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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

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DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
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ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE**

**Thursday, March 2, 2023  
2:30 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1394, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

House Bill 1394, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) Division of Forestry and Wildlife to manage hotspots at trailheads as part of the Nā Ala Hele Trail and Access Program (Program). **The Department strongly supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated the Department's Executive Budget request.**

The Department acknowledges the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Destination Management Action Plan initiative, which identified a series of destination "hotspots" across the state that are presenting management challenges to the agencies tasked with managing the hotspot areas. Program staff are currently actively engaged in a strategic planning effort to address the challenges associated with visitor use and have initiated programs and projects statewide to help mitigate the impacts of a rapid rise in outdoor recreation.

The funding proposed by this bill will allow the Department to put personnel and planning efforts in motion to address a number of these hotspots, including trailheads in the Koke'e region of Kaua'i, the Maunawili Falls and Ka'iwa Ridge trails on O'ahu, multiple areas on Maui, Naha Trail on Lāna'i, and Pololū Valley, Waipi'o Valley, and Maunakea on Hawai'i Island. The positions proposed will increase the Program staff by over 50% statewide, enabling enhanced, active, ongoing management of the Division of Forestry and Wildlife's recreational inventory.

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

**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 9:09:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bill Stormont	Department of Land and Natural Resources	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha. I am a DLNR employee with authorization to be available for questions from the Committee. Mahalo.

**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 2:19:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Klayton Kubo	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support

**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 5:19:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Catherine West Dale	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Fully support this bill!

**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 5:35:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Edwin Petteys	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair and Members of the House Finance Committee:

For many years, the Na Ala Hele program has struggled to manage our state’s trail and access system with minimal staffing and resources. It is a program that continues to grow both in terms of its geographic importance, but also in its cultural and recreational value to visitors and residents alike. Insufficient support has placed a difficult burden on this important program, forcing it into a triage-like prioritization process to allocate its limited resources. The result is, of course, inconsistent and reactive attempts to fulfill its responsibilities, and challenges in trying to manage this statewide program at a truly programmatic level. One of the symptoms of Na Ala Hele’s struggle is the hotspot issue referenced in this Bill. HB1394 is an opportunity to help this vitally important program to gain the staff and resources it needs to move into proactive, consistent, and more comprehensive program management. I ask your support of HB1394 to help this program more fully fulfill its mandates and obligations. Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully, Edwin Petteys, resident of Hawaii Island.

**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 10:03:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James B Friday	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Vice-Chair Kitagawa,

I am writing to support HB 1394 and support the DLNR's Na Ala Hele program. The state trails are real gems and I enjoy hiking on them a few times a month. The DLNR staff in charge of maintaining the trails are stretched thin, however, and many trails badly need upkeep and maintenance. HB 1394 would allocate much-needed funds to maintain and manage the trail system so that both residents and visitors can enjoy some of the most beautiful places in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration,

J. B. Friday

Hilo, Hawai'i

**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 8:40:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Deborah Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita and Members of the House Finance Committee:

Hawai‘i’s most cherished outdoor spaces on all the islands need to be better protected from the consequences of trail overcrowding and overuse. Our state’s trails should be an asset we can be proud to share with visitors, but this will require long-term commitment and investment. HB 1394 HDI would demonstrate that commitment.

HB1394 HD1 would better equip our Statewide Trail and Access System known as Nā Ala Hele, with resources and personnel needed to properly fix, manage, and maintain the “hot spots” that are being “loved to death.” For too many years, the Nā Ala Hele program has struggled to manage our state’s trail and access system with minimal staffing and resources.

Knowing the ownership of trails and accesses in the hot spots, as well as ownership of the historic Hawaiian trails, is critical to Nā Ala Hele’s work. HB 1394 HDI, SECTION 2.(7) provides for a full-time, permanent abstractor position on O‘ahu where many key sources of information for the abstractor’s research are located. Historic Hawaiian trails are a special category of trail completely unique to Hawai‘i, culturally significant, and can be government-owned, per the Highways Act of 1892 (see HRS §264-1). Claiming government-ownership of historic Hawaiian trails needs to be timely and requires professional research by an abstractor who is well-versed in Hawaiian land-tenure, language, and history. Time is running out for the protection of historic Hawaiian trails, as more rural lands are purchased and developed, especially on the neighbor islands.

Please support HB1394 HD1, which will improve the state’s ability to manage our trails on all the islands as well as help to protect the vulnerable, historic Hawaiian trails for future generations.

Respectfully,

Deborah Chang

Resident of Hawai‘i Island

**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2023 3:49:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members FIN,

My name is Diane Ware from the Moku o Ka'u. I strongly support appropriations for underfunded DLNR programs, divisions including Na Ala Hele. As an outings leader for SC Hawai'i Island I am aware of need in trail maintenance, access, parking and enforcement.

Mahao for this opportunity to comment.

99-7815 Kapoha Volcano 96785



**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/2/2023 9:39:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Nash	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony of *David Nash - Chair, Na Ala Hele Advisory Council (State and Oahu)*

Supporting Funding for the Department of Land and Natural Resources’

Na Ala Hele—Hawai‘i Trail and Access Program

I am in strong support of funding for the Department of Land and Natural Resources’ budget request for improving access to and maintaining state controlled recreational trails.

Public trails are conduits for recreational, subsistence, and cultural practices for a growing population of users. Heavy trail use affects not just people who use public trails, but communities and residents who live adjacent to once seldom used trailheads.

For over 10 years I have served on the Na Ala Hele trail council on Oahu and have served as state chair 3 times as well. During that time trail use has skyrocketed and yet funding has remained anemic and not grown commensurate with the use and need.

The Na Ala Hele Program has been challenged to keep up with the increasing demand for maintenance as trail use exceeds the program’s original expectations. Please increase the funding and positions contained in this bill.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

David Nash



**HB-1394-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/2/2023 10:17:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2023 2:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
nani pogline	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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As a Na Ala Hele council member, I get an inside view of the need for more funding to support valuable public access to Hawaii's unique places. The growing population needs more outdoors experience opportunity through trail access and management. Mahalo nui