

TESTIMONY OF
LARRY S VERAY

COMMITTEE'S ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SCR30

REQUESTING THE COMMANDER OF JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM TO ALLOW THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU TO USE THE RESTRICTED VACANT LAND ON THE PEARL CITY PENINSULA FOR YOUTH BALL PROGRAMS

April 10, 2025

Aloha, Chair Ilagan and Vice Chair Hussey and committee members. I am Larry Veray, Chairman for the Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21. I am submitting this testimony representing our board as a whole. In our 2025 legislative priorities stating a requirement to locate vacant land opportunities to support building additional youth ball field because of the high demand to support these youth programs. Our Neighborhood Board has had repeated requests from youth ball coaches that there is a great need from more available ball fields in the Pearl City area. **I am in STRONG SUPPORT OF SCR30.**

Advantages if the U.S. Navy authorized use of their vacant land on the Pearl City Peninsula:

- Every year, youth ball teams line up at the city parks and recreation to apply for a permit for their respective teams to use city park ball fields for their team practices and events but regrettably there is more demand for these ball fields than what is available from the city, and
- These youth ball teams are comprised of both public and military family volunteer coaches and young children who want to play soccer, baseball and flag football but because there are not enough ball fields available, some teams are not able to use our city parks because of over demand
- Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Pearl City Peninsula has about a 12-acre land space that has been vacant for the past three decades because the area has been restricted from use due to the previous Tank Farm Fire on Tank #1 that occurred in October 1985, and
- U.S. Navy Federal Fire Department used Polyfluoroalkyl Substance (PFAS) fire retardant to put out the fire and later the Navy made the decision to close down the tank farm and remove all the tanks clearing the land where it has been vacant as a fenced in restricted area these past years, and
- The Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21 has attended previous Pearl Harbor Restoration and Advisory Board meetings addressing our needs for youth ball fields and had asked if this land could be used for youth ball fields and it is our understanding the PFAS was isolated to the area where Tank #1 was located and the much larger area was not contaminated with PFAS fire retardant, and

The Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21 believes that this larger area of vacant land could be used to support a minimum of three ball fields built over non-contaminated area and a parking lot could be built over the existing land that was contaminated with PFAS, and

Please approve SCR30. Mahalo!

Larry S. Veray