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GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

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

P.O. BOX 621  
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Testimony of  
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
Acting Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE

Wednesday, April 8, 2026  
2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 2367, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO STATE BOATING FACILITIES

Senate Bill 2367, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 1 proposes to require the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to hold open public meetings before and as it develops a master plan for state small boat harbors; finalize a master plan for state small boat harbors; and consider the phased development of state small boat harbors. **The Department appreciates the intent of this measure and offers recommended amendments.**

The Department appreciates the deliberative amendments made by the House Water & Land committee to ensure public engagement in the development of state small boat harbors. However, the Department notes that House Draft 1 also removes the authority for the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) to lease certain portions of Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor, including the submerged lands within the harbor, which would significantly hinder the Department's efforts to achieve more effective harbor management.

Therefore, the Department requests that this measure be reverted to Senate Draft 2, which includes the authority for BLNR to lease certain portions of Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor for private development, management, and operation. Senate Draft 2 ensures that recreational parking for beach and ocean users remains preserved, and also aims to extend the Lei of Parks, in order to create a place-appropriate and aesthetically appropriate gateway to Waikīkī.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS



## HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Finance

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

April 8, 2026

S.B. 2367, S.D.2, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO STATE BOATING  
FACILITIES

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO provides comments on S.B. 2367, S.D.2, H.D.1, which requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to hold open public meetings before and as it develops a master plan regarding state small boat harbors, including the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor. This measure further requires the DLNR to develop a finalized master plan and consider the phased development for state small boat harbors, including the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor.

The HGEA appreciates the amendments reflected in the H.D. 1 version of this measure. Should any master plan be developed and implemented, it is our strong position that the State should be the sole authority to operate and manage the harbor in its entirety. The harbor is a valuable public asset, and we do not believe the Legislature and the State should surrender control of such assets through a lease to a private entity. Such leases would deprive the State of potential revenue that could be collected and reinvested back into the harbor or other essential State programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on S.B 2367, S.D.2, H.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director

**SB-2367-HD-1**

Submitted on: 4/8/2026 9:22:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/8/2026 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Blake Parsons	Scouting America, Aloha Council	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Blake Parsons, and I serve as Chief Executive Officer of Scouting America, Aloha Council. I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on SB2367 SD2 HD1.

Scouting America operates Sea Scout units that provide maritime education, seamanship training, and leadership development for young people in Hawai'i. These units are volunteer led, supported by parents, and operate with limited financial resources. Access to harbor facilities is essential to their continued operation.

As this measure moves forward, we respectfully request inclusion of the following language to ensure clarity and continuity for nonprofit youth maritime education programs:

“Any lease executed pursuant to this section shall include terms to preserve continued access for Sea Scout units and other qualifying nonprofit youth maritime education programs. The lessee shall provide a reasonable number of slips or moorings, subject to availability, at no charge consistent with section 200 7, and may not impose additional fees inconsistent with this section. The board shall ensure such provisions are included in any lease agreement or management contract.”

We humbly ask that this language remain part of the measure.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Blake Parsons

Chief Executive Officer

Scouting America, Aloha Council



*Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor*  
1651 Ala Moana Blvd. Slip 499, Honolulu, HI 96185

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Brynn Rovito, owner and operator of the historic 1929 yacht Vida Mia, moored at Slip 499 in Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor since the 1980s. Vida Mia is a thriving business offering popular private charters, sunset cruises, and coffee tours for locals and visitors alike. Despite the harbor's failing infrastructure and management challenges, we have created six full-time apprenticeship jobs and generated \$850,000 in annual revenue in just five years. This demonstrates the real economic potential that exists when dedicated operators have better infrastructure and support.

I **strongly support SB2367** and respectfully request that the **lease language be added back** to the measure. While public meetings and developing a master plan with phased development are important and responsible steps, there is no reason to remove the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) authority to lease certain portions of Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor for private development, management, and operation. This targeted lease authority is the best and fastest way to begin fixing the harbor while the broader master plan is being developed. The final measure should also preserve recreational parking and maintain strong state oversight and public trust protections for ocean access.

The harbor is suffering from severe deferred maintenance, failing docks, and derelict vessels. Ala Wai deserves to become a vibrant community harbor again. Now is the time to move forward.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

**Brynn Rovito**

Owner/Operator, Vida Mia Hawaii  
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## UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026**

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Rep. Chris Todd, Chair  
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 2:00 PM  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

**Re: Testimony on SB2367, SD2, HD1 – RELATING TO STATE BOATING FACILITIES**

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO (“UPW”) is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties.

UPW provides comments on SB2367, SD2, HD1, which requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources (“DLNR”) to: (1) Hold open public meetings before and as it develops a master plan regarding state small boat harbors, including the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor; (2) Finalize the master plan for state small boat harbors, including the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor; and (3) Consider the phased development of state small boat harbors, including the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor.

