



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

**Date:** 03/28/2025

**Time:** 09:00 AM

**Location:** 325 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**Committee:** House Public Safety

**Department:** Education

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

**Resolution Title:** HCR 0164 URGING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU, COUNTY OF MAUI, COUNTY OF HAWAII, AND COUNTY OF KAUAI TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF HURRICANE REFUGES AND SHELTERS ELECTRONICALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC.

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) would like to provide comments on HCR 164.

The Department supports the State and Counties with emergency operations via Emergency Support Function ESF-6, Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services.

To prepared for any disaster, the Department agrees that having a comprehensive list of hurricane refuges and shelters would benefit emergency operations.

However, the comprehensive list of hurricane refuges and shelters should not be electronically accessible to the public as it may cause confusion. The emergency event will determine the shelter needs and openings. During emergency operations, the various counties' emergency management agencies and/or civil defense along with the shelter working group will determine which shelters will be opened during that specific emergency event. A specific emergency event may not require all shelters to be opened. Having the comprehensive list available, accessible, and open to the public could cause confusion during emergency response operations.

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



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543  
March 28, 2025

The Honorable Representative Dela Au Belatti  
House Committee on Public Safer  
The Thirty-Second Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Belatti and Committee Members:

**SUBJECT: HR159/HCR164 URGING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU, COUNTY OF MAUI, COUNTY OF HAWAII, AND COUNTY OF KAUAI TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF HURRICANE REFUGES AND SHELTERS ELECTRONICALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC.**

The Hawai'i State Council on Developmental Disabilities respectfully submits **in support of HR159/HRC164**, urging the city and county of Honolulu, the county of Maui, the county of Hawaii, and the county of Kauai to create and maintain a comprehensive list of hurricane refuges and shelters electronically accessible to the public.

Access to accurate, timely, and inclusive emergency preparedness information is essential for the safety and well-being of individuals with developmental disabilities. HCR164 urges Hawai'i's counties to create and maintain a comprehensive, electronically accessible list of hurricane refuges and shelters that includes crucial details such as capacity limits, hurricane category ratings, pet policies, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

While the Council supports this measure, **we respectfully request replacing "Special Needs" on page 1, line 20, and page 2, line 26 with "Access and Functional Needs"**

The term "Access and Functional Needs" is the appropriate language when referring to adults with disabilities, particularly in emergency planning and service delivery. The phrase "Special Needs" is outdated and often associated with early intervention for children—using it for adults can be dismissive and fails to recognize their rights and individualized support. There is nothing "special" about a person needing access to communication, mobility, or medical care—it's about ensuring equitable access and functional support for full participation in community life.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HR159/HCR164**.

Sincerely,  
Daintry Bartoldus  
Executive Administrator



**House Committee on Public Safety**

**Testimony on HCR164 / HR159**

**Relating to Public Access to Hurricane Refuges and Shelters**

**March 28th, 2025**

**9:00 AM**

**Room 325**

The Climate Change and Health Working Group (CCHWG) is a cross-sector collaborative interested in strengthening climate and health resiliency in Hawai'i. CCHWG supports this resolution urging Hawai'i's counties to improve public access to life-saving information through a comprehensive, electronic list of hurricane shelters and refuges.

**Testimony of the Hawai'i Climate Change and Health Working Group**

**In Support of HCR164 / HR159**

**Relating to Public Access to Hurricane Refuges and Shelters**

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the House Committee on Public Safety:

The Climate Change and Health Working Group supports HCR 164 / HR 159 and its intent to ensure that residents of Hawai'i have timely access to accurate and comprehensive information on hurricane shelters and refuges across the state.

As a collaborative dedicated to protecting public health in the face of climate change, we recognize the urgent need to improve disaster readiness. Increasingly severe and frequent storms present a growing threat to Hawai'i's communities, especially those already experiencing health and housing vulnerabilities.

Currently, no county offers a centralized, easily accessible online platform detailing critical information such as shelter locations, structural capacity, pet policies, and accessibility features for those with special needs. This lack of transparency undermines public preparedness and poses serious risks to health and safety during extreme weather events.

A centralized, electronically accessible list will empower individuals and families to make informed decisions before and during emergencies. It will also support health equity by ensuring that all residents—regardless of ability, age, or income—can locate suitable shelter options.

Furthermore, coordination with the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to create a statewide list will enhance interagency communication and consistency, while amplifying community trust and preparedness.

For these reasons, the Climate Change and Health Working Group urges the Legislature to adopt this resolution as a critical step toward public safety and climate resilience.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure. The climate crisis is a health crisis.

Sincerely,

The Climate Change & Health Working Group

**HCR-164**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:44:42 AM

Testimony for PBS on 3/28/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cindy R Ajimine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly **SUPPORT** this bill for the **SAFETY** of all our people & preparedness for not just hurricane but other applicable disasters. A no-brainer that should've already been done & education be given & info made accessible online & in emergency communications. Mahalo!!!

**HCR-164**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:39:12 AM

Testimony for PBS on 3/28/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

**HCR-164**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 1:39:10 PM

Testimony for PBS on 3/28/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Louella Vidinha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in full support of this bill for much needed shelters quickly in time of disaster.

Louella Vidinha