

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committees on
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
and
WATER AND LAND**

**Wednesday, February 5, 2020
2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 414**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2915
RELATING TO LIFEGUARD SERVICES AT STATE PARK BEACHES**

Senate Bill 2915 proposes to allocate Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) revenues to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to cover lifeguard service expenses incurred at state park beaches. **The Department strongly supports this Administration measure.**

The Department's request in the Administration's budget for \$5 million in funds from the TAT would fully fund lifeguard service contracts for 5 Division of State Park (State Parks) beaches heavily patronized by both residents and out of state visitors. The cost of these contracts when added to the cost of State Parks staff salaries is currently 80% of the State Parks operating budget. The remaining 20% of the operating budget is insufficient to execute State Parks' core mission of the optimal management of state parks units and associated infrastructure and resources.

Currently several methods of financing are deployed to meet the fiscal obligation of these contracts. However, due to years of increased costs (salary increase and extended hours) and a lack of commensurate funding increases for State Parks, the actual cost is greater than what is being paid. This is creating tension between the Counties and State Parks due to this disparity and the obligation to continue services – which due the record tourism patronage is more critical

SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
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

than ever. In addition, the cost of equipment and tower upgrades could also be funded, rather than just salary.

This measure would provide a consistent, stable and single funding source to then allow State Parks to repurpose operating funds for needed equipment, vehicles, additional security, staffing and to initiate a program to begin to address the \$40 million backlog in repair and maintenance for the State Park system. In addition, should this measure be passed, the 2.1 million in general funds included in the Administration's proposed budget to offset the years of increased cost in the lifeguard contracts could then remain in the general fund.

In consultation with the Department of Budget and Finance, the Department recommends that the following amendment be inserted on page 7 of this measure in order to enable the Department to expend funds for the next fiscal year:

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the state parks special fund of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$5,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for lifeguard services, including but not limited to salary and equipment, at state beach parks for public safety at these areas frequented by visitors.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

The branding of Hawaii as a scenic and attractive resource destination, specifically our renowned beaches, has contributed to this unparalleled patronage. The investment of the \$5 million from the TAT is warranted to ensure the continued safety of residents and visitors to our State Park beaches. This is both a morally imperative action and critical to support the reputation of Hawaii as a safe destination.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

HONOLULU EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

3375 KOAPAKA STREET, SUITE 11-450 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819-1814
Phone: (808) 723-7800 • Fax: (808) 723-7836

KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR



JAMES D. HOWE, JR.
DIRECTOR

IAN T.T. SANTEE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 4, 2020

The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Water and Land

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
The Honorable Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Room 414
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Kahele, Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair Taniguchi, and Members of the Committees:

SUBJECT: Senate Bill No. 2915
Relating to Lifeguard Services at State Parks

The City and County of Honolulu's Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division supports SB 2915, which allocates funds to the state parks special fund for lifeguard (ocean safety) services at state beach parks. The City and County of Honolulu is preparing to provide Ocean Safety service from dawn to dusk island-wide. This would essentially increase by as much as one third (1/3), the number of hours currently staffed by Ocean Safety at Tower 50 at Kaena Point State Park.

This measure ensures sufficient funding as the City and County's Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division continues, and expands, its coverage at Kaena Point State Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

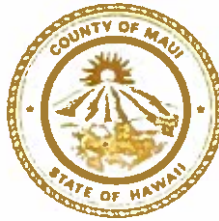
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Titchen".

John Titchen
Chief of Ocean Safety

MICHAEL P. VICTORINO
Mayor

DAVID C. THYNE
Fire Chief

BRADFORD K. VENTURA
Deputy Fire Chief



DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & PUBLIC SAFETY
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 DAIRY ROAD
KAHULUI, HI 96732

February 3, 2020

The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Committee on Water and Land
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, HI 96813

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 407
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chairs Kahele and Wakai:

Subject: Senate Bill (SB) 2915 Relating to Lifeguard Services at State Park Beaches

I am David C. Thyne, member of the Hawaii State Fire Council (SFC) and Fire Chief of the County of Maui, Department of Fire & Public Safety (MFD). The County of Maui Department of Fire & Public Safety supports SB 2915, which allocates \$5,000,000 to the State Parks provided that the allocation shall be expended for lifeguard services, including but not limited to salary and equipment, at state beach parks for public safety at these areas frequented by visitors.

