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HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 418 HD1
RELATING TO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON **PUBLIC SAFETY AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS
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HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

MARCH 13, 2023

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Elefante, and members of the committee:

I am James Barros, Administrator of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA).

HI-EMA provides written testimony to **OFFER COMMENT** on HB418 HD1.

This measure appropriates an unspecified sum to repair sirens statewide that are part of the all-hazard statewide outdoor warning siren system.

HI-EMA appreciates the intent to designate additional resources to address siren maintenance issues. Multiple sirens across Hawai'i have been out of operation for various reasons, and the elected officials representing the areas served by those have been an invaluable resource in advising HI-EMA of inoperative sirens and informing the community about HI-EMA's progress toward repairing them.

However, the continued challenges of vandalism, supply-chain delays, and scheduling repair visits have hindered the needed timely repairs to sirens across the State. These issues will not be solved by supplemental appropriations alone, and HI-EMA is revising its management system for the siren network to improve oversight and reduce lag time in addressing identified repair needs, whatever the cause.

HI-EMA would like to note for the committee members that there is a Capital Improvement Project item under consideration by the Legislature that provides funding for siren modernization and maintenance. We recognize that this bill could be seen as addressing the same State need and trust to the wisdom of the committee to identify the appropriate vehicle or vehicles to advance the objective of improved safety.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature to develop a solution that delivers excellent siren maintenance services statewide. We are in favor of this bill provided that it does not conflict with or replace the priorities set forth in the administration's executive budget proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

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