

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
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 Senate Committees on
HIGHER EDUCATION
and
WATER AND LAND**

**Wednesday, February 12, 2025
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1146
RELATING TO THE ALA WAI CANAL**

Senate Bill 1146 proposes to appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i for the development of an action plan and pre-engineering concept plan to help with debris management and water quality control in the Ala Wai watershed. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

Currently, during storms and heavy weather, debris—consisting of both vegetation and non-natural items—enters the Ala Wai Canal, Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor, and ultimately the ocean from the upstream reaches of the Pālolo, Makiki, and Mānoa Streams. This debris creates potential navigational hazards for boaters and recreational users of the canal, harbor, and ocean waters. The Department notes that much of this debris originates outside of its jurisdiction (the Ala Wai Canal and Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor), yet the Department is regularly responsible for clearing the debris with its own funds, and sometimes with its own staff.

The Department's Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR) has installed a permanent debris trap spanning a portion of the area where the Ala Wai Canal meets the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor. This debris trap catches about 30% of the debris that comes through the waterway during storms and heavy weather, which must then be cleared by heavy machinery. DOBOR pays its contractor about \$20,000 each time this debris trap needs to be cleared.

In the recent heavy rains in January 2025 alone, DOBOR expended a total of \$115,128.93 for debris trap cleanup, a significant and avoidable amount that could be put towards better uses

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

such as harbor improvements. The Department appreciates the cooperation and assistance from the Hawai'i Department of Transportation and City & County of Honolulu in this most recent weather event, but these last-minute cleanups, while still preventative in nature, are only a temporary solution to the longstanding problem because they do not address the issue at its source. A long-term, proactive solution is needed to ensure that an adequate plan is in place to minimize the impact of weather events on debris levels across the entire Ala Wai watershed.

Therefore, the Department is supportive of any assistance it can receive regarding this issue and looks forward to working with the University of Hawai'i College of Engineering in developing near-term and long-term solutions to the chronic and recurring issues of debris management and water quality in the Ala Wai watershed.

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



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Water and Land
Wednesday, February 12, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

By

Brennon T. Morioka, Dean
College of Engineering

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 1146 – RELATING TO THE ALA WAI CANAL

Chairs Kim and Inouye, Vice Chairs Kidani and Elefante, and Members of the Committees:

It is a pleasure to provide testimony in **support** of SB 1146 which is intended to engage the University of Hawai'i to assist the state in the development of an action plan and pre-engineering concepts to help address the debris accumulation and management as well as water quality issues in the Ala Wai Canal and the overall watershed.

The University of Hawai'i, through the College of Engineering, SOEST, and the UH Community Design Center, has been asked by the state to work with the State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the Department of Transportation (HDOT) to develop solutions for both near-term and long-term management of debris within the watershed that ends up in the canal and Ala Wai Boat Harbor areas following intense rain and weather events as witnessed recently over the last few months. This watershed is a critical component of an important ecosystem and natural resource both in terms of access and recreation for local residents but also an incredible asset for Hawaii's economy.

Through the use of student projects and faculty and industry mentoring, we believe this kind of collaboration between government, academia and industry professionals can serve as a sustainable and productive model for solution-oriented initiatives that can be utilized for a variety of problems facing our state.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our testimony in support and respectfully ask for your favorable consideration, provided its adoption does not impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Representative Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Representative Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water & Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
1:00 PM, Senate Conference Room 229
Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha, Chair Kim and Members of the Senate Committee on Water & Land,
My name is Bron Marino and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying **in support** of S.B. No.1146.

I am testifying specifically for the debris management aspect of the bill. Progressively, the Ala Wai watershed has been polluted with various debris, which has created concerns for the marine ecosystem and income earners at the Ala Wai Boat Harbor. NOAA Fisheries reported that coastal development, harmful runoff, and overfishing have depleted over 75% of small fisheries in the state. More damage will be inflicted on local businesses at the Ala Wai, especially fishing, as more debris runoff will increase the likelihood of biomagnification within nearby marine ecosystems. This will not only affect our economy, but further endanger our native marine species and the risk of hazardous consumption, which can be detrimental to our health. Allocating just over \$100,000 for the next year may seem inconvenient; however, the positive legacy it will leave on our society, economy, and environment will be far greater than the cost.

