

TESTIMONY

SB 1313

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
LAURA H. THIELEN
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committees on
WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, AND HAWAII AFFAIRS
and
TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, February 11, 2009
3:30pm
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1313
RELATING TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Senate Bill 1313 proposes to transfer the authority, duties, responsibilities and jurisdictions of the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department), and provides that HCDA's zoning authority reverts to the City and County of Honolulu. The Department respectfully opposes Senate Bill 1313 and provides the following comments.

The Department is responsible for managing approximately 1.3 million acres of public lands and the State's natural and cultural resources. The Department's responsibilities include managing and maintaining the State's coastal lands and waters, water resources, conservation and forestry lands, historical sites, small boat harbors, parks, and recreational facilities; performing public safety duties (e.g., flood and rockfall prevention); issuing and managing leases of public lands (agriculture, pasture, commercial, industrial, and resort leases); maintaining unencumbered public lands; and enforcing the Department's rules/regulations. Notwithstanding, many of the State's recreational facilities have fallen into alarming disrepair as a result, in part, of budgetary constraints.

Consequently, the Governor recently launched the Department's Recreational Renaissance initiative, an innovative change in the Department's philosophy as well as a viable economic plan to achieve greater efficiencies and self-sufficiency during today's increasingly difficult economic times. In cooperation with the Department of Budget and Finance, the Recreational Renaissance's economic plan proposes reasonable fee increases, partnered with new revenues from industrial and commercial lands under the Department's jurisdiction, to reinvigorate and maintain Hawaii's natural and recreational resources.

LAURA H. THIELEN
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RUSSELL Y. TSUJI
FIRST DEPUTY

KEN C. KAWAHARA
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

Considering the potential additional expenses to be incurred by the Department (i.e. unfunded positions resulting from the transfer of functions to the Department, obligations resulting from the deferred maintenance and condition of existing docks, piers, and other infrastructure associated with the Kalaeloa and Kakaako lands referenced in this measure, etc.), this measure will have a negative impact upon the Recreational Renaissance initiative's ability to succeed as well as the Department's ability to fulfill its fiduciary duties to protect Hawaii's natural resources.

Honorable Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair
Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

Honorable Senator J. Kalani English, Chair
Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Committee on Transportation, International and Intergovernmental Affairs

RE: SB 1313 – relating to repealing Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA)
and transferring jurisdiction of public lands back to DLNR – **IN STRONG SUPPORT**

Good Afternoon Chairs Hee & English, Vice Chairs Tokuda & Gabbard
and Committee Members:

I am Daisy Murai, born and raised on the Island of Oahu, have seen many, many changes in Development and Population Growth for the Island of Oahu within the last few years, not all are in the best interest for the Community members. I am not against progress or growth, but I feel it should be done in a careful and well planned manner, especially since Oahu, like the other Hawaiian Islands are loosing precious lands to over-development and lack of public infrastructure. The many residential projects of Mililani, Makakilo, Kapolei, Ewa Beach and even on the Waianae Coast are great for first time buyers to own their own home at affordable pricing, but during the morning and afternoon Rush Hours – **TRAFFIC GRIDLOCK** and **CONGESTION** are an everyday occurrence during weekdays, as some Legislature and Staff Members are experiencing. I feel that commuting traffic problems were never anticipated or envisioned in these planned communities, thus it's a daily nightmare for residents living in these communities traveling to Downtown.

The 2 recent decisions by HCDA of Public State & Private Lands in the Ala Moana/Kakaako District, I feel HCDA used the same premise as those projects in the Ewa Plains. HCDA recently approved General Growth's ambitious up to 20 Commercial and Residential high-rise towers with pedestrian walkways and meeting areas to replace the Ward Shopping Complex. These high rise buildings will be built next door to 3 – 4 existing High Rise Towers, without widening Ala Moana Boulevard or Ward Avenue in anticipation to increasing vehicle traffic. The earlier decision to sell or lease public lands in Kakaako Makai to a, private for profit establishment over the General Public clearly shows that **HCDA is NOT** managing the lands in the best interest for the General Public.

These are reasons, I strongly support SB 1313.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Daisy Murai
3039 Kaunaoa Street
Honolulu, HI 96815
February 10, 2009

Date of Hearing: February 11, 2009
Time: 3:30 pm
Place: Conference Room 229
FAX: 586-6659

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB1313
WITH A MUCH NEEDED CHANGE SUGGESTED

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AGRUCULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

AND

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, INTERNATIONAL AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Wednesday, 11 February 2009 in room 229 at 3:30 PM

Chairs Hee and English and respected members of the committees,

My name is Reg White. I work in the commercial boating industry of our state and have been involved with operations from Kewalo Basin for the past thirty five years. The recent years, since 1992, under the auspices of HCDA, our basin and its facilities have been allowed to run down and deteriorate, even though the state auditor reports show that there was an annual surplus of funds paid by our fees, income sufficient to have paid the maintenance all the way along. HCDA management has been a disaster for Kewalo Basin and its tenants from the beginning. This bill has our complete support except for the clause in Section 8 that transfers the staff from HCDA to go along with the job. This staff is the problem, they are the common thread that has caused our basin to deteriorate and they are the same people who mis-planned the restoration project in 1994 that made access to the basin nearly impossible for visitors who don't already know their way around, and in the process they parked the buses in a way to block the view of the waterfront from one of our main marketing sources, the traffic passing by on Ala Moana Blvd. No, if you must transfer this staff along with the job, then this bill has done nothing to help the tenants of Kewalo Basin. Please make the necessary amendments to fix this and then pass the bill.

Respectfully,

Reg White
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TESTIMONY

SB 1313

(END)