The tourism industry in Hawaii continues to grow, as Visitor interest in Hawaii have surpassed previous records. The statewide visitor spending through July 2018 was \$10.92 billion (an increase of 9.8 percent), surpassing the results for the same period last year. Total visitor arrivals rose 5.3 per cent to 939,360 visitors, the most ever for any month in Hawaii's history. The increase in tourism requires safeguards to protect Hawaii's cultural and natural resources, its residents, and visitors to the islands. The department of land and natural resources, specifically through its state parks and certain state park beaches are observing and managing greater park patronage due to this increasing tourism numbers. The increase in visitor arrivals, with their inadequate ocean survival skills or knowledge of Hawaii's ocean conditions, have added to additional increases in beach patronage and ancillary rescues. The department of land and natural resources relies on several and currently insufficient funding sources to pay for the cost of contracts with the counties for water safety officers at state park beaches that have been identified as high risk for drowning,

The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair

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February 3, 2020

spinal cord injury, and other ocean—related injuries. Additionally, the salary costs are increasing and the need to provide equipment to support water safety has increased the cost of these contracts since their inception. The revenue associated with the transient accommodations tax presents a clear nexus for enhancing visitor safety. A warranted source of funding in maintaining a skilled county water safety presence in select state beach parks is in critical need due to increasing tourism and beach patronage.

The County of Maui Department of Fire & Public Safety urges your committee's support on the passage of SB 2915.

Should you have questions, please contact Fire Chief David C. Thyne at (808) 270-7561 and david.thyne@mauicounty.gov.

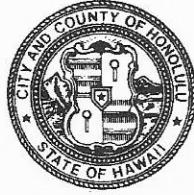
Sincerely,



DAVID C. THYNE
Fire Chief

HONOLULU EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

3375 KOAPAKA STREET, SUITE H-450 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819-1814
Phone: (808) 723-7800 • Fax: (808) 723-7836



KIRK CALDWELL
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DIRECTOR

IAN T.T. SANTEE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 3, 2020

The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
And Members of the Committee on Water and Land
The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair
And Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic
Development and Tourism

State Senate
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street, Room 414
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chairs Kahele and Wakai and Vice Chairs Keith-Agaran and Taniguchi and
Members of the Committees:

SUBJECT: SB2915
Relating to Lifeguard Services at State Park Beaches
In Support with Recommendation for Amendment

The Honolulu Emergency Services Department (HESD), which manages both the Ocean Safety and Emergency Medical Services programs for the City and County of Honolulu is in **support** of SB2915 and requests an amendment, for the purposes of clarification, to Page 6, Lines 12 through 17 as follows:

"\$5,000,000 shall be allocated to the State Parks Special Fund established under HRS Section 184-3.4; provided that the allocation shall be expanded for ocean safety services, including but not limited to salary and equipment at State beaches and beach parks for ocean safety services at these areas frequented by visitors."

The island of Oahu has benefitted economically from continued visitor growth with preliminary arrivals of 6,193,027 visitors in 2019 which is an increase of 5.6% from 2018.

The economic benefits have also translated into an increased demand for public life safety services as visitors explore our island looking for unique and exciting experiences. Often times, visitors are unaware of the hazards associated with our beaches and ocean waters, which can result in tragic consequences.

The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair, WTL
The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair, EET
The Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, WTL
The Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair, EET
February 3, 2020
Page 2

HESD's Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division is tasked via the City Charter with being the primary responder to all emergencies that arise on the beaches and near-shore waters of Oahu. This includes 181 identified beaches and ocean related activities taking place in the waters and off-shore islands from the shoreline to one mile off-shore.

In order to meet this charter requirement, the Division provides two levels of ocean safety services. Lifeguard tower service is provided at 41 locations, including a portion of Kaena Point State Beach Park. This service provides constant vigilance, preventive, emergency medical, and ocean rescue services.

The remaining beaches, both State and County beach parks, are serviced by mobile lifeguard services which provide limited preventive services, and full scale emergency medical and ocean rescue services via patrol and "911" dispatch to emergencies.

Mobile service has proved to be highly effective in serving the ocean safety needs of our community and has expanded from 13 to 17 units daily since 2015. This service is equipment intensive as the mobile service relies on vehicles, all-terrain vehicles, rescue skis and a rescue boat to ensure timely and effective lifesaving prevention, intervention and responses.

Both tower lifeguard service and mobile service are currently available from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily with two exceptions; Hanauma Bay and a small portion of Waikiki Beach.

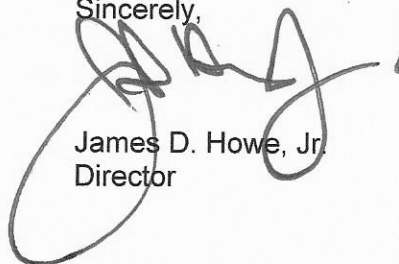
HESD is preparing to present to the City Council a program to extend lifeguard service hours from Dawn to Dusk to address drowning deaths that occur before and after current lifeguard service hours.

The use of T.A.T. funds for ocean safety equipment would directly benefit visitor safety for those who use our beaches and state waters.

As we all know, visitors to Hawaii come here to use our beaches and experience the wonders of our ocean waters.

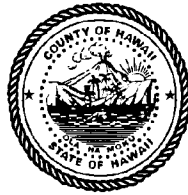
Thank you for your consideration and support of this life safety measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James D. Howe, Jr.", is written over a large, loopy circular flourish.