I truly hope that you take this into consideration and pass S.B. No. 1146 because it will allow our future engineers to tackle an imperative issue. Additionally, it will encourage our next generation to lead the state towards a more sustainable and prosperous future. Thank you again for this opportunity.

Regards,

Bron Marino
Mililani High School

Senator Donna Mercado Kim Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
1:00 Pm Conference Room 229
Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B. No.1146

Dear Committee and Members,

Historically Speaking, one of the hallmarks of the Hawaiian Islands have been their freshwater sources and world renowned clean water. It is one of the many things that I personally appreciate about our home and what I would like to share with the world. As you may also know, the Ala Wai Canal is just one of these freshwater sources and one of the largest as well. But as a result of human activity, pollution and poor management, the once beautiful water source has been severely damaged. To a point where it is near impossible to use and benefit from. Now this bill, currently under review, would serve as the first steps forward to resolve and bring attention to this pressing issue. By providing funding for the University of Hawaii's students, we will have the best and brightest combating and attacking this issue. We need to preserve the Ala Wai, for the present and future generations. To ensure Hawaii and its islands can be a paradise for all, for years to come.

Very Respectfully,

Alexander Carleton Cramer
alexandercramer99@gmail.com

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:49:23 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

As a resident along the Ala Wai Canal, I consistently see how dirty and cluttered it is on a regular basis. It gets even worse during storms. I'm grateful for the first step towards a durable solution for a clean and safe Ala Wai Canal.

However, I worry that this study will not properly integrate with the Ala Wai Flood Control Project. I urge this Committee to nonetheless SUPPORT this bill and ensure it is part of a larger, integrated effort with all stakeholders to have a healthy and safe Ala Wai Canal.

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 6:15:54 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Jorgensen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT this bill; please pass it. The trash that is washed into the streams not only hurts the stream water quality, but pollutes the Ala Wai and eventually the ocean.

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 6:20:21 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Boisvert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully SUPPORT this bill because it will help to design the best way to reduce the amount of trash that ends up floating down to the Ala Wai Canal.

The trash makes the canal look disgusting, and is not what Waikiki visitors and residents should be forced to see. It also is disgusting to see when it ends up in the harbor and pollutes the ocean.

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 3:55:54 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Katz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Kim

Senator Kidani

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Senator Inouye

Senator Elefante

Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00pm, Senate Conference Room 224

Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B N.o.1146

Aloha, Chairs and members of the Senate Committees on Higher Education and on Water and Land,

My name is Elizabeth Katz, and I am a senior at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of the passing of S.B. N.o.1146.

I am testifying in favor of providing funding to the University of Hawaii at Manoa to continue their efforts to clean floating debris from the Ala Wai Canal in Honolulu. I believe it is necessary to implement this bill because the Ala Wai is such an integral part of our Oahu ecosystem and community, and it has been terribly polluted and neglected in past years. It saddens me deeply that the waterway that was once used for water and community recreation is now too unsafe to swim and fish in. The Bishop Museum's archive contains videos of people splashing and frolicking in the canal, dating back to around 1920, before the massive construction began to extend the canal to drain the moisture from the wetlands. While I do believe the construction of the canal led to major issues for the environment, what's past is past and it is now our responsibility to try to revert the damages as best as possible. Each small step, such as this bill, will lead us closer and closer to restoring the Ala Wai canal, and help make Honolulu cleaner and safer for our future generations.

Thank you for hearing my testimony, and I hope you will consider passing S.B. N.o.1146 to help restore the Ala Wai Canal in order to benefit our 'āina and our communities.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Katz

Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 4:39:29 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Payton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Senator Kim, Chair
Senator Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senator Inouye, Chair
Senator Elefante, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land**

**Wednesday, February 12, 2025
1:00 PM, Senate conference room 229
Hawaii State Capitol**

Support for S.B. No. 1146

Aloha, Chairs, Vice Chairs, and members of the Senate on Higher Education and Water and Land,

My name is Payton Dugan and I am a senior at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of S.B. No. 1146.

