-based tourism, serves as a port of entry for cruise ships, and anchors major events such as the IRONMAN World Championship—bringing substantial revenue to local businesses and supporting jobs across the hospitality, retail, and visitor industries.

Beyond its economic importance, Kailua Bay is a cherished gathering place that enriches the quality of life in West Hawai'i. It's where people come together to celebrate traditions, connect with the ocean, and reflect on the area's rich history. Generations have learned to swim, paddle, and dive along its shore. For many in our community, including my family, Kailua Bay holds lasting memories and a deep personal connection.

Yet, this well-loved space faces growing challenges, from aging infrastructure and safety concerns to overlapping jurisdictional responsibilities that limit effective management.

We commend the Legislature for advancing this timely and practical resolution. Establishing a coordinated advisory working group will improve stakeholder communication, strengthen decision-making, and help ensure that Kailua Pier is maintained and managed to reflect its intrinsic community value and long-term importance.

Please vote in favor of SCR 119 SD1: Requesting the Department of Land and Natural Resources to Convene a Kailua Bay Advisory Working Group.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Wendy J. Laros'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Wendy' being more prominent.

Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO  
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce

**SCR-76-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/10/2025 3:14:23 AM

Testimony for WAL on 4/10/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tracy Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SCR 76 because it is working to achieve a long term solution in the Kahana Bay region to the shoreline erosion. While the Kahana Bay properties have invested significant time and expense working on viable solutions, they need the help of government agencies to make them or alternative solutions a reality.

Thank you

Tracy Wong



**SCR-119-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/8/2025 12:19:07 PM

Testimony for WAL on 4/10/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Atwood	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Mike Atwood. I have been a member of Kai`Opuu Canoe

Club in Kona since 1973. I have been involved in most of the club activities in and around Kailua pier and bay, and in the Kona community since then. I have been the race director for the Queen Lili`uokalani Outrigger Canoe festival for 23 years and also Race Director for the Kamehameha Day Outrigger Canoe regatta for the same period. Through these Hawaiian cultural and traditional events we see the Hawaii island community involvement as well as visitors to Hawaii being able to see and be a part of the Hawaiian experience. Since 2016, I have been communicating, via email, the Hawaiian Outrigger canoe activities to the DLNR, HFD, commercial users, and recreational groups sharing Kailua pier and bay. The emails keep everyone aware of club practices and races, and also high school paddling schedules utilizing the pier and bay. I support a DLNR Working Advisory Group and would like to be a part of it.

Mahalo

Mike Atwood