

Dear Senator Mike Gabbard,

RE: HCR160

April 15, 2016 2:55pm

Conference Room 224  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

LATE

My name is Carly Williamson and am an open water swimmer and beach goer. I am in support of HCR160 which would require the Dept of Land and Natural Resources to increase patrol of Kailua Bay, expand no wake zones and enforce boater safety.

A man was killed this year while doing what he loved in the ocean. He is not unlike many of us who live in and visit Hawaii who love to be in the ocean as swimmers, divers, paddlers, or as boaters. Everyone who enjoys the water deserves to be safe while doing so. Natural dangers already exist in the ocean, but safety can be improved by enforcing what can be controlled, such as boat speeds, dangerous wake and uneducated boat operators. The incident this year that killed an innocent man and ruined the life of the boat operator who may end up in prison for negligence, could have been prevented. As a swimmer, I now fear for my safety after hearing about what happened in Kailua Bay. I hope that better safety can be achieved by simply enforcing boater speeds and providing boater education. If the drivers of cars on the road must abide by speed limits and traffic laws, then boats should to. This is especially true in Hawaii where ocean sports are so popular.

I have swam from Lanikai to the Mokulua islands many times as a member of the open water swimming group, the Waikiki Swim Club. We always go early in the

morning to avoid boat, paddler, jetski and other vessels that could injure us. We wear bright colored swim caps and stay together with at least one person towing a dive buoy. We have an experienced leader who keeps track of us and monitors our ability to swim long distances before she allows us to join the open water group. Even with these precautions, a speeding boat with an uneducated operator could run us swimmers over before seeing our bright colors and dive buoys. Even if the boater did see us, boats do not have breaks and it could be too late to turn away. Swimmers and others who enjoy the calmness of being in the ocean should be protected from speeders just as pedestrians crossing the street are protected by speed limits and police who patrol the roads.

In conclusion, I support HCR160 and hope that the Legislature agrees that boater safety as well as the safety of everyone who enjoys the ocean is a growing issue in Hawaii and needs to be addressed better. Boats can be very dangerous and need to be monitored just like cars on the road are. We have a right to be protected from unnecessary accidents while being in the ocean, especially when this simple solution exists.

Sincerely,

Carly Williamson  
carlycw@hawaii.edu