I am testifying specifically to support debris management and water quality control regarding the Ala Wai Canal. I believe it is essential to rebirth the artificial waterway of Honolulu as it serves as a northern boundary of Waikiki and a draining resource for rice paddies and swamps. Managing the debris and pollution that goes into the canal could be incredibly beneficial for the future of the place we call home. Senator Kidoni, I know how much you care for students in Hawaii and the education system and I think providing the chance for college students to make an environmental impact on our islands, specifically O’ahu, would bring everyone together and create a new, clean, and healthy environment for the people and the island. Cleaning the Ala Wai canal can benefit the island in many different ways. It would help support the overall health of the ecosystem within the Ala Wai like aquatic life and vegetation. It would also improve public health ensuring safer

water and reducing the health risks for anyone who may come in touch with it. Not only will it make our island cleaner it can also help with flood control, as cleaning out the debris would help the water flow like it is supposed to, reducing the risk of flooding if it were to storm. Having a clean water canal would benefit the island and its people in more ways than not. Which is why I am in favor of S.B. No. 1146.

I hope you thoroughly consider passing S.B. No. 1146 because it will make our island cleaner and healthier for our ecosystem and the people in the long run. Mahalo for allowing me to testify.

**Sincerely,
Payton Dugan
Mililani High School**

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Wednesday, February 12th, 2025
1:00 P.M, Hawaii Conference Room 229 and Video Conference
Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B. No. 1146

Aloha, Chair Kim and Members of the Senate.

I am Tehani Joy Lopez and I am currently a senior at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of S.B. No. 1146.

I am testifying specifically in support of improving the water quality and the debris management in the Ala Wai. I believe that this is an important movement that should be implemented immediately because as the days go by the Ala Wai becomes overrun with waste which affects the water quality. According to research the Ala wai was first polluted in 1983 and the Ala wai was polluted with 2.5 million gallons of raw sewage due to an power outage. Ever since then the Ala Wai has been polluted constantly from storms and other disasters that happen on the island of Oahu. Many people can come together to help educate each other into teaching each other the benefits of doing community cleanups in the Ala Wai. The long term benefits can include environmental health, recreation, and public health. Environmental health is very important because it can help create cleaner and healthier ecosystems.

I hope you consider passing S.B. No. 1146 because clean water quality in the Ala Wai can positively improve the environment and have long term benefits for a healthier future in Oahu. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Tehani Joy Lopez
Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 12:01:09 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alana Nakamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorriane R. Inouye, Chair

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00 PM, Conference Room 229 & Video Conference

Hawai'i State Capitol

Support for S.B. No. 1146

Aloha, Chair Kim and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education, as well as Chair Inouye and Members of the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

My name is Alana Nakamoto and I am a Junior at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of S.B. No. 1146.

I have decided to testify in support of funding the University of Hawai'i to develop possible plans of action to help with the continuous issue of debris in the Ala Wai. Debris in the water has caused what was once a clean, and beautiful body of water, to turn into a large concern of water quality and pollution. The Ala Wai is now one of the most polluted waterways in Hawai'i. Our state is known for its beautiful beaches, and clear water, but the Ala Wai has become quite the opposite. Bacteria and pollution that is being collected in the water is causing extreme health concerns, including infections. It is disappointing that we as a community had let this issue grow to what it is now, so it's the responsibility of the state to do something about it. I believe by passing this bill, progress can, and will be made in efforts to restore the Ala Wai to its full potential of becoming clean, and toxin free.

I strongly hope that you all will thoroughly consider passing S.B. 1146 because it is a crucial big step into restoring the Ala Wai canal to it's full potential as a beautiful, clean, body of water...and staple attraction on Oahu. Thank you for your time, and an opportunity to testify!

