

**STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION
COMMISSION
POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809**

**Testimony of
Anukriti Hittle
Coordinator, Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission**

**Before the House Committees on
WATER AND LAND
&
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Tuesday, February 16, 2021
11:00 am
State Capitol, Via Videoconference**

**In support of
House Bill 243
RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION**

Co-Chairs:
Chair, DLNR
Director, Office of Planning

Commissioners:
Chair, Senate AEN
Chair, Senate WTL
Chair, House EEP
Chair, House WTH
Chairperson, HTA
Chairperson, DOA
CEO, OHA
Chairperson, DHHH
Director, DBEDT
Director, DOT
Director, DOH
Chairperson, DOE
Director, C+C DPP
Director, Maui DP
Director, Hawai'i DP
Director, Kaua'i DP
The Adjutant General
Manager, CZM

HB 243 proposes to require each executive branch department to identify existing and planned facilities that are vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding impacts, and natural hazards; assess options for mitigating impacts of sea level rise to existing and planned facilities; establish staff level points of contact to improve interagency coordination for sea level rise adaptation, flooding and resilience and submit annual reports to the governor, legislature, and Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission. **On behalf of the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) I support this measure, with comments.**

The Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission “recognizes the urgency of climate threats and the need to act quickly. It promotes ambitious, climate-neutral, culturally responsible strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation in a manner that is clean, equitable and resilient.” The Commission, established by Act 32 SLH 2017 to uphold the United States’ pledges under the Paris Agreement, is the coordinating body for policies on climate change mitigation and adaptation for the state. It is a high-level multi-jurisdictional body that guides the priorities of the state’s climate response. Co-chaired by DLNR and Office of Planning, it consists of 20 members—chairs of four legislative committees, and executive department heads at the county and state levels.

In 2018, as part of its larger statement on adaptation, the Climate Commission issued the following priority for countering impacts of sea level rise, and:

Encourage[d] agencies and non-governmental utility providers to identify and prioritize assets within the 3.2 ft SLR-XA or more as described in the State's Sea Level Rise report, identify adaptation measures, and to provide a status update on this activity annually to the Climate Commission.

HB243 effectively addresses this priority of the Commission.

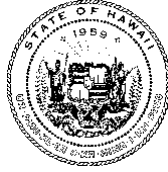
In December 2017, the Commission accepted the *Hawaii Sea Level Rise Report* and accompanying *Hawaii Sea Level Rise Viewer*. Along with the Report, a newly issued guidance (*Guidance for Using the Sea Level Rise Exposure Area in Local Planning and Permitting Decisions*, Oct 2020) and updated Viewer provide maps of a Sea Level Rise Exposure Area (SLR-XA) incorporating models of passive flooding, shoreline erosion, and annual high wave run-up with 3.2 feet of sea level rise.

Recent science summarized in the Report, Guidance and Viewer points to a likelihood of three feet or more of sea level rise in the second half of this century - within the expected lifespan of most existing and new development. It is critical that agencies and departments move expeditiously to address climate change impacts on public infrastructure. Identifying and prioritizing vulnerabilities to climate change impacts is a necessary first step. To maintain progress on this issue, frequent and regular reporting is essential, as is a point of contact at the staff level to accelerate action.

In closing, I suggest that the text on Page 4, lines 4-7, might read: "utilizing the latest projections and map data endorsed by the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission and State of Hawaii Hazard Mitigation Plan." This would reflect evolving science and updated modelling, and prevent obsolescence.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments in support of this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CURT T. OTAGURO
COMPTROLLER
AUDREY HIDANO
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
OF
CURT T. OTAGURO, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEES ON
WATER AND LAND
AND
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2021, 11:00 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOMS 430 AND 325, STATE CAPITOL

H.B. 243

RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION.

Chairs Tarnas and Lowen, Vice Chairs Branco and Marten, and members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony supporting the intent of H.B. 243 with comments.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) supports action to mitigate the future impacts of sea level rise, however we currently lack the necessary resources required to fund and administer the research, analysis, and recommendations mandated by this bill for DAGS facilities.

