

DEPARTMENT OF WATER

COUNTY OF KAUAI

4398 PUA LOKE STREET LIHUE, HAWAII 96766

WWW.KAUAIWATER.ORG (808) 245-5400 BUSINESS (808) 245-5813 FAX



JOSEPH E. TAIT
MANAGER AND CHIEF ENGINEER

MICHAEL K. HINAZUMI, P.E.
DEPUTY MANAGER-ENGINEER

February 3, 2025

The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair
and Committee Members
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
and Committee Members
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Hawaii State Capitol, Room 224
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chairs Richards and Wakai, and Committee Members:

Subject: Senate Bill 1409 – Relating to County User Fees

The County of Kaua'i, Department of Water (DOW) submits this letter to respectfully express its strong opposition to Senate Bill (HB) 1409. The bill proposes to exempt the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) from county user fees in excess of \$100,000.00 in the aggregate per year; provided that no services shall be denied to the DHHL.

Pursuant to HRS 46-1.5(23), the counties were granted, by the State, the power to establish and maintain waterworks; to collect rates for water supplied to consumers; to install water meters whenever deemed expedient; and, to take over from the State existing waterworks systems, including water rights, pipelines, and other appurtenances belonging thereto, and to enlarge, develop and improve the same.

The Kauai County established its Department of Water as a semi-autonomous organization to manage its island-wide drinking water systems. As a semi-autonomous agency, the DOW relies solely on its self-sufficiency to generate revenue through its water rates and impact fees to operate, maintain and expand its water systems and does not receive any funds from the County's revenue streams of taxes.

The DOW does not believe it is appropriate for DHHL to expect an exemption from county user fees because it would shift the cost of its expenses to other water rate payers. This bill would result in a further financial burden on the customers the DOW serves, including non-residential customers – existing agriculture and businesses. It would cause an inequity for other water rate payers to

subsidize the cost of the DHHL. Additionally, it would be difficult for the DOW to forecast these costs, which would have to be made up with other sources of revenue or expenditure deferrals.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your dedication and commitment you have shown in serving our State. We remain hopeful that you will carefully weigh the concerns raised by the DOW and others.

Please feel free to contact me at (808) 245-5403 or via email at jtait@kauaiwater.org with any questions you may have regarding DOW's comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Tait". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and "T".

Joseph E. Tait
Manager and Chief Engineer



DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY • COUNTY OF HAWAII

345 KEKŪANAŌ'A STREET, SUITE 20 • HILO, HAWAII 96720

TELEPHONE (808) 961-8050 • FAX (808) 961-8657

February 3, 2025

TESTIMONY OF KEITH K. OKAMOTO, MANAGER-CHIEF ENGINEER
DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY, COUNTY OF HAWAII

HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, AND
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE: Tuesday, February 4, 2025

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

SB 1409 - RELATING TO COUNTY USER FEES

Honorable Chairs Richards and Wakai, Vice-Chairs San Buenaventura and Chang, and committee members,

The County of Hawaii, Department of Water Supply (DWS) strongly opposes Senate Bill 1409 (SB 1409).

This bill proposes to exempt the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) from county user fees in excess of \$100,000 in the aggregate per year and that no service shall be denied to DHHL.

DWS was established and has operated as a semi-autonomous organization to manage its island-wide drinking water systems over 75 years ago. As a semi-autonomous agency, DWS relies solely on revenue generated through its water rates and fees to operate and maintain our water systems and does not receive any funds from the County's revenue streams. As such, exempting or capping DHHL fees owed the DWS will shift the costs to the other water customers.

DWS also would need a clear definition of "user fees" to better evaluate the financial impact of this proposed bill.

We thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your dedication and commitment to serving our State.

Please feel free to contact me at (808) 961-8050 or via email at dws@hawaiidws.org with any questions you may have regarding DWS' comments. Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony on SB 1409.

...Water, Our Most Precious Resource...Ka Wai A Kāne...