Sincerely,

Alana Nakamoto

Junior at Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 2:39:20 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Callie France	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello, my name is Callie France, and I am an undergraduate here at the University of Hawai'i, working to complete my Bachelor of Science in Global Environmental Science. Since moving here, one of the most alarming issues I have witnessed is the severe lack of proper waste disposal management. Every year, and often multiple times within the year, this is made apparent by the dramatic influx of solid debris that flows through the largest waterway in the city, the Ala Wai Canal. Already, in 2025, when parts of the island saw over 15 inches of rainfall in 24 hours, it exemplified how little grasp the city has on urban runoff control.

While I am aware of the preparation taken by HDOT and the Contractors at Hawaiian Dredging Co., who recently implemented a temporary debris boom to divert large rubbish to the Ala Moana debris trap, our final defense against pollution washing into the ocean is only about 20% effective. The students at UH are more than qualified to get the ball rolling on long term solutions for debris and pollution reduction in the Ala Wai. With the \$125,000 appropriated, graduate students would have the funds they need to create a solid plan of action for today and begin developing products that could change how the United States handles solid waste in our water ways.

I urge you to support S.B. #1146 to take a crucial first step toward lasting solutions for the Ala Wai and beyond.

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 9:00:33 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aaron Rose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12th, 2025

1:00 PM Conference Room 229

Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha Chair Kim, Chair Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committees on Higher Education and Water and Land,

My name is Aaron Rose, a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 1146.

I am testifying in support of this bill because I believe it is unequivocally important to the future of our island and an absolute necessity in terms of sustainability for Oahu. As you know, the Ala Wai has become overrun with debris and pollution, sullyng a vast potential source of water for our communities. The toxic state that the water finds itself in is detestable and it never should have been allowed to become so polluted. The freshwater contained in this canal is unusable in its current state, but if maximized could potentially be a source of drinking water or perhaps for plumbing purposes. Regardless, going beyond the practical uses, it is a mark of shame on us that we have allowed a part of our island to become so toxic and hazardous. It is a safety risk for individuals and organisms and detracts from the great beauty our island has to offer. I would implore the respected members of the Senate to vote in favor of this bill so that we can right a longstanding wrong and help restore these waters to their former glory.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Aaron Rose

Mililani High School

Senator Donna Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
1:00 PM, Senate conference room 229
Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B. No.1146

Greetings, Chair Kim and Chair Inouye and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education and Water and Land,

My name is Maya Kaneshiro and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying **in support** of S.B.No. 1146.

I am testifying particularly in support of the debris management and quality control in the Ala Wai watershed. I believe that maintaining a healthy watershed is not only a benefit to us, but to the surrounding environment and ecosystem as well. Personally, I strongly value environmental conservation, especially that of wildlife. Numerous species rely on watersheds and wetland environments for their survival. All living organisms cannot live without access to clean and safe drinking water. Its sustainability is crucial for the long-term welfare and survival of both fauna and flora alike. With growing concerns of pollutants contaminating precious resources like watersheds, this need for maintenance is only going to continue to persist.

I sincerely wish that you consider passing S.B. No. 1146 because of its crucial role in the lives of both plants and animals, the importance of environmental conservation, and how sustainability is essential to moving closer to a healthy future. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Maya Kaneshiro
Mililani High School

Representative Sem. Kim, Sen. Kidani
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Representative Sen. Inovye, Sen. Elefante
Senate Committee on Water & Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
1:00P, House conference room 229
Hawaii State Capitol
Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha, Chair Gates and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education/Water & Land. My name is Nickolas Olarti and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of S.B.No. 1146.

I believe this bill is necessary to save the Ala wai, and continue environmental development in Waikīkī Beach due to the valuable natural resources that support the culture and lifestyle of Hawai'i and its people. Rep. Kidani, I can gamble that at least you have been to the Ala Wai, it is home to more than 200,000 residents and a vital watershed to our state. If we allow pollution to occur in our Ala Wai, we also face the risk of natural disasters and floods overflowing the Ala Wai, putting nearby residents in danger. We would have to face the damages from the water, but also the infections people could be at risk for. Bacteria's like *Vibrio vulnificus* which can cause life threatening skin injuries, and harm our native marine wildlife as well. With the Ala wai being one of the most polluted waterways in Hawaii, The University of Hawaii has created the Genki Ala Wai Project. Its main way of combating pollution is releasing small spheres of mud that benefit organisms to eat away at the sludge.