In addition, DAGS recommends one centralized agency, such as the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission, to provide statewide protocol and guidance to ensure consistency of results as part of more comprehensive mitigation measures and to provide support across all executive branch agencies. This support would include, but not be limited to, providing resources for education of staff and consultants, identifying regional mitigation

measures and recommendations for facilities and infrastructure by regions, and establishing a statewide budget and program for agencies to utilize for the requested assessments and reporting.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.



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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Representative Nicole Lowen, Chair
Representative Lisa Marten, Vice Chair

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Representative David Tarnas, Chair
Representative Patrick Branco, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 11:00 a.m., VIA Videoconference

HB243 – RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION

TESTIMONY

Nancy Davlantes, Legislative Committee Member, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chairs Lowen and Tarnas, Vice-Chairs Marten and Branco, committee members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii lends support to HB243 that would require each executive branch department to: identify existing and planned facilities that are vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding impacts, and natural hazards; assess options for mitigation impacts of sea level rise to existing and planned facilities; establish staff level points of contact to improve interagency coordination for sea level rise adaptation, flooding, and resilience; and submit annual reports to the governor, legislature, and Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission. Such an effort at interagency coordination is long overdue, and one may well ask, “what took you so long?”

Studies have shown that 70% of beaches in Hawaii are experiencing chronic sand loss and shoreline retreat and that more than 13 miles of beach have been completely lost to erosion fronting seawalls and revetments.

Who among us hasn't seen what's been happening to Hawaii shorelines, such as the erosion on Oahu's north shore? This bill recognizes that current coastal management policy objectives have been thwarted by, among other things, ordinances and practices allowing increased hardening of shorelines, which has only led to more shoreline armoring. This, in turn causes amplified erosion, which then causes more hardening. This vicious cycle must be halted if we are to keep our beaches for public recreation and cultural practice for future generations.

The League agrees with the legislature's finding that state coastal zone management policies must be strengthened while also reducing shoreline communities' exposure to hazards.



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The League has long had a position that the interrelationships of air, water, and land resources should be recognized in designing environmental safeguards.

While overdue, this bill indicates that Hawaii may finally be getting its act together.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Joint Hearing Wednesday, February 16, 2021 11:00 AM Conference Rooms 430 & 325

IN SUPPORT OF HB 243 Relating to Sea level Rise Adaptation

Co-Chairs Tarnas and Lowen, Co-Chairs Branco and Marten, and Members of the Committees:

The HAWAII REEF AND OCEAN COALITION –HIROC– was formed in 2017 by coral reef scientists, educators, local Hawai'i environmental organizations, elected officials, and others to address a crisis facing Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean. We are currently asking the Legislature to pass a handful of very important bills to save our coral reefs – they are bills relating to sunscreens, cesspools, plastic marine debris, climate and sea level rise

We support passage of HB 243 Relating to Sea Level Rise Adaptation.

This bill requires each executive branch department to identify existing and planned facilities that are vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding impacts, and natural hazards; assess options for mitigation impacts of sea level rise to existing and planned facilities; establish staff level points of contact to improve interagency coordination for sea level rise adaptation, flooding, and resilience; and submit annual reports to the governor, legislature, and Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission.

These steps are very prudent and necessary given the importance of these public facilities to the health and well-being of the citizens of Hawai'i, and the risks many of them face from sea level rise.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important bill.

Dave Raney

On behalf of the Hawai'i Reef Ocean Coalition



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

February 16, 2021 11:00 AM

In **SUPPORT** of **HB243**: Relating to Sea Level Rise Adaptation

Aloha Chairs Tarnas and Lowen, Vice Chairs Branco and Marten, and members of the Committees,

On behalf of our 27,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **supports HB243**.