The Department of Water Supply is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.maucounty.gov

February 3, 2024

TO: Senator Herbert M. Richards, III, Chair
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
John Stufflebean, Director, Department of Water Supply

DATE: February 3, 2025

SUBJECT: **OPPOSITION OF SB1409, RELATING TO COUNTY USER FEES**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **OPPOSITION** of this important measure. The Act exempts the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL) from county user fees, in the amount of \$100,000 aggregate per year, and ensures county services to the DHHL for Hawaiian Homelands.

We **OPPOSE** this measure for the following reasons:

Background

Under HRS 46-1.5(23), the State conferred upon the counties the general powers to establish and maintain waterworks, collect rates for water supplied to consumers, and install water meters whenever deemed expedient. As such, the Maui County DWS has operated successfully as the County department responsible for Maui's critically important municipal drinking water systems County-wide. Especially with the housing crisis on Maui, there is no more important function than maintaining and developing water sources and operating the water systems. This function is especially difficult in Maui County given its well-documented water challenges. The DWS is self-

sufficient and is funded almost entirely by rate revenues (with some other funding including low-interest bonds and the State Revolving Fund loans).

Maui County Position

Maui County and the DWS vigorously support the DHHL and its important mission. As an example, the DWS partners with the DHHL in developing water sources and water system infrastructure to serve DHHL.

Maui County and the DWS propose that a better approach be developed to support the DHHL. This bill sets up a win-lose scenario where as DHHL develops additional housing, the DWS (and other county water boards) lose revenue. This sets up a very unfortunate situation where it is a disincentive for the counties to support DHHL housing. We propose that a better public policy approach would be to develop a partnership between the DHHL and the county water agencies to work together to develop water sources that serve DHHL, and all other, housing.

Specific to this bill, Maui County and the DWS do not believe it is appropriate for DHHL to expect an exemption from county user fees. This will shift a significant financial cost onto the public we serve and place a heavy and difficult to predict burden on all other water rate payers including residents and businesses.

It is inequitable to support the DHHL on the backs of the critical water utilities and other rate payers. The adverse consequences to housing and economic development in the County would be severe. Specifically, this would seriously impact the ability of the DWS to develop new water sources, to cover the cost of maintenance and repairs of the existing water system, and finance the major repairs and improvements to the water system.

Summary

We believe other means designed around a win-win public policy approach should be explored to support the DHHL. We can enthusiastically offer to assist with its development.

Mahalo for your consideration.

DEPARTMENT OF FACILITY MAINTENANCE
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA HALE
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

1000 ULU'OHIA STREET, SUITE 215, KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707
PHONE: (808) 768-3343 • Fax: (808) 768-3381 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



GENE C. ALBANO, P.E.
DIRECTOR AND CHIEF ENGINEER
PO'O A ME LUNA NUI 'ENEKINIA

WARREN K. MAMIZUKA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

IN REPLY REFER TO:
SWQ 25-017

February 3, 2025

The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Hawai'ian Affairs

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
State Senate
415 South Beretania Street.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chairs Richards and Wakai and Vice Chairs San Buenaventura, and Members of the Committee on Hawai'ian Affairs and Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs:

SUBJECT: Department of Facility Maintenance, City and County of Honolulu
Testimony in Opposition to S.B. No. 1409, Relating to Storm Water Fees

The Department of Facility Maintenance (DFM) of the City and County of Honolulu has primary responsibility for ensuring the County's compliance with storm water regulations under the United States Clean Water Act. In 2015, the Hawai'i Legislature took the proactive and foresighted step of authorizing the counties to establish fee-based funding of storm water services, or "storm water utilities." Over the past two (2) years, the Department has undertaken a comprehensive program to develop a storm water utility and fee for the County pursuant to this State law. During this time, extensive information has been provided to State agencies and departments on the benefits and impacts of adopting a storm water fee. The Department opposes S.B. No. 1409, Relating to storm water fees, which would place a storm water fee cap of \$100,000 in aggregate annually for all Department of Hawai'ian Homelands (DHHL) properties and would prohibit the City and County from denying related storm water management services to the DHHL.