I hope you will consider passing S.B. No. 1146 because it is necessary to move our state towards a more sustainable, cleaner, and healthy future. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Nickolas Olarti
Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 10:27:23 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Constantine Cramer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00 PM, House conference room 229

Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha, Chair Kim and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education and Water and Land, My name is Constantine Cramer and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of S.B. No. 1146.

Today, freshwater resources are one of the most valued and coveted natural resources. We depend on these resources for our survival and livelihood. Protecting these freshwater resources like the Ala Wai Canal are paramount to the survival of our natural ecosystems and making Hawaii more sustainable. The ala wai is a part of our coveted and beautiful Ko‘olau Mountain Ridge. The Koolau watershed and subsequently the Ala Wai provides water to ecosystems containing Hawaii's native species. Continued negligence of this fact will result in a loss of what little remains of Oahu's natural resources.

The University of Hawaii is committed to the values of Hawaiian sustainability and environmental protection. Moreover the institution provides opportunities for our States youth to participate in the protection, restoration, and preservation of Hawaii's natural resources. Thankfully the Ala Wai can be saved, and there is no better group of academics and motivated people than those at the University of Hawaii. The allocation of funds to support the development of an action plan and pre-engineering concept plan to help with debris management and water quality control in the Ala Wai watershed is necessary and must be pursued.

I hope you will consider passing S.B. No. 1146 because it is vital to move our State in the right direction.

Very Respectfully,

Constantine Cramer

Mililani High School

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidan, Vice Chair
Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Branon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
1:00 PM, conference room 229
Hawaii State Capitol

Support for H.B. No.2083

Aloha, Chair Gates and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,
My name is Rafael Ortiz and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying
in support of S.B. No. 1146

I am testifying specifically in support of this bill as it is important to prioritize the future of our island in terms of sustainability. The Ala Wai was created in the 1920s in order to drain the coastal wetlands, however now it is vastly polluted with the waste of humans. The Ala Wai used to once serve as a fresh water source for our ohana and now it is too toxic to even swim in. *We the people* in our community are obligated and should help restore the Ala Wai to its once famous glory of a freshwater source, and revert it back to its purpose when it was established in the 1920s. The Ala Wai would allow for us to have a fresh water source, making us more sustainable as a community. It goes to show the great shame that we should have as the people who reside on this island, to have allowed the Ala Wai to get this bad. However it can be fixed, and I would humbly request that our elected people in the Senate vote in favor of this bill. We should focus on restoring the Ala Wai to its once famous glory of being a freshwater source.

I humbly request you consider passing S.B. No. 1146, it's imperative that we restore this freshwater source. I sincerely appreciate you allowing for the opportunity to testify in favor of this bill.

Very Respectfully,
Rafael Ortiz
Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:19:32 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ciara Higgins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair

Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00PM, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Hawaii State Capitol

Support for SB1146

Aloha, Senators and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

My name is Ciara Higgins and I am a senior at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of SB1146.

I am testifying in support of the plan for debris management and water quality control in the Ala Wai. I believe it is necessary to implement this for the growth of our community. The Ala Wai has always been known as one of our island's most polluted waterways by everyone. No local will swim in it because of the risk of infection and stories of people dying. But by cleaning the Ala Wai, it opens up more opportunities and shows future generations how keeping our waterways clean is important to the environment and to us. If the Ala Wai were clean, it'd be safe to go swimming, kayaking, and other recreational activities. Also, we'd make a good example for future generations. By cleaning a waterway notorious for being polluted, we can show that keeping our environment clean is achievable and inspire others to do the same. This will lead to an overall cleaner environment.

I hope you will consider passing SB1146 because it will help our community to grow. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Ciara Higgins

Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:22:21 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sofia Belhaj	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00 pm, Conference Room 229

Hawaii State Capital

Support for H.B. No. SB1146

Aloha, Chair Gates and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

My name is Sofia Belhaj and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am

testifying in support of H.B. SB1146.

