



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 Finance
Monday, February 26, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

By

Charles "Chip" Fletcher, PhD

Interim Dean

School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology

And

Darren Lerner, PhD

Director, Sea Grant College Program

Name, Dean or Director

And

Michael Bruno, PhD

Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 2248 HD1 – RELATING TO BEACH MANAGEMENT ON THE NORTH SHORE OF OAHU

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) and the Climate Resilience Collaborative (CRC) support House Bill 2248 HD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to develop a north shore beach management plan for the north shore of O'ahu from Sunset point to the Kapo'o (Sharks Cove) area.

Hawai'i Sea Grant has developed similar beach and dune management plans for Maui County, Kailua Beach Park and the Hawai'i Dune Restoration Manual as recent examples of similar work.

A common element of coastal management planning involves the evaluation and assessment of climate adaptation pathways, triggers and implementation strategies. This is an important component of any coastal planning effort and a consideration for this bill as it would serve to provide professional merit as a comprehensive climate adaptation plan rather than just a beach management plan. This expanded focus could be referenced as a climate adaptation plan in addition to beach management throughout the bill.

The measure, if passed, can serve as an adaptation planning and community engagement model for other coastal communities struggling with coastal hazards and sea level rise and can facilitate improved community-focused coastal planning statewide.

CRC is a multi-investigator research project at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa focused on sea level rise adaptation and climate resilience. CRC is updating coastal models that project the impacts of sea level rise.

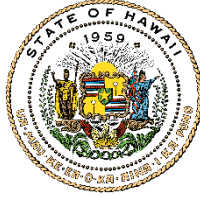
Hawai'i Sea Grant's mission is to provide integrated research, extension, and education activities that increase understanding and use of ocean and coastal resources of the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands and support the informed personal, policy, and management decisions that are integral to realizing this vision. Hawai'i Sea Grant is part of a national network of 34 university-based programs associated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that promote better understanding, conservation, and use of coastal resources.

CRC and Hawai'i Sea Grant would be happy to provide updated sea level rise data and projections to the Committee or any lawmaker upon request.

CRC and Hawai'i Sea Grant support House Bill 2248 HD1, provided its adoption does not impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

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LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Monday, February 26, 2024
3:30 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2248, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO BEACH MANAGEMENT ON THE NORTH SHORE OF OAHU

House Bill 2248, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to develop a beach management plan for the North Shore of O'ahu from Sunset Point to the Kapo'o (Sharks Cove) area. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the bill.**

The Department supports proactive adaptation planning for the impacts of coastal erosion and sea level rise. The development of a dune and beach management plan follows up on the 2022 findings of the North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group, which was comprised of beach advocates, community members, government officials, and representatives of the University of Hawai'i.

A beach management plan for O'ahu's North Shore presents the opportunity to focus on the ecological health of an iconic beach, and on the preservation of the State's public trust resources by addressing the inevitability of beach migration. The Department appreciates that the management plan will outline concrete adaptation and implementation strategies, and believes that the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program possesses the requisite understanding of both beach processes and of human activity in the area to develop an effective plan.

The Department hopes that a successful plan can provide a template for other communities in Hawai'i that are facing the effects of coastal erosion and sea level rise.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.



2/26/2024

Finance Committee
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Finance Committee,

Position: Support HB2248 - North Shore beach management and climate adaptation plan

The Surfrider Foundation, Hawai'i region, is testifying in **strong support of HB2248**, relating to the creation of a North Shore beach management plan.