Protecting and enhancing O'ahu's groundwater, streams, and near-shore environment is a shared responsibility. Storm water utilities have been adopted by over 2,000 of our peer cities and counties in the United States and Canada, providing stable, equitable funding for these programs including permitting, maintenance, and necessary

capital improvements. Under a storm water utility, all properties, including United States government properties, would pay a fee representing their fair share of the cost of providing services, similar to the water bills charged by the Honolulu Board of Water Supply and sewer fees by the Department of Environmental Services. Storm water fees will be assessed based on impervious areas and the total raised may not exceed the demonstrated cost of storm water services, an important check and balance on spending that is not in place today. DFM has determined that it currently spends \$115 million per year on storm water services but is expecting that cost will need to increase upwards to around \$208 million in order to run a right sized program.

Placing a fee cap on DHHL properties and land, especially at an amount that is significantly below the properties' proportional share of storm water service costs, substantially undermines this important element of equity and fairness. In fact, equity and fairness are the core purposes of adopting a storm water fee: Today, the full cost burden is on taxable properties, with the greatest impact on residential property owners. Under a storm water utility, everyone would pay a fair share based on storm water runoff generated from impervious surfaces. It is notable that the Clean Water Act, itself requires all Federal agencies (which own nearly 17% of the impervious area on O'ahu) to pay duly adopted local storm water fees. Courts across the United States have upheld the appropriateness and legality of State and Federal governments paying duly adopted and equitable storm water utility fees, recognizing the burden on local taxpayers with the introduction of any new utility fees. State properties, based on current estimations, makes up around 14% of the total amount impervious area on O'ahu.

Adoption of a fee at the level under consideration by the City and County of Honolulu would result in charging fees to State agencies for their fair share of the total cost of managing storm water runoff on O'ahu. However, there are multiple opportunities for each state agency to reduce its fees, and to cooperate with the DFM in finding mutually beneficial means of providing these services. Under the proposed structure of the storm water utility, all State agencies would have the opportunity to reduce their fees by up to 60%, by implementing beneficial water capture and storm water management practices on site, which most State agencies are doing.

A prime example of this occurred in 2023, through which the DFM, under good faith negotiations, collaborated with the State Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop an acceptable and workable solution agreed upon by both parties that recognizes the DOT's ongoing investments in storm water management. Through a cooperative analysis, the DFM and the DOT reached an agreement to exempt all public roadways, State airport runways, and harbor docks from a storm water fee, since these areas are fundamentally part of the public transportation systems. The DOT will also be able to apply and qualify for the maximum 60% credit reduction of applicable storm water fees for those facilities that include beneficial storm water management. The ultimate agreement would essentially place a fee cap in aggregate not to exceed

\$1.5 million per year for all State DOT properties. This amount is proportional to the expected storm water fee while also crediting DOT for its many contributions to storm water management.

To date, we have not had the opportunity to discuss these options with our State DHHL partners. S.B. 1409 would foreclose exploration of appropriate and fair fees and mutually beneficial options, including delayed/phased implementation based upon current and future economic and financial conditions.

In its 2015 action authorizing counties to adopt storm water fees, the Legislature recognized the need to fund the protection of our waters sufficiently, and equitably. S.B. No. 1409 moves the State away from embracing that shared responsibility. The DFM would be happy to conduct a presentation and Q&A on the storm water utility, fee proposals, and potentials for phased implementation, etc. to this committee and any other interested Legislators or State agency partners whenever convenient for you. We urge the committee to reject S.B. No. 1409 at this time to allow for further discussion and collaboration. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

Gene C. Albano, P.E
Director and Chief Engineer Designate

**BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY
KA 'OIHANA WAI
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.
MANAGER AND CHIEF ENGINEER
MANAKIA A ME KAHU WILIKI

ERWIN KAWATA
DEPUTY MANAGER
HOPE MANAKIA



NĀ'ĀLEHU ANTHONY, Chair
JONATHAN KANESHIRO, Vice Chair
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LANCE WILHELM
KĒHAULANI PU'U
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN, Ex-Officio
GENE C. ALBANO, P.E., Ex-Officio

February 4, 2025

The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair
and Members
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 224
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 224
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Richard, Chair Wakai and Members:

Subject: Senate Bill 1409: Relating to County User Fees

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) strongly opposes Senate Bill (SB) 1409. This bill proposes to exempt the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) from county user fees in excess of \$100,000 in the aggregate per year; provided that no services shall be denied to the DHHL.