I am testifying in strong support of appropriating funds to the University of Hawaii for developing an action plan and pre-engineering concept plan to improve debris management and water quality in the Ala Wai Watershed. This watershed is vital to our communities, and without proper intervention, pollution and flooding will continue to threaten our environment, economy and public health. Funding this initiative will provide the necessary research and strategies to protect and restore the watershed for future generations. Investing in this project is an investment in Hawaii's future—ensuring cleaner waters, reduced flood risks, and a healthier ecosystem for residents and visitors

alike.

I urge the legislature to support this measure and take a critical step toward protecting one of Oahu's most important watersheds. I hope you will consider passing H.B. SB1146. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Sofia Belhaj

Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:25:16 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shayla Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair Senate Committee on Higher Education

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00PM, House Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Hawaii State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Support for S.B.No. 1146

Aloha, Chair Gates and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

My name is Shayla Ramos and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying

in support of S.B.No. 1146.

I am testifying in favor of funding the University of Hawai'i to develop an action plan to

limit debris entering the Ala Wai Canal. Water is vital to the wellbeing of all living things, especially humans. We should have the right to have clean water all around us, therefore ensuring the Ala Wai Canal has clean accessible water for the people of Hawaii. There are many benefits of this action and in terms of economics, passing this bill will not only increase the satisfaction of locals, but tourism interest is likely to increase due to the wonders of the Ala Wai Canal. Hawaii is known for the beautiful land and surrounding water; both in the the ocean, but also the waterways throughout the island. There are already people able and willing to find a solution to the dirtiness of this Canal, but it is up to you, the Senate, to pass this bill so those students at the University of Hawai'i can go ahead and get started. These students are dedicated to giving our beautiful island of Oahu clean water for its people. Overall, the benefits of cleaning the debris out of the Ala Wai Canal and keeping it clean will have countless benefits relating to health, economic, social, and even political issues. Therefore, passing this bill will be essential to create the change we all hope to see.

I truly hope you will consider passing S.B. No. 1146 because I believe it is essential to have clean, safe water running through our community, not only to strengthen us now, but to also strengthen and give an example for many generations to come. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Shayla Ramos

Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:27:01 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Correa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Kim, Chair

Senator Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Senator Inouye, Chair

Senator Elefante, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00PM, Senate Conference Room 229

Hawaii State Capital

Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha, Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of Higher Education and Land and Water,

My name is Shannon Correa, I am a student attending Mililani High School. I am here today to express my support for the Ala Wai provision in Bill 1146, with the inclusion of protecting native species in addition to clearing debris. As a young adult living in Hawaii, I believe it is crucial to protect and restore the Ala Wai watershed, which is very important to both our community and environment.

The Ala Wai Canal has faced a number of environmental challenges over the years, such as the water quality being compromised, increase in pollution, and harm to the native ecosystem. Bill 1146 presents a valuable opportunity to address these issues by focusing on the restoration and preservation of the Ala Wai. A big threat presented in the canal includes invasive species. These non-native organisms threaten the balance of the local ecosystem. Invasive organisms often outcompete native species for resources, and their presence can lead to a loss of biodiversity. Removing these harmful species is vital in restoring the health and functionality of the watershed as well as ensuring that native plants and wildlife have the space they need to thrive.

The Ala Wai Canal is not only crucial to the surrounding ecosystems, but it also plays an important role in the lives of local communities. It is deeply embedded in the daily routines of a multitude of people including residents, businesses, and visitors alike. The canal provides recreational space for families, joggers, and tourists, while also helping to regulate the flow of water in the urban areas surrounding it. Protecting the Ala Wai is essential for maintaining a clean, safe environment for these communities. As a member of our community, concerned about the future of our natural resources, I believe supporting Bill 1146 is a vital step to protect the Ala Wai for future generations.

Mahalo for your time and consideration. I respectfully urge and hope you stand with our community and pass Bill 1146, due to the importance of restoring and preserving the Ala Wai.

