



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1924, RELATING TO A WILDFIRE FORECAST SYSTEM FOR HAWAII.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEES ON WATER AND LAND AND ON
HIGHER EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY

DATE: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 309 and Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Candace J. Park, Deputy Attorney General

Chairs Ichiyama and Perruso and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill: (1) requires the University of Hawaii to establish and report on a two-year program to develop a wildfire forecast system for the State using artificial intelligence approaches; and (2) makes an appropriation for purposes of the Act.

Article X, section 6, of the Hawai'i Constitution gives the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university." Section 6 further provides: "This section shall not limit the power of the legislature to enact laws of statewide concern. The legislature shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to identify laws of statewide concern." If the Committee decides to pass this bill, we recommend an amendment that adds a statement identifying this bill as a law of statewide concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Water & Land
House Committee of Higher Education & Technology
Wednesday, January 31, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Brennon Morioka, Dean
College of Engineering

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1924 – RELATING TO A WILDFIRE FORECAST SYSTEM FOR HAWAII

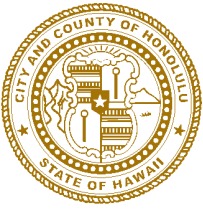
Chairs Ichiyama and Perruso, Vice Chairs Poepoe and Kapela, and members of the Water & Land and Higher Education & Technology Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1924, provided its adoption does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. This measure establishes and appropriates funds for the University of Hawai'i to develop a wildfire forecast system for the State of Hawai'i. The system will assist in forecasting potential wildfire incidents across the State of Hawai'i in order to enhance public safety, preparedness, and risk mitigation.

This early detection system will allow authorities to issue timely warnings to enhance the preparedness of first responders and enable the broader community to take proactive measures, such as evacuation planning and home risk mitigation. By providing timely information, these forecasts can help reduce the total area burned and mitigate the overall impacts of wildfire through rapid response and suppression efforts. By better anticipating potential wildfire locations and intensities, the forecast system assists emergency responders to allocate resources more efficiently. This includes positioning of firefighting teams, equipment, and helicopters in strategic locations based on the forecasted fire behavior. The rapid response leads to better control of the fire, reducing its spread and resultant damage. Finally, in collaboration with the National Weather Service, Department of Land and Natural Resources-Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Hawai'i-Emergency Management Agency, and county fire departments, wildfire risk forecasts from this project will be integrated into the Red Flag Warning to improve the overall preparedness and response capabilities of these agencies.

The UH Mānoa (UHM) College of Engineering's research capabilities in artificial intelligence and the Hawai'i Climate Data Portal development by the UHM Water Resources Research Center, combined with the extensive outreach activities and technical solutions from the UHM College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, will provide the full range of skillsets and research, as well as the climate data necessary to develop this important tool for Hawai'i's decision-makers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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RADIANT CORDERO
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January 29, 2024

The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Chair
The Honorable Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
And Members of the Committee on Water & Land

The Honorable Amy A. Perruso, Chair
The Honorable Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
And Members of the Committee on Higher Education & Technology

Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 2:00 PM
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Subject: Strong Support of HB 1924 Relating to a Wildfire Forecast System for Hawai'i

I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1924 that proposes to establish a two-year program at the University of Hawai'i to forecast the risk of wildfire statewide using artificial intelligence approaches.

I support this measure/program that aims to reduce the risk of life and property as a result of wildfires.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Radiant Cordero".

Radiant Cordero
Councilmember, District VII