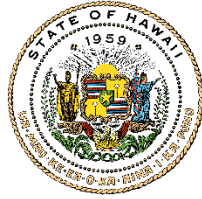


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

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

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
WATER & LAND

Tuesday, March 21, 2023
9:15 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 430

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1136, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO STATE PARKS

Senate Bill 1136, Senate Draft 1 proposes to require the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to conduct a study of the carrying capacity of Mākena State Park in the County of Maui and appropriates funds. **The Department respectfully opposes this measure.**

The Department appreciates this measure's intent to better support Mākena State Park and asks that State Parks be allowed to keep its focus on implementing parking improvements rather than diverting staff time to conduct or oversee a study. State Parks has never performed a carrying capacity study for the 3 park units that currently have advanced reservations. At Ha'ena State Park, the volume of cars and length of stay was determined by the number of parking spaces, the shuttle system capacity, and simply selecting a reasonable length of stay. In the master planning process, the community selected a substantially lower number (900) than the average of 3,000 per day. Before the parking improvements, no paved and allotted parking spaces created a chaos of cars parking on shoulders and deep into the neighborhood.

Wai'anapanapa State Park's temporal capacity was determined in consultation with State Park staff and the parking concessioner who in the collection of fees determined that rate by which spaces in the lot would turn over and factored in the shorter length of stay of the tour vans. This park unit is typically one of many stops along the Hana Highway for visitors. At Diamond Head State Monument, there was over 20 years of data from parking vendors making the calculation of hourly and daily patronage very accurate. Each of these systems can be adjusted weekly and seasonally as warranted and to ensure residents always have parking access.

The Department appreciates that the intent of this bill is to improve the parking situation at Mākena State Park, and specifically to support a reservation system that sets aside parking for residents. The Department agrees that the parking at Mākena State Park needs to be improved, and is initially addressing the Mākena

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
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

parking situation with paving and striping of the shoulder areas of the entry road that now get congested with parked cars. The Department is examining an exterior fence option to restrict access from outside the park boundary. The other 3 park units with reservations have a single control point for entry. State Parks would need a single control point for entry at Mākena State Park to establish a reservation system.

When State Parks rebids the parking contract by the end of the year, a reservation system based on lot turnover can be established that sets a temporal capacity over the span of a day and will ensure that there will always be dedicated parking for local residents. These limits can be adjusted to allow for more resident parking and entry on weekends and holidays to support free, non-reservation-based access for our local residents.

As State Parks moves forward Mākena State Park parking improvements, State Parks is also working with NIC Hawaii to add Iao Valley State Monument as the 4th reservation-based access for out of state visitors. State Parks is doing this work in collaboration with the current parking vendor, and is factoring in the new additional stalls created during current CIP improvements to better organize large tour buses and independent travelers.

The Department appreciates the intent of this measure but asks that State Parks be allowed to keep its focus on implementing parking improvements at Mākena State Park.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in respectful opposition to this measure.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

KEKUHAUPIO R. AKANA
Acting Managing Director



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

March 19, 2023

TO: Honorable Rep. Linda Ichiyama, Chair
Honorable Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
House Committee on Water and Land

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor

DATE: March 19, 2023

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB 1136, SD1, RELATING TO STATE PARKS**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this Act is to appropriate moneys for the department of land and natural resources to conduct a carrying capacity study, which will be submitted before the legislature convenes for the regular session of 2024.

I **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Access to Makena State Park is an ongoing concern for Maui residents due to an excess of visitor traffic. This measure supports means to ensure that residents' public access to these important community assets will be preserved.
2. The measure will reduce the impact of humans on the health and abundance of natural resources, cultural resources, and native species within the park.

For the foregoing reasons, I **SUPPORT** this measure.



MAUI TOMORROW

Protecting Maui's Future

Testimony before the
Senate Committee on Water & Land

March 21, 2023

S.B. No. 1136 SD1 – Relating to State Parks
STRONG SUPPORT

By Albert Perez
Executive Director
Maui Tomorrow Foundation

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the committee:

The Maui Tomorrow Foundation STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB 1136 SD1. Thank you for hearing this important bill.

In the 1980s when the Wailea-Mākena area began experiencing rapid growth, developers made plans to build beachfront condos at Oneloa (or Big Beach), which was then a long, isolated stretch of sand surrounded by kiawe. Realizing what was at stake, citizens began a successful effort to convince the Legislature to acquire the land. The result is Mākena State Park, now one of the most popular beach parks on Maui. The waters offshore are still some of the cleanest in the state, and endangered hawksbill turtles are known to nest there.

Today this park is under immense pressure as a result of increasing tourism numbers. Residents are often unable to find parking, as every available space is often taken up. As a result, people are parking outside the paved parking areas, and State Parks' proposed response is to simply accommodate that demand by paving new parking areas without knowing the capacity of this beautiful natural area to absorb impacts. A carrying capacity study is needed to determine whether the Park's environmental, cultural, psychological or social carrying capacity have been exceeded. If such a study is not conducted, Mākena State Park will be at risk of losing its 'sense of place' due to the impacts of overtourism on the ecosystem and landscape. Many would argue that this has already occurred, but there is no objective way of knowing without conducting a carrying capacity study.

The Division of State Parks has already taken action to manage overtourism on Kaua'i, through its adoption of the Hā'ena State Park Master Plan. This plan aims to improve the long-term management of the park and visitor satisfaction by implementing transportation and parking management practices; as well as establishing a target for a reduction in the number of daily visitors.

Similarly, in recent years crowding at Waianapanapa State Park near Hāna had impacted the adjacent community and overall visitor experiences. In response, a reservation system was launched, with fees for visitor entry and parking, while Hawai'i residents are still able to park there for free.

On the State Parks web site for Waianapanapa, State Parks Administrator Curt Cottrell is quoted as saying, "Quality over quantity is our new target in management." Mākena State Park deserves the same consideration, and a carrying capacity study for this park will be a good first step.

I urge you to support this important bill.

Mahalo,

Albert Perez
Executive Director
Maui Tomorrow Foundation

SB-1136-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 9:59:51 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/21/2023 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

We need to preserve this valuable resource!

SB-1136-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 10:45:01 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/21/2023 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Young MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

we are overwhelmed with people at Makena

SB-1136-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 7:05:41 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/21/2023 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
STACEY ANN LEILANI CASCO	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure. There is too much tourist in Makena. Commercial activity at Makena Landing negatively impact marine life and local traditions.