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LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the House Committees on
FINANCE**

**Tuesday, February 28, 2023
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1183, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO STATE PARKS**

House Bill 1183, House Draft 1 proposes to exempt parking lot operations at state parks and operation of concessions at certain state parks from the bidding requirements for concessions operating on public property. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this measure.**

Cooperative agreements for stewardship and management with private partners, including non-profit organizations, have proven to be an effective management tool to increase quality of experience and resource protection in our state parks. While a number of non-profit partners have long-term leases to provide experiences and value-added services within parks, none of them have yet included assistance with visitor management or parking lot operations, which are defined in Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Section 102-2 as a concession, and therefore subject to a competitive bid process. As the State Park System has expanded its parking and entry fee collection to ten parks, with potential for more, a natural outcome is to integrate co-management with affected communities and non-profit partners. This idea was piloted in 2020 at the Hā'ena State Park integrated parking and shuttle reservation system, in the wake of a paradigm-shifting master planning process. However, due to the lack of an existing exemption in HRS Section 102-2, State Parks cannot negotiate a long-term lease or management agreement to our non-profit partner at Hā'ena, Hui Maka'āinana O Makana. They presently manage this critical, highly successful visitor management system via a month-to-month revocable permit.

Particularly notable is the proposed amendment adding a new SECTION 2(b)(11) which exempts bidding requirements for concessions within state parks which are "environmentally, culturally, historically, or operationally unique and are supported by nonprofit corporations". This is a very specific exemption, and warranted given the important natural and cultural resources requiring specialized care and management

within the Hawai'i State Park system. Hā'ena certainly fits within this definition, and great potential exists for other culturally and environmentally unique parks to benefit from this model, such as Kealakekua Bay and Kīholo (Hawai'i) and Ka'ena Point (O'ahu).

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this measure.

HB-1183-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2023 10:32:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose if it can lead at any point in the future to favoritism or nepotism.

Perhaps a study is needed as to why any existing operators can't submit competitive bids.