Previous versions of this bill privatized the management of a public resource through legislative preauthorization, by exempting a proposed lease for Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor from Sections 171-53(c) and 171-60(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes. While the HD1 has largely allayed UPW’s concerns, this bill charts, what we believe is, a practical course for the State to invest in boating facilities across the state. However, without appropriate funding, this unfunded mandate leaves the door open for private-public partnerships in the future, and our fear is that this will ultimately lead to the loss of jobs that have historically been performed by public employees.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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## WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2367

### WITH COMMENT TO PROTECT PUBLIC ACCESS, YOUTH SAFETY, AND COMMUNITY USE

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shelley Oates-Wilding, and I submit this testimony in **support of SB2367 with comments** to ensure the Ala Wai Small boat harbor remains for the public, accessible, and rooted in community benefit, particularly for youth ocean safety, workforce development, and cultural perpetuation.

I offer this testimony not only as a nonprofit leader, and water safety & cultural advocate, but as someone who has lived, trained, and worked in and around Ala Wai Harbor for more than 40 years. This harbor is not an abstract policy issue — it is part of my daily life, my community and lifelong commitment to Hawaii's youth and ocean culture.

### **Ala Wai Harbor: The Gateway to Waikīkī and Hawaii's Ocean Future**

Ala Wai Harbor is the gateway to Waikīkī, one of the most visited shorelines in the world. No other harbor in the islands sits at this intersection of global tourism, local community, and public trust land.

#### **This creates a rare opportunity:**

Visitors who come to enjoy Hawaii's unique ocean environment can directly support ocean safety education for local keiki, including the goal that every third-grade child in Hawai'i receives ocean safety training. Handled correctly, Ala Wai Harbor can protect lives, strengthen culture, and support our economy — simultaneously.

### **An Irreplaceable Pathway for Youth to College, and the Olympics with huge opportunities for Sports Tourism and international acclaim**

Ala Wai Harbor is the only place in Hawaii that allows youth a safe, consistent, and scalable pathway to:

- College rowing
- Olympic sprint kayaking
- Olympic canoeing
- High-performance paddling and maritime careers

And Rich in history:

- King Kalākaua was an avid rower and champion of water sports
- The Ala Wai Harbor previously trained the majority of the U.S. Olympic Canoeing Team
- Most recently, the only athlete in history to compete in Canoe and Kayak at a single Olympic Games trained in Ala Wai Harbor, by the U.S. Olympic Coach.

Yet today, despite this legacy, there is no dedicated, safe access for youth rowing, kayaking, or canoeing in the Harbor — let alone a world-class facility that perpetuates Hawaii's Watermans culture, invites the World or serves as a true Community hub.

## **Public Safety, Youth Wellbeing, and Economic Reality**

**Drowning** remains one of the leading causes of preventable death for children in Hawaii. Our visitor economy depends on people being safe and confident in the ocean, yet thousands of local youth lack:

- Affordable after-school programs
- Safe ocean access
- Clear workforce and leadership pathways

Harbors are one of the last remaining public places where these needs can be addressed at scale — if access is protected.

## **Learning from Kewalo Basin and those opposed to this bill**

The concerns raised at Kewalo Basin and testimony in opposition of bill SB2367:

- Reduced public access
- Limited public parking
- Possible Increased parking and local user costs
- Commercialization prioritizing retail over community
- Loss of working-harbor character
- Loss of employment for current state workers.

While improvements were made, many in the community feel the public trust was weakened with Kewalo Harbor and do not trust the enormous needs of the community will be balanced with commercial gain.

If the winner of the negotiations with the state could be made accountable for the 300 free community parking spaces.

The inclusion of youth nonprofits like Sea scouts, Ikaika Hawaii and other current youth groups using the harbor.

The inclusion of a Hawaii Community Watermans Center.

The State ensuring continued employment for the staff involved with same levels somewhere else and the yearly continued assessment be the state of the agreement I believe these lessons can guide this bill to ensure an extremely positive outcome for all parties and a historic opportunity for this pilot project here in the Ala wai. This will show world class leadership by state and public towards an important historical icon being preserved. .

## **A Collaborative Solution: The Hawaii Watermans Center**

A community-based Hawaii Watermans Center provides a practical solution that aligns public and private interests:

- Water safety education for 10,000 keiki annually
- Leadership and sport pathways for 5,000 local youth
- Creation of 100 local jobs rooted in ocean skills and stewardship
- Revitalization of underutilized harbor space without privatization

This is a phased, realistic approach — starting with programming, growing into a Hawaiian-inspired hālau, and developing long-term infrastructure that remains community-run and accessible.

## **Support**

Public-private partnerships succeed only when communication, trust, and lived experience are built into the process.

Choosing someone who is aware and supportive of our community needs will be able to work with a accountable public private partnership to benefit all.

## **What I Respectfully Request**

I ask that SB2367 be amended to:

1. Guarantee public and youth access within redeveloped harbors
2. Protect affordable local parking and shoreline access
3. Require space for nonprofit, community-based ocean safety and youth programs
4. Ensure transparency and accountability in public-private partnerships
5. Affirm the State's obligation to steward harbors under the public trust doctrine

## **Closing**

Ala Wai Harbor is more than infrastructure — it is a gateway to safety, opportunity, culture, and Hawaii's future.

We can revitalize our harbors without excluding the people.

We can grow sports tourism without losing access.

And we can build something truly world-class together.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Shelley Oates-Wilding

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