

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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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
Acting Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
WATER & LAND

Thursday, February 12, 2026
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 411

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2361
RELATING TO THE KANEOHE BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL

House Bill 2361 requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to provide administrative support to the Kaneohe Bay Regional Council (Council); requires the chairperson of the Council to be selected by the voting members from among all voting and nonvoting members on an annual and rotating basis; and requires the Council to meet quarterly. **The Department supports this bill and offers the following comments.**

The Council was established to serve as a community-based advisory body to the Department on the management, use, and protection of Kaneohe Bay. The Council provides a vital forum for stakeholder input, coordinating the perspectives of residents, cultural practitioners, environmental groups, fishers, and commercial operators to guide implementation of the Kaneohe Bay Master Plan and ensure the Bay's sustainable use.

The Department supports this measure because it strengthens the Council's capacity to fulfill its advisory role. Providing administrative support will improve meeting coordination and record-keeping, ensuring consistent stakeholder engagement. The annual rotating chair system will promote balanced leadership and diverse representation, while the quarterly meeting requirement will maintain regular communication between the Department and the community on issues vital to the stewardship of Kaneohe Bay. These changes align with the Department's commitment to collaborative and transparent management of Hawaii's natural and cultural resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



Ko`olau Foundation

P. O. Box 4749 / 46-005 Kawa St., #205
Kane`ohe, HI 96744

February 10, 2026

To: Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair
& Members, Water & Land Committee

From: Mahealani Cypher, President
Ko`olau Foundation

Re: H.B. 2361, Relating to the Kaneohe Bay Regional Council – SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Hashem and Committee Members:

The Ko`olau Foundation strongly supports House Bill 2361 which directs the Department of Land and Natural Resources to provide administrative support to the Kaneohe Bay Regional Council as well as facilitates a rotation of the chair of the council among all its members. The Bill also sets for quarterly meetings of the council.

Our organization is dedicated to advocating for the preservation of cultural heritage and wise management of our resources, and supports the rotation of the chairperson among members of the Council as well as requiring DLNR to provide continuing administrative support for the group.

This Council works hard to ensure that Kaneohe bay is protected from over-commercialization, thus creating more sustainability for the marine life and health of the bay to benefit the resources as well as cultural fishing practices.

We urge your support of this bill and its movement forward toward passage.

Mahalo for your consideration of our mana`o.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

Handwritten signature of Mahealani Cypher.

MAHEALANI CYPHER

President

malamapono744@aol.com

Ph. (808) 226-4195



KO`OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

February 10, 2026

TO: Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair
& Members, Water & Land Committee

FROM: Charles Naumu & Members
Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

RE: H.B. 2047 – Relating to the Aha Moku Advisory Committee - OPPOSE

Aloha Mai Kakou:

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club offers its strong opposition to House Bill 2047, which removes the power of the Aha Moku Advisory Committee (AMAC) members to appoint its own executive director and transfers this authority to the director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

We have been pleased to see that this Council has met regularly in recent years, contrary to how it was some time ago, when few meetings were held. Kudos to DLNR which has been chairing this Council and making sure regular meetings were held to discuss various challenges and issues affecting this bay.

We do, however, prefer the idea of rotating the chairperson role among the council's members, to give it a little more independence although each rotation is only for a year at a time. We also appreciate that DLNR has been providing administrative support, so this bill actually codifies a responsible practice of the department.

Of course, it is our expectation that assigning the chairperson to any member must be if the member is willing to assume the role. With DLNR's assistance, however, this might well be mitigated.

We urge your support for this bill and its forward movement toward passage into law.

Mahalo.

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club was established in 1937 and is a not-for-profit community organization dedicated to preserving and perpetuating the history, heritage and culture of Native Hawaiians. One of the largest of the Hawaiian Civic Clubs, its membership is open to people of Hawaiian ancestry and those who are "Hawaiian at heart".

P. O. Box 664 * Kaneohe, HI 96744 * Ph. (808) 235-8111 * www.koolaupoko-hcc.org

HB-2361

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 8:34:06 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/12/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ashley monden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 2361.

Kāneʻohe Bay is not just a body of water — it is part of our identity. For many of us who grew up on Oʻahu, it represents family memories, fishing, paddling, and a deep connection to ʻāina. Protecting and properly stewarding the Bay is something that matters personally to our community.

HB 2361 makes practical improvements to ensure the Kāneʻohe Bay Regional Council can function effectively. Providing administrative support from the Department of Land and Natural Resources will help the council stay organized and focused on its mission. Requiring quarterly meetings and rotating leadership encourages shared responsibility, accountability, and consistent progress.

These may seem like small structural changes, but strong structure leads to stronger stewardship. When the council has the support and clarity it needs, it can better serve the community and help protect this precious resource for future generations.

I respectfully urge you to pass HB 2361 and continue supporting thoughtful, community-based care for Kāneʻohe Bay.

mahalo,

Ashley Monden