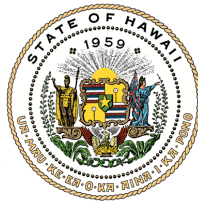


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



JORDAN LOWE
DIRECTOR

MICHAEL VINCENT
Deputy Director
Administration

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR
KE KE'ENA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai

715 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TESTIMONY ON

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 84 AND SENATE RESOLUTION 70
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT TO CONVENE A
SEARCH AND RESCUE WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS TO DETER HIKERS FROM ENTERING ILLEGAL HIKING
TRAILS AND TO ADDRESS RISING SEARCH AND RESCUE COSTS FACING THE
STATE AND COUNTIES DUE TO INCREASED ILLEGAL HIKING TRAFFIC.

Before the Senate Committee on

Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

Monday, April 1, 2024; 3:00 p.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 225, Via Videoconference

Testifier: Jared Redulla

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) supports Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 84 and Senate Resolution 70 that requests the Department of Law Enforcement is requested to convene a Search and Rescue Working Group to develop and make recommendations to deter hikers from entering illegal hiking trails and to address rising search and rescue costs facing the State and counties due to increased illegal hiking traffic;

State law enforcement is regularly called upon to participate in search and rescue operations for people who have ignored posted warnings, left defined hiking trails, and ventured into closed areas that have been posted. These situations typically do not involve standard search and rescue of lost or injured persons which are anticipated and part of expected operations of first responders. These are situations created by an individual's choice to ignore posted warnings and the efforts of government agencies or private landowners to keep them safe. When first responders

are called upon to engage in these types of search and rescue operations involving people who make poor decisions, ongoing operations must be put on hold and agencies often incur additional unbudgeted costs and expense through overtime, calling in additional responders, and costs of equipment and supplies.

For these reasons, the DLE believes that the study requested in SCR is timely and relevant towards learning whether penalties such as fines, or the collection of fees would be a suitable method to deter people hiking in unauthorized areas, and later requiring to be rescued. Consequently, the DLE supports SCR 84 and SR 70.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this resolution.

Chair Glen Wakai

Vice Chair Brandon J.C. Elefante

House Committee on PSM

Testimony in SUPPORT of S.C.R N.O. 84: Relating to requesting the DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT TO CONVENE A SEARCH AND RESCUE WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO DETER HIKERS FROM ENTERING ILLEGAL HIKING TRAILS AND TO ADDRESS RISING SEARCH AND RESCUE COSTS FACING THE STATE AND COUNTIES DUE TO INCREASED ILLEGAL HIKING TRAFFIC

Hearing: 04/01/2024 3:00 pm (Video Conference)

Aloha Chair Glen Wakai, Vice Chair Brandon J.C. Elefante, and members of the Committee:

I am Ashley Wong, a student in the Thompson School of Social Work program at The University of Hawaii at Mānoa. As a concerned citizen, I am writing to express my full support for S.C.R. NO. 84. This resolution, which calls for establishing a Search and Rescue Working Group to address the escalating issues surrounding illegal hiking in Hawaii, is a crucial step towards ensuring the safety of both hikers and the environment.

Hiking is a cherished activity in Hawaii, but the recent surge in popularity has brought about significant safety and environmental challenges. Irresponsible hikers disregard trail closures and warning signs, endangering their lives and harming native habitats. Each rescue operation incurs substantial costs, burdening state and county budgets.

It is distressing to witness individuals and groups disregarding trail closures and warning signs, endangering their lives and harming delicate native habitats and natural resources. Closing specific trails is not arbitrary; mitigating safety risks and protecting the environment is necessary.

Furthermore, the strain placed on emergency responders could be more sustainable due to the increasing search and rescue operations. Each rescue operation incurs substantial costs, burdening state and county budgets. Implementing fines or fees for individuals requiring rescue due to their negligence is justifiable and essential in promoting accountability and discouraging reckless behavior.

Drawing inspiration from the practices of other states that have successfully implemented penalties for irresponsible hikers, Hawaii has the opportunity to develop

effective policies that prioritize public safety and environmental conservation. I urge esteemed lawmakers to wholeheartedly support S.C.R. NO: 84 and establishing the Search and Rescue Working Group. By doing so, we can take proactive measures to address the pressing issues surrounding illegal hiking, safeguard lives, and preserve Hawaii's natural treasures for generations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your dedication to the well-being of our community.

Ke aloha nui,
Ashley Wong
Wonga3@hawaii.edu

SCR-84

Submitted on: 3/29/2024 7:56:02 PM

Testimony for PSM on 4/1/2024 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brent Teraoka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I am writing in support of SCR84. Our neighborhood has been directly impacted by the illegal hiking of Haiku Stairs for decades. Social media and crowd sourcing has exacerbated the problem tenfold. The lack of fear of repercussions is apparent. There are several videos currently available on YouTube that encourage the illegal behavior, treating it as a recreational "mission." There are various websites that provide maps/directions that guide people through our neighborhood. There are websites like AllTrails that allow users to broadcast their trip to Haiku Stairs and invite others to join them on their publicly available message boards. There have been photos and videos of giant swings and trampolines setup. And the fact that people will voluntarily post all of this online shows how little they are concerned with any consequences. And the ones who are impacted the most are the local residents who are forced to see our communities overrun by these entitled individuals. How would you like it if you saw a person trespass on your property and use your hose to wash their mud off before they leave. Or if you saw a person who just trespass on your property take a selfie before jumping into their car and laugh while casually driving away. SCR84 is a step in the right direction in giving us the relief that we've spent years asking for.

Hearing on SCR 84 and SR 70
April 1, 2024 at 3:00 pm

LATE

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety & Intergovernmental & Military Affairs

RE: SCR 84 and SR 70 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT TO CONVENE A SEARCH AND RESCUE WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO DETER HIKERS FROM ENTERING ILLEGAL HIKING TRAILS AND TO ADDRESS RISING SEARCH AND RESCUE COSTS FACING THE STATE AND COUNTIES DUE TO INCREASED ILLEGAL HIKING TRAFFIC.

Mr. Chairperson and members of the Committee:

Thank you, Chair Wakai, for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SCR 84/SR 70, requesting that a working group be established to make recommendations to deter hikers from entering illegal hiking trails, causing a nuisance in private neighborhoods and putting firefighters at risk with each rescue.

My name is Jennifer Sabas, and my family and I have lived for decades with hikers illegally trespassing through our community to get to the Haiku Stairs. We are used to the familiar sound of helicopters whirling above our home and hovering by the mountains in search of stranded hikers and the landings at Kaneohe District Park. We appreciate the police patrols in our neighborhoods, which have reduced the number of hikers.

Any recommendations that will incentivize less risky behavior on the part of hikers, more respectful actions in private neighborhoods, while not unnecessarily putting firefighters into risky rescue situations, would be appreciated.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SCR 84/SR 70

Aloha,
Jennifer Sabas