This bill would place a heavy financial burden on BWS and the public we serve, including residential water rate payers, kupuna, and non-residential customers - existing businesses. This makes it difficult for the BWS to forecast the cost of these exemptions against the water charges that are the main source of revenue.

As such, BWS has operated successfully as a semi-autonomous City agency responsible for Oahu's critically important municipal (i.e. City-owned) drinking water supply systems island-wide. The BWS is self-sufficient and does not receive any funds from the City's primary revenue source – real property taxes. Infrastructure improvements and operations are funded mostly by rate revenues; other funding mechanisms include low-interest bonds, and State Revolving Funds loans.

The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair
The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
and Members
February 4, 2025
Page 2

The BWS does not believe it is appropriate for DHHL to expect an exemption from county user fees and shift the burden of costs to other water rate payers. This bill would place a heavy financial burden on the public we serve, including residential and non-residential customers - existing businesses. It is unfair for other water rate payers to subsidize the water cost of the DHHL. As DHHL expands its plans to develop more homes and condominiums, the cost to the counties will receive less revenue from DHHL. Essentially, this is an unfunded mandate to the counties. This would make it difficult for the BWS to forecast the cost of these exemptions against the water charges that are the main source of revenue.

It is unclear as to the definition of "user fees" as there is no definition in Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) § 46-1.5. We will provide a preliminary estimate of the financial impact to the public we serve at this hearing. DHHL should pay its fair share of the cost of service it takes to provide water 24/7 to its beneficiaries as all other BWS water customers are required to pay.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony in strong opposition to SB 1409.

Very Truly Yours,



ERNEST Y.W. LAU, P.E.
Manager and Chief Engineer



SB-1409

Submitted on: 1/31/2025 10:55:59 AM

Testimony for HWN on 2/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
De MONT Kalai Manaole	Testifying for Hoomana Pono, LLC	Support	In Person

Comments:

We **STRONGLY SUPPORT** this bill as it relates to Trust Beneficiaries on Hawaiian Home Lands. Please pass this measure as is. Mahalo.

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: MISCELLANEOUS; DHHL; Counties; User Fees; County Powers

BILL NUMBER: HB 1090, SB 1409

INTRODUCED BY: HB by NAKAMURA by request, SB by KOUCHI by request (Governor's Package)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Exempts the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands from county user fees, in the amount of \$100,000 aggregate per year, and ensures county services to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for Hawaiian Home Lands.

SYNOPSIS: Amends section 46-1.5(5)(E), HRS, county user fees charged or collected from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to create or maintain any stormwater management system or infrastructure shall not exceed \$100,000 in the aggregate per year. No services shall be denied to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands under this subparagraph, from this amendment.

Amends section 46-15.5(23)(D), HRS, rates collected from the Department of Home Lands for water supplied to consumers and for the use of sewers shall not exceed \$100,000 in the aggregate per year. No services shall be denied to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands under this subparagraph, from this amendment.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval.

STAFF COMMENTS: This is an Administration bill sponsored by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and designated HHL-10 (25).

This bill is, essentially, an unfunded mandate from a higher level of government to a lower one. Sometimes it sucks to be a county.

Digested: 1/29/2025

SB-1409

Submitted on: 1/31/2025 11:14:32 AM

Testimony for HWN on 2/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marion K A Kapuniai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support!