From 2021-2022, the Surfrider Foundation, O'ahu Chapter, SeaGrant, and SSFM International convened the North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group (NSCRWG),¹ a group of stakeholders on the North Shore, to discuss the imminent threats of sea level rise and proposed solutions. Of our 6 recommendations, two specifically discussed the immediate need to develop a beach management and adaptation plans:

Recommendation #4. Develop a beach and dune management plan for North Shore beach parks and accessways, including guidelines that may be transferable to efforts fronting privately owned lands

Recommendation #5. Develop a comprehensive climate change and sea level rise vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategy for the North Shore

It is evident that comprehensive beach management and adaptation plans are not only warranted, but immediately needed to ensure that we can proactively approach the impacts of climate change and sea level rise. HB2248 allocates funds and resources to a problem that we should have begun addressing in a more comprehensive manner decades ago. Given the immense challenge of private property being built too close to the ocean coupled in an area that is undergoing long-term erosion, we need plans and we needed them yesterday. It is our hope that the plans developed by this bill will serve as a prototype to be replicated to other areas around the state.

In Hawai'i, beaches are an integral part of our way of life. While it is easy to discount projects such as this, HB2248 supports plans that are integral to ensuring that we have beaches for the next generation. Surfrider Foundation spent over \$20,000 of our nonprofit funds to bring the North Shore Working Group to fruition. We now ask the state to do their share and support HB2248 and the requested appropriations.

The Surfrider Foundation is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our ocean, waves, and beaches. Surfrider maintains a network of over 150 chapters and academic clubs nationwide, including 3 chapters in the Hawaiian Islands. The Surfrider Foundation focuses on many aspects of the environment such as coastal protection, plastic pollution, and water quality. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony in support of HB2248, submitted on the behalf of the Surfrider Foundation's 3 Chapters in Hawai'i and all of our members who live in the state and visit to enjoy the many coastal recreational opportunities offered by all of the islands' coastlines.

Sincerely,

Lauren Blickley
Hawai'i Regional Manager
Surfrider Foundation

¹ <https://hawaii.surfrider.org/northshoreworkinggroup/>

HB2248 HD1 FIN Hearing
Feb. 26, 2024 3:30 pm

Aloha FIN Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

I write in **strong support of HB2248 HD1**. I have lived on the North Shore of O‘ahu for over thirty years including several years residing and raising my family in the “Kammies”/Ke Nui Road to Kapo‘o neighborhood, the erosion “hot spot” that is addressed by this bill.

A surprisingly diverse group of stakeholders appear to support this bill – from conservationists to beachfront homeowners – two groups that do not always find common ground, but, on this bill, it seems we can -- an **unusual positive consensus** that the Legislature should recognize and support.

Particularly in the past decade, this spectacular beach has experienced **severe episodic erosion**, causing hazards to homeowners, beachgoers, and the integrity of the beach/dune ecosystem. The erosion is only getting worse with sea level rise and less predictable swell direction and strength, undermining the frontage and foundations of homes built on a once-stable sand dune.

I think everyone recalls the shocking headline in [February 2022](#) “*As beach disappears, house collapses into ocean on Oahu’s North Shore.*” This photo shows the unfortunate modest beach house -- owned by a local family -- that fell into the ocean, sending a **distress signal** to our community and around the world.



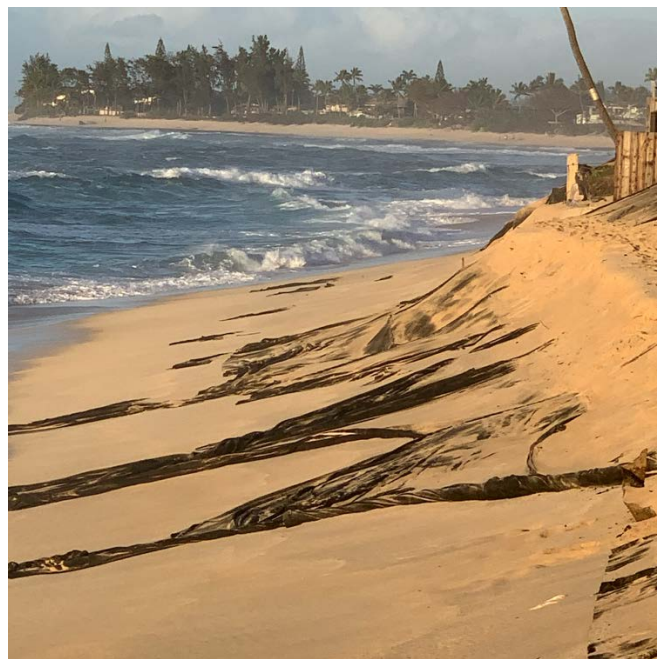
Based on the Legislature’s passage of **Act 16 (2020)**, which wisely prohibited new shoreline hardening structures shoreline across the state, new approaches must be explored to balancing the protection of our beaches and long-term adaptation (including possible relocation) of beachfront homes.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources has – correctly, in my view -- taken **strong enforcement** action against illegal and expired shoreline erosion control measures – such as seawalls,

