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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

April 23, 2026
10:00 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 430

in consideration of
SCR 159 SD1 HD1

URGING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STAKEHOLDERS TO ADOPT SHARED GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PLANNING, FINANCING, AND UNDERTAKING OF EFFORTS FOR THE RESTORATION, IMPROVEMENT, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE BEACHES, SHORELINES, AND COASTAL AREAS OF WAIKIKI.

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the House Committee on Water & Land,

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** SCR 159 SD1, HD1 which urges the adoption of shared guiding principles for beach restoration projects in Waikiki, and **respectfully requests clarifying amendments**. The guiding principles contained in this Concurrent Resolution would prioritize public access to and conservation of natural resources, approach planning decisions from a holistic perspective, reinforce the State's role as the policy and implementation lead in beach restoration efforts, and equitably distribute costs among the public institutions and private interests that benefit from a healthy and restored beach.

OPSD supports regional shoreline management as an appropriate planning tool and policy strategy to protect beaches and nearshore waters, preserve public enjoyment of public trust resources, and develop proactive, adaptive measures that reduce the risk of coastal hazards to natural resources, shoreline properties, and infrastructure.

The Waikiki we know today is the result of more than a century of large-scale civil engineering projects that created its sandy beaches and buildable land. Although we today may not make the same choices that our predecessors did, we also recognize that their past actions determine our current reality. Leaving aside its visitor-focused amenities, Waikiki is irreplaceable in terms of the jobs, housing, recreation, and ocean access that it provides for residents.

Significant beach loss has been documented in the area since the early 1900's and on-going mitigation efforts since that time have included shoreline hardening, erection of static groins, and periodic sand replenishment. The guiding principles contained in this measure

SCR159, SD1, HD1 URGING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STAKEHOLDERS TO ADOPT SHARED GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PLANNING, FINANCING, AND UNDERTAKING OF EFFORTS FOR THE RESTORATION, IMPROVEMENT, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE BEACHES, SHORELINES, AND COASTAL AREAS OF WAIKIKI.

State Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
April 23, 2026

recognize that past practice has not achieved a stable shoreline and look forward to a new paradigm for a unified, transparent, equitable, and effective strategy. Shoreline management solutions must be planned collaboratively to foster trust among all Waikiki beach stakeholders, work in concert across the total beach system, be designed to accommodate rather than oppose natural forces, and lie lightly enough on the ground to be adapted over time in response to continually changing conditions.

OPSD recognizes the shared obligation of all Waikiki Beach stakeholders to allocate resources toward future-focused planning, continuous collaboration, and sustainable action that adheres to data-driven policy and sound public planning principles. Therefore, OPSD requests the following clarifying amendments:

Page 2, lines 33 – 41:

“WHEREAS, decades of coordinated efforts by the State, the City and County of Honolulu, and private interests have ~~[worked to produce]~~ fallen short of producing a sustainable and equitable long-term strategy for preserving Waikiki beaches, infrastructure, and commerce~~[- which includes the 1928 and 1929 Waikiki Beach Reclamation Agreement, the 1965 Surfriider-Royal Hawaiian Sector Beach Agreement, and Hawaii Supreme Court cases, including Gold Coast Neighborhood Association v. State of Hawaii, 140 Hawaii 437, 403 P.3d 214 (2017);]~~ despite various legacy contractual agreements and more recent judicial intervention; now, therefore,”

Page 3, line 40 – page 4, line 13:

“(4) Planning and implementation of state-led beach improvements, with cost-sharing among federal, state, county, and private property owners~~[-];~~, collaboration with all relevant stakeholders including private interests and the community, and consultation with coastal science experts and;

(5) Confirmation of the responsibility of federal, state, county, and private property owners to maintain seawalls and other infrastructure ~~[proximate to the shoreline, in accordance with authorities, including but not limited to the 1928 and 1929 Waikiki Beach Reclamation Agreement, the 1965 Surfriider-Royal Hawaiian Sector Beach Agreement, and all applicable Hawaii Supreme Court cases;]~~ pursuant to jurisdictional authority and in accordance with controlling law; and

~~[(6) Consultation and collaboration with Waikiki Beach hotels, landowners, University of Hawaii Sea Grant experts, and other relevant stakeholders; and]~~”

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure and to propose clarifying amendments to strengthen its language

STARN · O'TOOLE · MARCUS & FISHER
A LAW CORPORATION

April 22, 2026

Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair,
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee Water & Land

Hearing: House Committee on Water & Land
Date: Thursday, April 23, 2026
Time: 10:00 AM
Place: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 430
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Testimony In Support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 159 SD1 HD1
Urging Incorporation of Suggested Amendments of
Shared Guiding Principles for the Restoration of Waikiki Beaches

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa,
and Members of the House Committee on Water & Land:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding SCR 159 SD1 HD1.
Our firm represents the Waikiki Beach Special Improvement District Association (“WBSIDA”).

WBSIDA supports the stated objectives of SCR 159 SD1 HD1, including the following statements:

1. Waikiki beaches require ongoing replenishment, maintenance, and coordinated management to sustain beach width, shoreline access, and recreational use;
2. The loss of beach access reduces opportunities for the public enjoyment of coastal resources that are held in trust for the people of the State; and
3. The loss of Waikiki as an economic engine would be catastrophic to the State’s financial future and could severely impact the jobs of tens of thousands of kamaaina.

Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair,
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee Water & Land
April 22, 2026
Page 2

For the foregoing reasons, WBSIDA respectfully requests that the committee pass SCR 159 SD1 HD1. Thank you for considering our testimony.

Mahalo nui,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ivan M. Lui-Kwan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ivan M. Lui-Kwan
Cori J. Terayama



April 23, 2026

Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Water & Land

Strong Support of SCR 159, SD1, HD1, URGING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STAKEHOLDERS TO ADOPT SHARED GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PLANNING, FINANCING, AND UNDERTAKING OF EFFORTS FOR THE RESTORATION, IMPROVEMENT, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE BEACHES, SHORELINE, AND COASTAL AREAS OF WAIKIKI

WAL Hearing: Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 430, and VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i (LURF) is a private trade association founded in 1979, whose members include major Hawai'i landowners, developers, utility companies, and land use professionals. LURF's mission is to research, educate, and advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, laws, and regulations that encourage well-planned and sustainable economic growth in agriculture, housing, renewable energy, commercial and industrial uses, health care, and tourism, while safeguarding Hawai'i's significant natural, environmental, historic, and cultural resources, public health, and safety.

LURF is in **strong support of SCR 159, SD1, HD1.**

Waikiki's beaches are central to Hawai'i's visitor industry and to local recreation. For years, challenges including erosion, flooding, and infrastructure issues have threatened the shoreline environment and the economic stability of the Waikiki district. Today, Waikiki's shoreline and those challenges are managed by a complex network of public agencies, private landowners, businesses, and community organizations. As a result, sometimes, stewardship, restoration, maintenance, and new developments may not be coordinated, which can result in different outcomes, duplicated work, and missed opportunities.

SCR 159 addresses these issues by urging stakeholders to align around common values, goals, and decision-making criteria and it recommends a constructive and shared path toward coordinated, science-based, and community-aligned stewardship of Waikiki's shoreline. By promoting shared principles, SCR 159 helps ensure that short-term and long-term investments in restoration, maintenance, and future initiatives are strategic, equitable, and resilient.

LURF strongly supports SCR 159 and is willing to collaborate and contribute to shaping these guiding principles. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of this measure.