

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
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BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
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CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
WATER AND LAND**

**Friday, February 9, 2024
9:00 AM**

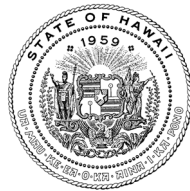
State Capitol, Conference Room 430 and Via Videoconference

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2375
RELATING TO FUNDS**

House Bill 2375 proposes to reinstate the Governor's authority to transfer funds to cope with the effects of natural disasters, for operating purposes, or to supplement the Department of Land and Natural Resources' Fire Fighter's Contingency Fund. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The Department supports the Governor's ability to respond rapidly to a natural disaster and to transfer funds to the Department to fund its emergency response operations. The Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife is the primary responder for wildfires on 26% of the land area in Hawai'i and has approximately 150 staff trained to respond to not only fire but to support other departments in their response to natural disasters, such as flooding and hurricanes. While the Department's wildfire suppression budget has increased to meet its ten-year rolling average of expenditures, there is the possibility of an extreme wildfire season or other prolonged disaster response, such as a catastrophic hurricane or volcanic eruption, that would require additional funds to support continued emergency operations.

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



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

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ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
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FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 2375

February 9, 2024
9:00 a.m.
Room 430 and Videoconference

RELATING TO FUNDS

The Department of Budget and Finance strongly supports this bill.

House Bill No. 2375 reinstates the Governor's authority to transfer funds for operating purposes, in the case of a natural disaster, or to supplement the Department of Land and Natural Resources' Firefighter's Contingency Fund (FCF). These boilerplate provisions were previously included in the General Appropriations Act to provide the Governor with authority to transfer funds for operating purposes, natural disaster, or to add funds to the FCF.

This bill reinstates three provisions that were removed from Act 88, SLH 2021, as amended by Act 248, SLH 2022, and not included in Act 164, SLH 2023, to allow the Governor to better serve the State and the public interest.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



KENNETH S. HARA
DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
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STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2375,
RELATING TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
WATER AND LAND

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FEBRUARY 9, 2024

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to **SUPPORT** HB 2375.

The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency is expressing its **support** for House Bill 2375, which grants the Governor the necessary flexibility to respond swiftly and effectively to natural disasters or unexpected emergencies. This bill ensures that resources can be directed where they are most needed during critical times and in a timely manner, ensuring that other state programs are supplemented to aid with prevention, control, and mitigation of disasters within the State.

The requirements for the Governor to promptly inform the legislature and submit an annual report ensures earnest accountability in the use of these funds. This openness also allows for public input and oversight, strengthening trust between the government and its citizens.

HI-EMA is in **support** of this measure, which promotes responsible governance and ensures transparency and accountability in the use of reallocated funds.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of House Bill 2375.

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