concrete pours, rocks, sand bags, and black fabric “burritos” and tarps. But DLNR can address these serious issues only “parcel by parcel,” creating **frustration and efficiency problems** for DLNR, the homeowners, and the beach. The beach and public suffer for months if not years while fines and removal orders are contested by homeowners who feel their homes are at risk.

Just a few weeks ago, I helped our community coordinate the fourth “**burrito debris clean up**” work day at this beach to cut up and remove deteriorated heavy black “burrito” fabric and broken sandbags from illegal shoreline installations. This debris is **impeding public access and posing serious hazards** to the public and marine life.

During our cleanup on Saturday January 25, over 20 volunteers (including beachfront homeowners), used knives to cut up and remove **three pickup-truck loads** of dangerously strewn burrito fabric and debris in this eroding stretch of shoreline:



In short, particularly in this North Shore “hot spot,” a **cohesive plan is desperately needed** to provide options to the community and homeowners, and to protect the public trust. **UH Sea Grant** knows this area and community very well, including through participation in the **2022 North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group**, and is the ideal entity – along with OCCL -- to lead the development of an “action plan” (not just a “study”) that would evaluate and clarify pathways forward.

This plan, supported by our highly motivated community and diverse stakeholder groups, could be a model for addressing other erosion “hot spots” across the State. **Please support HB2248 HD1.**

Mahalo nui,

Denise Antolini
59-463 Alapi’o Road
Pūpūkea, HI 96712

HB-2248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 10:07:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randolph Moore	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill appropriates funds for a beach management plan and climate adaptation plan for that portion of Sunset Beach between Sunset Point and Sharks Cove.

I strongly support this bill. It is the next step in a process that was initiated by the Surfrider Foundation – the organization of the North Shore Coastal Resilience Working Group – to identify actions that could mitigate shoreline erosion along parts of the entire North Shore between Kawela and Mokulē‘ia. I was a member of the working group. This working group is referenced in the bill beginning on line 18 on page 3.

This beach is an amenity for the entire island, as well as for the many tourists who visit it. Absent a plan that addresses the issues, this amenity will continue to deteriorate, to the detriment of all who enjoy it.

Full disclosure: I am a beachfront property owner along this stretch of beach. I intend to move my house back (in a mauka direction) on my lot. It was 60 feet from the vegetation line when I built the house in 1976. Erosion has claimed about 45 feet of my yard since then. I have a contract ready to sign to do this work, pending approval of the design for the septic system (which approval has been pending for a number of months). I am fortunate that I have room on my lot to do this.

The plan proposed by this bill is what is needed – a plan, not another study.

Mahalo for your consideration!

HB-2248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 2:09:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Wachtel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of the Finance Committee

This Bill appropriates funds for a beach management plan for the North Shore from Sunset Beach to Sharks Cove.

As a thirty year resident of Sunset Beach and former City & County Ocean Safety Officer stationed on the North Shore, I strongly support the passage of this Bill as it is the CORRECT step in the right direction to effectively manage and maintain this stretch of shoreline.

This is not only a study but a much needed "action plan" that will help restore and maintain the public resource for both locals and visitors alike and at a fraction of the cost to other alternatives.

Please support and pass HB2248.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2248-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 11:50:25 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Brock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in favor of this bill.