Sincerely,

Shannon Correa

Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:30:41 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Dechoso	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00PM, Conference Room 229

Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha, Chair Gates and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

My name is Erin Dechoso and I am currently a Junior at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of S.B. No.1146.

I am specifically testifying in support of the creation of an action plan and pre-engineering concept plan to address the debris management. I believe it's important to continue funding to allow full support of this part of the bill, giving the University of Hawaii complete possibility for creating a successful action plan. This can also give the next generation the chance to solve real and concerning problems here in Hawaii, strengthening their complex problem solving and thinking. The plan itself is very important because of how toxic the Ala Wai is becoming, it's a very large energy source for those in town so it's extremely important to keep it clean and healthy.

I hope you'll consider passing S.B. No.1146 because it's important for Hawaii to have clean water quality within the Ala Wai. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Erin Dechoso

Mililani High School

Representative Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Representative, Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Representative Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Representative Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2024
1:00PM, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol

Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha, Chairs Mercado Kim and Lorraine R. Inouye and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Senate Committee on Water and Land,

My name is Zendrick William Quibol Hanna and I am currently a 12th grade student at Mililani High School. I am testifying in **support** of S.B. No.1146

Coming off the heavy weather from the last few days of January, more contaminants have made their way into the Ala Wai canal so allowing the University of Hawaii to draft solutions for debris management and water quality provides many benefits for the local community of the area. Letting UH convene a plan is, as I see, a great choice, giving UH's more local perspective, knowledge and technical expertise. A well designed plan by UH could help lead to effective sustainable long term improvements that could guide an efficient, cost effective long term plan for the Ala Wai Watershed. This would also provide immediate benefits for the local area and community as it would provide some form of improvement in water quality and reduce environmental and bacterial hazards within the canal.

I hope you will consider passing S.B. No.1146 because of the long term and short term benefits for public health, environmental quality and overall safety and capital.

Sincerely,
Zendrick William Quibol Hanna

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:35:33 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Michael	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair

Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00 PM, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

Hawai'i State Capitol

Support for SB1146

Aloha, Senate Committee and Water and Land

My name is Rachel Michael, and I am a highschool student at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of SB1146.

I want to emphasize that I believe youth has the ability to influence policy. Partnering with the University of Hawai'i encourages college students to make a difference and take action towards the sustainability of the environment. Funding the University of Hawai'i is important in order to take steps to create an effective prevention plan to control the debris and water quality. The Ala Wai is known for being heavily polluted and is not available to the public due to its dangers. By creating an effective plan to clean the Ala Wai with the help of funding and student help, it will be clean and available for various recreational activities such as swimming, kayaking, and more. Taking this step will also encourage both high school and college students to take initiatives to contribute to a cleaner and safer environment. Thank you for this opportunity to allow me to testify, and I hope you take into consideration to pass SB1146.

Sincerely,

Rachel Michael

Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:42:07 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalli Tanita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Senator Donna Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on High Education**

**Senator Lorraine Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land**

**Wednesday, February 12, 2025
1:00 pm, Conference Room 229
Hawai'i State Capitol**

Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha, Senate Committee and Water and Land,

My name is Kalli Tanita and I am a student at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support of S.B. No. 1146.

I am testifying in favor of giving appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i to help develop a plan to help manage and clean the canal from all of the trash and debris and to help preserve the water quality in the Ala Wai watershed. I believe that this is important to being able to protect our waters. The canal is filled with trash and debris floating around in its waters and from the beautiful blue it once was is now turning into a brown and green murky color. The canal is in Waikiki which is a very popular tourist spot where many vacation at. With being able to take this step into protecting our waters, it could lead to many other states and countries to be inspired to start cleaning our waters. With the inventions these college students could possibly make, it could inspire many other colleges,

companies, and other non-profit organizations and it could help clean out other bodies of water that are polluted with debris.

I hope you will consider passing S.B. No. 1146 because I believe it is necessary to move our state to cleaning our waters with removing debris in our waters and to help preserve our waters. Mahalo for the opportunity and experience to testify.