This bill requires each executive branch department to identify existing and planned facilities that are vulnerable to sea level rise, flooding impacts, and natural hazards; assess options for mitigation impacts of sea level rise to existing and planned facilities; establish staff level points of contact to improve interagency coordination for sea level rise adaptation, flooding, and resilience; and submit annual report to the Governor, Legislature, and Climate Commission.

Climate change impacts, especially sea level rise, create a new type of coastal hazard affecting coastal areas now and increasingly in the future. The "Hawai'i Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report" prepared by the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, provides the first state-wide assessment of Hawaii's vulnerability to sea level rise by showing sea level rise exposure areas (SLR-XA) that are exposed to potential chronic flooding and land loss based on modeling passive flooding, annual high wave flooding, and coastal erosion. A summary of potential state-wide impacts from 3.2 feet of sea level rise (25,800 acres) are estimated to be \$19 billion in loss of land and structures, 38 miles of major roads flooded, 6,500 structures flooded, and 19,800 people displaced.¹

While much of the focus of the Report is on the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability projections of 3.2 feet expected to occur before the year 2100, *impacts of sea level rise are here already and will accelerate in coming years*. Policy and permitting decisions with long-term effects related to sea level rise are happening now, including approvals of structures with long life spans, siting of utilities and other capital improvements, and other actions with long-range consequences. These impacts will increase in coming years as sea level rise continues and eventually accelerates, potentially placing significant numbers of lives, properties, cultural and natural resources at risk in the absence of effective adaptation strategies.

¹ https://climateadaptation.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/SLR-Report_Dec2017.pdf

While the state of Hawai'i has adopted very ambitious goals for mitigation of climate change, including goals for clean and renewable energy to reduce our carbon emissions, much work remains for developing and implementing adaptation strategies we will need in this era of climate change. We welcome a bill like HB243 to begin laying the groundwork for sea level rise adaptation throughout our state and are pleased to see that the bill places high priorities on protecting the state's most vulnerable populations, and promoting resilience and nature-based adaptation solutions.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB243**.



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 11:00 am

House Committees on Water and Land and Energy and Environmental Protection

HOUSE BILL 243 – RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION: Assess Mitigation Options for State Facilities

Position: Strong Support

Me ke Aloha, Chairs David Tarnas and Nicole Lowen, Vice-Chairs Patrick Branco and Lisa Marten, and Members of the Committees on Water and Land and Energy and Environmental Protection:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party, through its Committee on Energy and Climate Action, are in strong support of HB243, which requires executive agencies to identify facilities to be affected by sea level rise and to assess and report mitigation options.

Sea Level Rise is here, and Hawaii is noting its presence with increased damage shorelines, difficulty in discharging storm water, and more significant and prolonged flooding. Projections for continuing sea level rise are drawn conservatively by careful science, and projected along a linear path, which we know from previous experience to be confounded by feedback loops now accelerating the process of global warming and climate disruption. We are into the tipping points. We should expect sea level rise to arrive in more pronounced forms as the years pass, but recognize that the process will not be steady but be “punctuated” by catastrophic ice shelf and glacial collapse, causing more rapid sea level rise. Results are not instantaneous, but certain.

It is essential to accelerate the adaptation and mitigation process, as rapid change could occur at any time, and the orderly process of procurement and contracting must be fully prepared with foresight, with funding made available to avoid loss of critical service. Such steps are essential, given that many State facilities are important to the health and well-being of the citizens of Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this important issue.

/s/ Charley Ice, Co-Chair, Energy and Climate Action Committee, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

HB-243

Submitted on: 2/12/2021 4:35:06 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/16/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lois Crozer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We need to take climate change seriously and start mitigation efforts.

HB-243

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 8:24:39 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/16/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert B Huber	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in full support of this bill , we need a quick plan of action with facts determined by measured sea levels and these findings reported to the necessary committes to show where we need a course of action -or-change to occur , and when to do it by from the results of the data the gov't. agencies are provided with.

HB-243

Submitted on: 2/16/2021 10:53:47 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/16/2021 11:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Janet Pappas	Individual	Support	No

Comments: