COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, March 21, 2025

TIME: 3:00 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

Support SCR22

Chairs Senator Elefante, Senator Wakai, Vice Chairs Senator Wakai, Senator Chang and members of the Committee:

I am Beverly Ann Gotelli, Chair, of the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA), which is an appointed board tasked with advising the Executive Office on Aging (EOA). My testimony does not represent the views of the EOA but of PABEA.

I speak in support of SCR 22 which is requesting the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to collaborate with relevant agencies to develop initiative and outreach programs to inform Kupuna about emergency preparedness.

As we witnessed the devastation on Lahaina, and the number of Kupuna were not readily prepared for what was happening. I think having a collaborate group as mentioned in the Resolution will benefit everyone in the present and future. It is something that we all can prepare for and our younger generation will be able to assist the kupuna if there is a plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SCR 22

Beverly Ann Gotelli, Chair PABEA 6286 Opaekaa Road Kapaa, HI 96746

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.

Mayor

LORI TSUHAKO
Director

JESSICA CROUSE Deputy Director





DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN CONCERNS

COUNTY OF MAUI 2200 MAIN STREET, SUITE 546 WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAI'I 96793 PHONE: (808) 270-7805

March 20, 2025

TO: The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair

and Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

The Honorable Glenn Wakai. Chair

and Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Governmental Affairs

FROM: Rowena M. Dagdag-Andaya, Executive on Aging

County of Maui, Department of Human Concerns, Maui County Office on Aging

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of SCR 22 Requesting The Hawaii Emergency

Management Agency To Collaborate With Relevant Agencies To Develop Initiatives And Outreach Programs To Inform Kupuna About Emergency

Preparedness.

The Maui County Office on Aging (MCOA) strongly supports **SCR 22** which requests the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to collaborate with relevant agencies to develop initiatives and outreach programs aimed at informing kupuna about emergency preparedness.

As the designated Area Agency on Aging for Maui County, MCOA recognizes the critical need to equip older adults with the knowledge and resources necessary to prepare for natural disasters and emergencies. The devastating impact of the 2023 wildfires in Lahaina and Kula underscored the unique challenges faced by kupuna, particularly those with mobility limitations, chronic health conditions, and limited access to transportation or communication technology. Ensuring that kupuna are well-informed and prepared for future emergencies is essential to protecting lives and reducing strain on emergency response services.

We commend the Legislature for prioritizing the safety of our older residents by advocating for coordinated efforts between emergency management agencies at the state and county levels. Collaboration is key to ensuring that kupuna-specific concerns—such as evacuation planning, shelter accessibility, and medical preparedness—are addressed in a comprehensive and culturally appropriate manner.

Additionally, we encourage that this effort also considers the needs of **persons with disabilities**, many of whom face similar challenges during emergencies. Individuals with disabilities may require additional assistance with evacuation, accessible communication, and

shelter accommodations. By incorporating their needs into emergency preparedness initiatives, we can ensure a more inclusive and effective disaster response for all vulnerable populations.

Current Efforts by the Maui County Office on Aging

1. Community Outreach and Education

- Our team delivers presentations to senior clubs and other community groups to educate older adults and caregivers on the services provided by our department. We actively track the number of people reached.
- During these presentations, our staff disseminates emergency preparedness resources, including information on evacuation planning and disaster response.

2. Partnerships with Local Community Organizations

- MCOA works closely with contracted service providers, ensuring that they have emergency protocols in place as part of their agreements with MCOA. This guarantees that providers are prepared to support clients during emergencies.
- MCOA recently participated in meetings facilitated by AARP Hawaii to develop an emergency plan template for Independent Senior Housing properties. Meeting participants included:
 - Area Agencies on Aging from all four counties
 - Departments of Emergency Management
 - o The State Fire Council
 - Hawaii Emergency Management Agency
 - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development staff

Overall, emergency preparedness education is a key component of this effort. While agencies work to improve evacuation planning and support services, it is equally important for members of the public to take an active role in their own emergency preparedness. Encouraging older adults, persons with disabilities, and caregivers to create personal evacuation plans, stay informed about emergency alerts, and participate in preparedness workshops will help ensure a safer and more coordinated response during a disaster.

Mahalo for your consideration and for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 22.

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 5:19:20 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify	_
Rosemarie Johnson	Testifying for Hawaii SAR Alliance	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom	

Comments:

Chairs Elefante, Wakai, and Vice Chair Chang,

My name is Rosemarie Johnson and I am a seasoned enginner, researcher and stratagist. On behalf of the Hawaii SAR Alliance and as the Director, I concour that Hawaii is increasingly prone to a variety of natural disasters, including volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, tsunamis, and other which severely impact the safety and public health of the kapuna. So it is vital that they are well-informed about emergency preparedness as it will significantly improve their chances of survival as well as reduce the strain on emergency services. However, I would like to note that another way to reduce the strain on all emergency services is to have a State SAR Coordinator as most other states with much less hazards have.

In addition to collaborating with all agencies and developing initiates and outreach prepardeness programs for Kupuna and others, a State SAR Coordinator would also take the burden off of the already over burdened Emergency Management Agencies as well as create opportunites for:

Utilizing best practices from around the country.

Decreasing call outs and incidents.

Increased lines of communication prior to, during and after an incidents

Decrease cost of SAR and EMS in the state

Increase probability of successful rescues and decrease the states missing persons statistics.

Improving safety for the residents and tourists statewide by:

- Creating efficiencies in processes and procedures to improve rescue outcomes and reduce costs.
- Coordinating statewide training programs to ensure consistency and decrease spending.
- Unified command between government, federal, state, county, and volunteer agencies to streamline communication.
- Coordination of asset management for all mass casualties, missing persons, and enact some type of state security for the port.

A State SAR Coordinator would also be aware of, capable of and responsible for:

- Ordering and tasking mutual aid federal, state and local resources
- Resource opportunities
- Budget process
- Ensure proper certifications and trainings statewide
- Streamlining statewide training preserving resources
- Owner of standard approval process
- Improving processes and procedures
- Formal mutual aid dispatching
- Legislative authority responsible for making sure that each missing persons case is adjudicated fairly which includes silver alerts.

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 1:47:57 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane Sugimura	Testifying for Hawaii Council of Community Associations	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support SCR 22

Hawaii Council of Community Assocations supports all efforts for emergency response education and encourage the collaborative, all emergency response agencies to have the same education message.

Just like many of our parents, our older adults need reminders of what to do or what to have on hand, the do's and don'ts. Not many of the older adults have younger people around them to assist in an emergency, so we need to empower our older adults.

Hawaii Council of Community Associations encourages a required emergency and evacuation plan for buildings and the occupants to be educated and with reminders.

Thank you for allowing this testimony.

Jane Sugimura, President Hawaii Council of Community Associations



Testimony to the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs and to the Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Friday, March 21, 2025

3:00 p. m.

State Capitol Conference Room 225 and via videoconference

Re: SCR 22 Requesting the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to collaborate with relevant agencies to develop initiatives and outreach programs to inform kupuna about emergency preparedness.

Dear Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs, and Vice Chair Chang, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs:

I am Gary Simon, a member of the board of the Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition, whose mission is to improve the quality of life of those who give and receive care by increasing community awareness of caregiver issues through continuing advocacy, education, and training. I am offering testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition.

The Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition strongly supports SCR 22.

Kupuna are particularly vulnerable in a disaster. Education and outreach on emergency preparedness will significantly enhance the safety and welfare of kupuna and caregivers of kupuna during an emergency.

We urge you to support SCR 22, and we urge you to recommend its passage.

Mahalo for seriously considering the resolution.

Very sincerely,

Gary Simon

Hawai'i Family Caregiver Coalition

Dary Sumon

Email garysimon@hawaii.rr.com



1001 Bishop Street #625 | Honolulu, HI 96813 866-295-7282 | aarp.org/hi | hiaarp@aarp.org | Twitter.com/aarphawaii | facebook.com/aarphawaii

The State Legislature Senate Committees on Public Safety and Military Affairs and Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs Friday, March 21, 2025 Conference Room 225, 3 p.m.

TO: The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante and the Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chairs

FROM: Keali`i S. Lopez, State Director AARP Hawai`i

Re: Support for S.C.R. 22

Aloha Chairs Elefante and Wakai and the rest of the members of the committees,

I am Keali'i Lopez, State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, social impact organization dedicated to empowering people fifty and older to choose how they live as they age. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families. On behalf of our nearly 135,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to share our testimony.

AARP strongly supports S.C.R. 22 which would encourage the Hawai`i Emergency Management Agency to collaborate with relevant agencies to develop initiatives and outreach programs to inform kupuna about emergency preparedness.

The Lahaina fire and, in fact, every major natural disaster for the last several decades has made clear that kupuna are more likely to perish in a natural disaster than younger people. People over 60 made up more than two-thirds of the deaths in Lahaina.

The Lahaina Fire Final Phase Three report acknowledges the number of deaths of kupuna, but none of its detailed recommendations include initiatives that focus specifically on reducing kupuna deaths.

We know that the Hawai`i Emergency Management Agency is doing its best with the resources that they have to help all of us survive the next disaster and AARP has worked with HIEMA staff on promoting disaster resilience in communities – organizing communities and neighborhoods in advance of a disaster so they can help each other out before, during and after a disaster.

AARP worked with FEMA to develop a Disaster Resilience Toolkit, a 44-page booklet for community leaders with tips and tools to develop disaster resilience in their neighborhoods. AARP Hawai`i also worked with the nonprofit disaster organization the Saint Bernard Project to develop a checklist for managers of senior independent living facilities so they can create emergency plans and practice

what to do in a disaster. We are beginning to introduce the checklist to senior affordable housing communities throughout the state.

AARP does these things because we see a need. Too many kupuna do not know what to do in a disaster. Caregivers of kupuna also need information on how to develop their emergency plans. It's especially important for caregivers of kupuna with dementia or who have mobility and other health issues to build a team of people who can help and to know what to do if they need to shelter in place or if they have to evacuate.

Too few kupuna know how to tell if they have to evacuate or if they are better off sheltering in place in a disaster. And some kupuna do not have familiarity with or access to technology to notify them about what to do in a disaster.

AARP can play a role as an educational resource for disaster management. But we are not a disaster management agency. A focused effort to help kupuna survive a disaster must come from the communities themselves – from friends, family and neighbors with government support and leadership.

That's why this resolution is needed and appreciated by AARP and other kupuna groups.

Government is overwhelmed during a disaster. It can't do everything and be everywhere all at once. But government can do better before a disaster in preparing people, especially kupuna and family caregivers, to survive a disaster and to survive in the immediate aftermath of a disaster with the help of family and neighbors.

Note: Included is a link to <u>aarp.org article</u>, written after the Lahiana fire, that includes interview with disaster experts and information on what other communities are doing to increase disaster preparation with the aim of reducing kupuna deaths. It provides the committee with good background information





2025 Hawaii Leadership Board

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Gordon Takaki, *Past*President Hawaii Island

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Caroline Witherspoon, President Becker Communications

LJ R. Duenas, Executive Director Alzheimer's Association

Testimony to the Senate Committees on Public Safety & Military Affairs and Energy & Intergovernmental Affairs Friday, March 21, 3:00 PM Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 225, and Videoconference

RE: SCR22

Chair Elefante, Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution requesting the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to collaborate with relevant agencies to develop initiatives and outreach programs to inform kupuna about emergency preparedness. My name is Coby Chock, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy for the Alzheimer's Association. I write in **strong support of SCR22 with an amendment**, to ensure those living with dementia and their caregivers are prepared and safe in the event of an emergency.

The Alzheimer's Association Hawaii Chapter is dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. With 31,200 people living with Alzheimer's disease in Hawaii, 60,000 caregivers providing \$1.9 billion in unpaid care, and a rapidly aging population, it is critical for us to keep the vulnerable individuals in the community safe.

This resolution will significantly benefit individuals impacted by Alzheimer's disease and dementia by ensuring they receive crucial information and resources to stay safe during emergencies. Given their heightened vulnerability, it is essential to include caregivers in these efforts, as they are the primary support system for those living with Alzheimer's. By equipping caregivers with the necessary knowledge and tools, we can enhance the overall safety and well-being of both the individuals affected and their caregivers, ensuring a more resilient community in times of crisis.

To ensure those impacted by dementia are included, we humbly offer the following amendment for your consideration:

"BE IT RESOLVED...to develop initiatives and outreach programs to inform kupuna <u>and caregivers for individuals living with dementia</u> about emergency preparedness; and..."

We urge your favorable consideration of this legislation and our amendment. Mahalo for your support and the opportunity to testify in support! If you have questions, please contact me at 808-451-3410 or ckchock@alz.org.

Coby Chock

Coby Chock

Director of Public Policy and Advocacy Alzheimer's Association - Hawaii

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 9:45:24 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Otaguro	Testifying for Be Ready Manoa	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Elected officials,

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Be Ready Manoa, an approved 501c3 organization whose primary mission is to educate the residents of Manoa about disaster preparedness, as well as a senior citizen. I support SCR22/HCR37.

- Many senior citizens have multiple vulnerabilities that necessitate the development of
 outreach programs in the event of a natural or other disaster. While there are programs
 assisting vulnerable seniors for daily living, additional support will be required during
 disasters.
- Existing programs that assist the senior population should collaborate with relevant City and State agencies/departments to ensure additional provisions are in place during disasters. The City and State should also coordinate with these senior programs to ensure sufficient coverage and coordination when a disaster occurs.
- The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA), given its expertise in disaster management, is a logical choice to organize such coordination. This department will need funding to fulfill any additional responsibilities in bringing together existing senior-centric organizations like AARP and other resources (the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters aka VOAD which includes community groups like Be Ready Manoa, and the Center for Resilient Neighborhoods aka CERENE) to develop appropriate outreach programs and related services.
- It is inevitable that a disaster such as a hurricane will affect Hawaii, so it is prudent to proactively seek effective and efficient methods to educate and support our kupuna. While I have the resources to keep myself and my family safe, there are many individuals in the community who do not have that capacity and will require extra guidance whether through easy-to-understand materials in their primary language, information on sheltering in place, or evacuation options for those with limited mobility.

Sincerely,

Glenn Otaguro

Senior Citizen

Be Ready Manoa

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 2:01:52 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raelene Tenno	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Support SCR 22

I am submitting testimony as and individual with aging family members and as the Education Chair for Hawaii Council of Community Associations (HCCA).

Statistics show a large population among each island of 62+ and many of them live independantly as their children are out of the house. That was the case for my family, my brothers and sisters lived elsewhere but we always made efforts to remind them and we often would change their smoke detector batteries.

As the Education Chair for Hawaii Council of Community Associations, we encourage a required emergency and evacuation plan to include Mobility Impaired list for buildings and the occupants to be educated and with reminders.

Thank you for allowing the submission of this testimony.

Raelene Tenno as an individual and Education Chair for Hawaii Council of Community Associations

TESTIMONY OF LARRY S VERAY

COMMITTEE'S ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS & ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SCR 22

REQUESTING THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO COLLABORATE WITH RELEVANT AGENCIES TO DEVELOP INITIATIVES AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS TO INFORM KUPUNA ABOUT EMERGENCY PREPARDNESS

March 21, 2025

Aloha, Chair's Elefante and Wakai, Vice Chair's Wakai and Chang and committee members. I am Larry Veray, Chairman for the Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21. I am submitting this testimony representing our board as a whole. In our 2025 legislative priorities stating a requirement for HIEMA to develop and improve emergency preparedness for our residents, in particular, our Kupuna. The Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21 has made it a priority for Pearl City to be prepared for natural disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis, and earthquakes.