An appropriate inclusion - (23) (D), pg 11,12

Thank you, M Kapuniai

Testimony in Support with Comments of S.B. No. 1409

RELATING TO COUNTY USER FEES. DHHL; Counties; User Fees; County Powers; Exempts the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands from county user fees, in the amount of \$100,000 aggregate per year, and ensures county services to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for Hawaiian Home Lands.

Friday, January 31, 2025

To: Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair, Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs;

To: Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair, Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

From: Ronnie Inagaki

Subject: Testimony in Support with Comments of S.B. No. 1409- RELATING TO COUNTY USER FEES. DHHL; Counties; User Fees; County Powers; Exempts the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands from county user fees, in the amount of \$100,000 aggregate per year, and ensures county services to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for Hawaiian Home Lands.

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding S.B. No. 1432, which proposes significant changes to the governance of the Kalaupapa Settlement and the dissolution of the County of Kalawao upon the passing of the last patient resident. I respectfully oppose this bill due to the following critical concerns about its implications for the remaining patients, their families, and the preservation of Kalaupapa's unique historical and cultural legacy.

1. Loss of Autonomy and Dignity for Remaining Patients

The bill repeals many sections of Chapter 326, including §326-1.3, which explicitly recognizes the personal liberty, autonomy, and dignity of Kalaupapa's patient residents. This repeal is unnecessary and sends a troubling message to the remaining patients and their families, undermining the state's commitment to honoring their lived experiences and sacrifices. While there are only a few remaining patients, their dignity, autonomy, and legacy must remain a priority until the end of their lives. Removing these protections prematurely disregards the historical injustices they endured and marginalizes their voices.

2. Uncertainty Regarding the Transition to Maui County Governance

The bill proposes the dissolution of the County of Kalawao and its absorption into the County of Maui. This raises several unanswered questions:

- How will Maui County be equipped to govern the unique needs of this area, particularly its historical preservation and cultural significance?
- Will Maui County have sufficient resources and understanding to manage Kalaupapa's infrastructure, historical sites, and community interests?

Page 1 of 3

Testimony in Support with Comments of S.B. No. 1409- RELATING TO COUNTY USER FEES. DHHL; Counties; User Fees; County Powers; Exempts the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands from county user fees, in the amount of \$100,000 aggregate per year, and ensures county services to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for Hawaiian Home Lands.

- What specific ordinances or protections will Maui County enact to ensure that the unique identity of Kalaupapa is not lost in this transition?

The lack of detailed planning outlined in the bill creates uncertainty and risks neglecting the nuanced governance needs of Kalaupapa.

3. Inadequate Protections for Kalaupapa's Historical and Cultural Legacy

While the bill establishes the Kalaupapa State Historical Area, it fails to provide sufficient details about funding, management, and long-term preservation. The historical area's purpose—to commemorate the lives of Hansen's disease patients and those who served them—is noble, but the bill does not include enforceable commitments or adequate resources to ensure that this purpose is realized. Without explicit funding and clear management strategies, there is a risk that the area's historical and cultural significance will become neglected over time.

4. Disruption of Patient and Family Connections to Kalaupapa

For many patients and their families, Kalaupapa represents more than just a settlement—it is a sacred place that embodies their struggles, resilience, and community. The dissolution of the County of Kalawao and the removal of specific provisions, such as §326-40 (which guarantees patient residents the right to remain at Kalaupapa for as long as they choose), may sever this deeply personal connection. Families and advocates have expressed strong desires to ensure that Kalaupapa's legacy is preserved in a way that honors the people who lived there. This bill does not adequately reflect those values.

5. Lack of Public Participation and Transparency

Although the bill acknowledges the importance of public input, it does not outline concrete mechanisms to engage patients, families, and the broader community in decision-making about Kalaupapa's future. The historical significance of Kalaupapa extends far beyond its residents; it is a symbol of resilience and a critical part of Hawaii's history. Including affected communities and organizations, such as *Ka 'Ohana o Kalaupapa*, in shaping the transition and historical preservation process is essential.

