

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

KA'ĀINA HULL, DIRECTOR

JODI A. HIGUCHI SAYEGUSA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Testimony of Ka'āina Hull

Planning Director, Planning Department, County of Kaua'i

Before the

Senate Committee on Water and Land

February 15, 2023 at 12:30pm

Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

In consideration of

Senate Bill 331

Relating to Housing

Aloha Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, and Committees Members:

The County of Kaua'i Planning Department submits its testimony with comments on SB 331, which would prohibit the counties from enacting a development policy, standard, or condition that would have the effect of changing the land use designation or zoning of a parcel to a less intensive use or reducing the intensity of land use within an existing zoning district below what was allowed under the land use designation and zoning ordinances of the county.

While we are generally supportive of properties within existing urban zones continue to capitalize on the full residential development rights of their respective zones and ensure additional housing developments and their associated uses not be stymied, there are areas within our islands' urban zones that are subject to increasing hazardous effects of climate change and coastal erosion. Responsible planning for climate-related changes necessitates that the best available information on climate change be incorporated into planning decisions. This may include informed decisions related to modifying current land use in order to minimize the impact climate hazards may have on public health and the built environment.

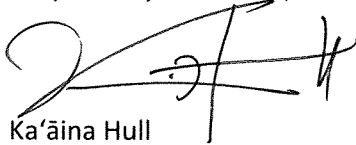
SB 331 would undermine the County's ability to responsibly regulate land use in consideration of existing and changing conditions such as climate change and coastal erosion. The proposed legislation bill is in conflict with several of the County's planning policies, as detailed in the County of Kaua'i (CoK) 2018 General Plan, such as:

1. Regularly review and refine relevant policies, rules, and regulations based on the most currently available climate and hazard science and projections;
2. Identify lands/areas that may serve as buffers from coastal hazards and restrict development within them; and

3. Periodically update the shoreline setback and coastal protection article of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to allow for adjustments in the setback calculations based upon best-available SLR data.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ka'aina Hull', written over a horizontal line.

Ka'aina Hull
Planning Director, County of Kaua'i