Sincerely,

**Kalli Tanita
Mililani High School**

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 12:15:04 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gavin Failano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Representative Donna Kim, Chair

Representative Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00PM, House conference room 229

Hawai'i State Capitol

Support for S.B. No.1146

Aloha, Chair Kim and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education,

My name is Gavin Failano and I am a Student at Mililani High School. I am testifying in support

of S.B. No. 1146.

I am testifying specifically in support of the Ala Wai Canal part of the bill. I believe it is necessary to implement this part of the bill for the health of the environment and the tourists who decide to jump dare to jump into the canal not knowing they can gain all kinds of diseases. Rep. Kim, I know you are familiar with dirty waters and Hawai'i's 53 million gallons of sewage waters. This water flows through the sewage systems, sometimes even flooding leading to sewage leaks, as well all of this water flowing into the ocean making the environment inhabitable and killing off the marine life in Hawai'i's Ecosystem. We the people want to keep marine life in Hawai'i safe and protected so ways to do this is by treating our waters correctly with the right sewage system and taking out the unnecessary objects within Ala Wai Canal. The long term benefits far outweigh the short-term potential inconvenience some may feel implementing this change will have on the current system.

I hope you will consider passing S.B. No. 1146 because it is necessary to move our state towards more attractive, habitable, and healthier waters. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Gavin Failano

Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 12:53:47 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gianna Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Donna Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Higher Education

Senator Lorriane Inouye, Chair

Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Water and Land

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

1:00pm, House conference room 229 & Videoconference

Hawai'i State Capitol

Support for SB1146

Aloha, Senators and Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education and the Senate Committee on Water on Land.

My name is Gianna Young and I am a junior currently attending Mililani Highschool. I am testifying in support of SB1146.

I am testing specifically in desperation of your support to be able to bring proper awareness for the need of the cleaning our Ala Wai. By funding the University of Hawai'i this can fully aid their attempts to come up with an in depth and efficient plan in helping with debris management. This would help improve water quality control making our Ala Wai watershed area closer to being able to thrive at its fullest. This would significantly help our aquatic life thrive because it would limit the pollution spread into our oceans making it safer for people from getting into accidents. Tourists would feel more inclined to go there and people of Hawai'i as it'll be aesthetically appealing. All of this is only possible with the help of the Senates funding.

I hope you will deeply take in consideration my testimony and the passing of SB1146 because without your support from the Senate Committee on Water and land and all Senate assigned to this bill, our Ala Wai continue to suffer due to our own faults.

Sincerely,

Gianna Young

Mililani High School

SB-1146

Submitted on: 2/12/2025 9:56:14 AM

Testimony for HRE on 2/12/2025 1:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cadey Mizuno	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Testimony in Support of [SB1146](#)

To: The Hawaii State Legislature

From: Cadey Mizuno

Date: February 10, 2025

Subject: Support for SB 1146 - UH; Ala Wai Canal; Debris Management; Water Quality; Appropriations (\$)

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cadey Mizuno, and I am a resident of Hawaii, born and raised. I support SB 1146, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for the development of an action plan and pre-engineering concept plan to help with debris management and water quality control in the Ala Wai watershed.

Passing this bill will provide the necessary resources to address these critical issues. By investing in an action plan and pre-engineering concept plan, we can effectively manage debris and improve water quality in the Ala Wai watershed. This will not only enhance the natural beauty of our beloved canal but also protect the ecosystem and public health.

As a social work student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, I strongly support this bill. The involvement of the University in developing the action plan provides an excellent opportunity for students and researchers to engage in real-world environmental projects. This will enhance their educational experience and contribute to innovative solutions for environmental challenges.

Moreover, cleaner waterways will benefit the entire community by promoting recreational activities, supporting local businesses, and attracting tourists. It will create a safer and healthier environment for future generations to enjoy.

In conclusion, I urge you to support SB 1146. This initiative is crucial for preserving the Ala Wai Canal, ensuring the well-being of our community, and fostering a sustainable future for Hawaii.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cadey Mizuno

6615 Ainapo Place Honolulu, HI 96825

cmizuno3@hawaii.edu

(808) 829-5464