6. Insufficient Transition Timeline

The bill proposes that key governance provisions be repealed one year after the passing of the last patient resident. This timeline is too short to ensure a smooth and thoughtful transition of governance, preservation efforts, and management responsibilities. Extending this timeline would allow for greater collaboration between stakeholders and ensure that Kalaupapa's historical and cultural significance is preserved for future generations.

Recommendations

To address these concerns, I respectfully urge the Committee to consider the following:

1. **Preserve Dignity and Autonomy:** Retain provisions, such as §326-1.3, that affirm the dignity and autonomy of Kalaupapa’s remaining patients for the duration of their lives.
2. **Detailed Transition Plan:** Require a comprehensive and transparent transition plan to Maui County governance that includes funding, infrastructure management, and ordinances to protect Kalaupapa’s unique identity.
3. **Guaranteed Funding for Preservation:** Include explicit provisions for the funding and maintenance of the Kalaupapa State Historical Area to ensure its long-term success.
4. **Extend the Transition Period:** Allow for a longer transition timeline of at least two to three years after the passing of the last patient resident to ensure thoughtful planning and collaboration.
5. **Engage Stakeholders:** Mandate active participation from patients, families, community groups, and organizations like *Ka ‘Ohana o Kalaupapa* in shaping the settlement’s future.

Conclusion

Kalaupapa is not just a place—it is a living testament to the resilience, courage, and dignity of individuals who endured tremendous hardships. This bill, in its current form, does not adequately honor their legacy or address the concerns of their families and advocates. I respectfully urge the Committee to amend this bill to reflect the values of respect, inclusion, and historical preservation that Kalaupapa represents. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to S.B. No. 1432.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ronnie Inagaki

SB-1409

Submitted on: 1/31/2025 1:47:40 PM

Testimony for HWN on 2/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Awai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of SB1409. Department of Health should no longer have jurisdiction over the Kalaupapa area. My father's first wife, Lillian Needham Kekipi was sent there about 1940 after 3 medical doctors at the Kalihi Hospital had diagnosed her with leprosy. She had a 5-month old child and worked In the Pineapple Cannery, while my father traveled around the Pacific Rim, as the first Hawaiian Diesel Mechanic and as a Native Hawaiian friend and advisor to many of the most powerful men in Hawaii and abroad and a Republican card holder.

Born in 1905 in the Puuloa which is now Pearl Harbor/Hickam area, my father, Isaia John M. Kekipi descends from the Kekipi family buried in the Moanalua Valley and owned the ahupuaa from the mountain to the sea in Kaneohe. He was probably involved in building the Halawa Aloha Stadium, which was to convert from a baseball field to a football field and the Red Hill Tanks, which was only supposed to be used temporarily. He knew a lot about the H2 freeway and how many had died building it through Halawa Valley which was ancient burial grounds for many. But he was imprisoned when he was setup by his own union InterIsland Floating Dock supervisor in the 1930s, which is described in John Hall ILWU's book, "A Spark is Struck!" And was labeled a criminal and his voting rights taken away. He may have been in prison when his wife, Lilian was labeled with a medical leprosy and sent to Kalaupapa.

Both of my half-brothers, Jeremiah and Lionel Kekipi were also sent to prison or Kalaupapa. Lionel was also sent to Kalaupapa, but was able to return to Oahu when he befriended a nurse and eventually married her and began a junkyard on Sand Island. Jeremiah was sent to prison for forgery for accepting an auto part and signing his brother's name. My brother, Joseph Kekipi, was also imprisoned several times and sent to the Hawaii State Hospital to be experimented on by doctors, like they do many of us that are labeled if we don't comply to their orders!

In 2005-9 as a national consultant, I learned at SAMHSA Center for Mental Health Services, now Office of Recovery under Paolo DelVecchio in Washington DC, the medications given to us are killing us 25-35 years earlier than those that don't take it! But we, especially the older kupuna continue to listen to these pros, who give us medications which causes us to fall in our age. The medical model professionals are only PRACTICING are experimenting on us to further their own research to prove theories they create!

