



**The House of Representatives
STATE OF HAWAII**

NEWS RELEASE

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County Liability Protection Bills Advance at the Legislature

Honolulu. Two bills aimed at better protecting county liability are advancing at the state legislature. The bills, introduced by Representative James Kunane Tokioka (District 15 – Lihue, Koloa), if enacted, will enable the counties to provide government services for the public as follows:

House Bill 36, RELATING TO COUNTIES, requires that if a state agency receives assistance, services, rights, or permission to use county property, the state must indemnify the county.

House Bill 38, RELATING TO LIABILITY OF STATE AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS, provides liability protection for the actions of county lifeguards and other state and county activities related to the use of public lands and county beach parks on a permanent basis. At this time, liability protection for these activities is temporary.

"I'm pleased that these bills are receiving attention and support at the legislature," said Rep. Tokioka. "Our lifestyle on Kauai revolves around our natural resources, especially our parks and beaches. Keeping these areas open for Kauai families and visitors is critical to our economy and our future, and we won't be able to do that without protecting the county from liability. These measures are also beneficial to taxpayers, who would end up paying for the county's liability if unprotected."

Some recreational areas on state and county property have potentially dangerous conditions. The liability protections enable government to keep these areas open to the public and reduce exposure to the state and counties.

The bills will now go before the Finance Committee of which both Rep. Tokioka and Rep. Roland Sagum (District 16 – Niihau, Lehua, Koloa, Waimea) are members.

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