James D. Howe, Jr.
Director

Harry Kim
Mayor



Darren J. Rosario
Fire Chief

Lance S. Uchida
Deputy Fire Chief

County of Hawai'i
HAWAI'I FIRE DEPARTMENT
25 Aupuni Street • Suite 2501 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
(808) 932-2900 • Fax (808) 932-2928

February 3, 2020

The Honorable Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Committee on Water and Land
State Capitol, Room 213
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Kahele:

Subject: S.B. 2915, RELATING TO LIFEGUARD SERVICES AT STATE PARKS BEACHES

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2020

Time/Place of Hearing: 2:45 p.m., Conference Room 414

I am Darren J. Rosario, Fire Chief of the Hawai'i Fire Department of the County of Hawai'i (HCFD). The HCFD supports S.B. 2915 which proposes to allocate Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) revenues to cover lifeguard service expenses incurred at state park beaches.

The HCFD is currently contracted by the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) for Water Safety Officers at the Hapuna and Kua Bay State beach parks. Historically, the cost of maintaining and expanding services has grown without an appreciable growth in the funding received by the DLNR due to overall fiscal health of the state. The HCFD has relied on the Daniel R. Sayre Memorial Foundation to fund critical needed equipment at Hapuna Beach Park such as ATV units, Long Range Acoustic Devices, Rescue Boards, and other protective equipment.

The TAT was designed to offset the impacts of tourism on the local governments. The use of TAT funding for state beach parks is directly related to the mission of the TAT.

Please do not hesitate to call me at 932-2903 or darren.rosario@hawaiiicounty.gov should you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2915.

Respectfully,

DARREN J. ROSARIO
Fire Chief





February 4, 2020

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism
Senator Kai Kahele, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land

Comments on SB2915

Dear Senators Wakai, Taniguchi, Kahele, Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism and the Committee on Water and Land,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB2915, providing additional TAT revenues to the DLNR for lifeguard services at state parks.

While we strongly believe that additional resources should be provided to support safety and security measures at our state parks and beaches, we believe those funds should come through the state's share of TAT currently in general fund revenues (\$339,000,000 representing 56.6% of overall TAT collections) and the budget allocation process to the departments, not from creating additional special allocations of the TAT, such as the one proposed.

We believe that nimbleness and flexibility better serves the state's interests moving forward, so that it can address challenges as they unfold, without subdividing and earmarking the TAT into a multitude of categories.

KCRA is a collection of master-planned resorts and hotels situated north of KOA which represents more than 3,500 hotel and timeshare accommodations and an equal number of resort residential units. This is approximately 35 percent of the accommodations available on the island. KCRA members annually pay more than \$20 million in TAT, \$20 million in GET and \$11 million in property taxes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie P. Donoho". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Stephanie Donoho, Administrative Director

SB-2915

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 11:17:20 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/5/2020 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jason Kohl	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2915

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 1:14:17 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/5/2020 2:45:00 PM

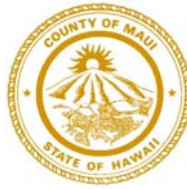
Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Harold Teshima	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this Bill. Mahalo for your continued support for Hawaii Ocean Safety.

Michael P. Victorino
Mayor

Sananda K. Baz
Managing Director



LATE



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

February 5, 2020

TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL P. VICTORINO
MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
TOURISM, and WATER AND LAND
Wednesday, February 5, 2020, 2:45 p.m.
Conference Room 414

SB2915 RELATING TO LIFEGUARDS AT STATE BEACHES

Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Honorable members of the Committee on Water and Land
Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
Honorable Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair
Honorable members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **FULL SUPPORT** of SB2915.

With a record-setting number of visitor arrivals, State park beaches are having to cope with greater patronage. Many of these visitors do not have adequate ocean-safety knowledge and skills, leading to an increase in water injuries and rescues. The Department of Land and Natural Resources does not have sufficient funds to pay the increasing cost of contracts with counties for water safety officers' salaries and equipment, especially at beaches at higher risk for drowning and other ocean-related injuries.

This bill provides for several appropriations to address this critical need. Included in those appropriations is an allocation to the County of Maui of 22.8% (or \$23,484,000) of \$103,000,000. An additional \$5,000,000 is to be allocated to a state parks special fund to cover lifeguard services, including salaries and equipment, at State beach parks that are more prone to safety issues and injuries. These amounts are to be funded by revenues collected under the transient accommodations tax (TAT) that are placed in special accounts set up by the State Director of Finance for this dedicated, sole and exclusive purpose.

Accordingly, I strongly urge you to pass this measure, SB2915.

LATE

SB-2915

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 3:24:03 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/5/2020 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ron Bregman	Testifying for Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-2915

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 7:26:37 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/5/2020 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bryan Phillips	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

IN SUPPORT of SB 2915, which allocates funds to the state parks special fund for lifeguard (ocean safety) services a tstate beach parks. Mahalo