After the pandemic, we all have a mental health issue due to the isolation, depression, and loneliness, but who really profitted during this time period? The Department of Health, like most state offices, except for essential workers, were closed down and everyone was being referred to

the C&C or county offices. From Maui, I participated in many of the weekly zoom meetings with Scott Morishige & Justin Lamasa under Governor Ige's Interagency Homeless and Housing council. But state employees still benefitted with the help of their union, such as HGEA, even if they only worked a few hours during the pandemic! My daughter was an essential worker at Judiciary and worked daily except for a few days in the beginning of covid.

As a former state worker for DOH, I saw others work efforts, which was very little which still continues today due to poor training and supervisorship. At AMHD, staff criticized those diagnosed like myself, who advocated against the Clubhouse Model. They felt I was less than if I preferred the Life Skills of Diamond Head and Haleiwa and did very little work, but got had been paid for decades! I worked with many individuals, such as Matt Matsunaga, Bruce Anderson, Linda Fox, Suzanne Chun-Oakland, Alex Santiago, Carol Kai of the Aloha Run, governors and organizations that supported me in my efforts as a behavioral health consultant and advocate. Mahalo for this opportunity the plight of my family under the issues created by the Department of Health and others!

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
*Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o
Hawai'i*

SYLVIA J. LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
*Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina
'o Hawai'i*



KALI WATSON
CHAIRPERSON, HHC
Ka Luna Ho'okele

KATIE L. LAMBERT
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR
Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS
Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawai'i

P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS AND
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
HEARING ON FEBRUARY 4, 2025 AT 1:00PM IN CR 224

SB 1409, RELATING TO COUNTY USER FEES

February 3, 2025

Aloha Chairs Richards and Wakai, Vice Chairs San Buenaventura and Chang, and
Members of the Committees:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **supports** this bill which
exempts the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands from county user fees, in the amount
of \$100,000 aggregate per year, and ensures county services to the Department of
Hawaiian Home Lands for Hawaiian Home Lands.

The cost savings by DHHL via exemption from county user fees, in the amount of
\$100,000 aggregate per year, could be used for infrastructure and housing needs for
Hawaiian Home Lands. This legislative proposal was approved by the Hawaiian Homes
Commission and included in the Governor's Administrative Package.

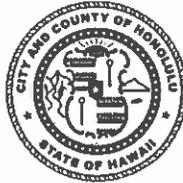
Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELAWE KAIĀPUNI
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

LATE

1000 ULU ŌHI'A STREET, SUITE 308 • KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707
PHONE: (808) 768-3486 • FAX: (808) 768-3487 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



February 3, 2025

ROGER BABCOCK, JR., Ph.D., P.E.
DIRECTOR
PO'O

MICHAEL O'KEEFE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

IN REPLY REFER TO:
DIR 25-10

The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs
The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chairs Richards and Wakai, and Vice Chairs Buenaventura and Chang:

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 1409 - Relating to County User Fees

The City and County of Honolulu's (City) Department of Environmental Services (ENV) submits the following comments in strong opposition to SB 1409, Relating to Water Pollution.

ENV operates and maintains the City's wastewater infrastructure, which consists of nine wastewater treatment plants, 72 wastewater pump stations, and 2,100 miles of collection systems, ENV is also responsible for executing the City's wastewater Capital Improvement Program, which is valued at approximately \$10.1 billion between Fiscal Years 2025 and 2040.

The costs of building, operating and maintaining the City's wastewater infrastructure are paid from the City's sewer enterprise fund, which is an entirely self-sufficient fund that relies entirely on the revenue it collects from sewer fees (i.e. customers paying their sewer bills) to remain solvent. The sewer enterprise fund is completely separate and receives no subsidy from the City's general fund.

If SB 1409 were to become law, ENV would be forced to forgo millions of dollars in sewer fee revenue annually, which would force it to shift the cost burden of building, operating and maintaining the City's wastewater infrastructure to its other customers.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 768-3486.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Babcock, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Roger Babcock, Jr., Ph.D., P.E.
Director Designate