I am in STRONG SUPPORT OF SCR22.

Our greatest concerns during HIEMA ordered emergency evacuations and preparedness:

- We have a large elderly population in Pearl City and our Kupuna are extremely vulnerable in emergency situations due to their physical limitations, chronic health conditions and lack of access to communication technology resources
- We have numerous elderly care homes in Pearl City and throughout the islands and the care and safety of our Kupuna is paramount when we have to evacuate due to a disaster
- We require a HIEMA outreach program to make sure our Kupuna are well-informed about emergency procedures and evacuation plan for the location care home they are residing. We need to make sure each care home has a solid emergency and evacuation plan.

The Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21 requires the State Legislature and HIEMA need to collaborate and build solid relationships with all emergency agencies at the Federal, State and City levels agencies. The State Legislature and HIEMA needs to make sure all Kupuna Care Homes have a solid emergency evacuation plan.

Please approve SCR22. Mahalo!

Larry S. Veray

SCR-22 Submitted on: 3/18/2025 3:13:07 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this initiative.

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 9:42:34 AM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Lenzer Medeiros	Testifying for Policy Advisory Board Elderly Affairs	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Sara Lenzer Medeiros, member of the Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA), which is an appointed board tasked with advising the Executive Office on Aging (EOA). My testimony does not represent the views of the EOA but of PABEA.

PABEA offers it's full support of HCR37 and SCR22 related to disaster preparedness and kupuna.

Submitted on: 3/18/2025 7:25:59 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please approve this concurrent resolution, SCR22, regarding the process of informing Kupuna about emergency preparedness.

Mahalo for considering the special needs of our Kupuna, one of our most precious resources!

Barbara J. Service MSW

Child Welfare Supervisor (ret.)

Passionate Kupuna advocate

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 3:50:43 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a long-time resident of Kailua, born and raised in Hawaii, I have dedicated my retirement to serving our community. I volunteer with the American Red Cross Hawaii Chapter, focusing on community preparedness. Through my work, I have observed that our senior population, or Kapuna, is often under-served and has unique needs that require targeted preparedness programming.

Our Kapuna have contributed so much to our community, and it is our responsibility to ensure they are well-prepared for any emergencies that may arise. By supporting efforts to better prepare our Kapuna, we can help them feel more secure and confident in their ability to handle unexpected situations.

Mahalo for your support in this important endeavor.

The State Legislature Support of SCR 22

To Whom It May Concern

I am a 90 year old widowed senior living alone in an area that would be greatly damaged and probably inaccessible should there be a serious flooding, hurricane, or tsunami.

Each year I dread the hurricane season for fear that we will be hit by one. It is a very stressful, fearful time for me. I need the information to survive so I wholeheartedly support the idea of SCR22.

Barbara Tatsuguchi

54-144 A Puuowaa St.

Hau'ula, Hi. 96717

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 4:21:24 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/21/2025 3:00:00 PM



 Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Burke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony

SCR 22 REQUESTING THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO COLLABORATE WITH RELEVANT AGENCIES TO DEVELOP INITIATIVES AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS TO INFORM KUPUNA ABOUT EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.

I am a member of AARP-HAWAII but not providing testimony on their behalf.

I am in full support of SCR 22.

As you know, kupuna are the amongst the most vulnerable in a disaster and would like to see initiatives and outreach to specifically address what kupuna and caregivers should do in an emergency.

I have helped to facilitate a few Senior Disaster Preparedness Workshops sponsored by AARP-Hawai'i and have witnessed the enthusiasm displayed by the participants in the workshops.

I wish to personally thank all of you for bringing attention to this important need.

Sincerely

James burke