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**STATE OF HAWAII
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
CARTY S. CHANG
Interim Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
WATER & LAND**

**Monday, February 09, 2015
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 611
RELATING TO DIGITIZATION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION RECORDS**

House Bill 611 proposes to appropriate funds to digitize the records of the State Historic Preservation Division in the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department), as well as create necessary data bases and the geographic information system needed to make this information accessible and usable by staff, planners, consultants and project sponsors. **The Department strongly supports this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget request.**

During the last fifteen months, the State Historic Preservation Division (Division) has made tremendous strides in resolving the problems that lead to the issuance of the two National Park Service (NPS) Corrective Action Plans (CAP). In May 2014, the Division delivered the CAP Final Report, which included 41 of the 42 deliverables to NPS. The single deliverable not included with the May Report was the independent audit.

In June 2014, NPS notified the Department that it had accepted and approved 40 of the 41 deliverables. The one product not accepted by NPS was the Data Management Plan. Between May and June, it became clear to the Division that both it and NPS had greatly underestimated the work necessary to digitize, organize and make the Division's digital records easily usable and useful, and accessible. Accordingly, the Department advised NPS that while it will work to revise the Data Management Plan to make it acceptable. At the same time, the Department advised NPS that existing resources were not sufficient to implement the Data Management Plan in a meaningful and timely fashion.

The funds provided by House Bill 611 would allow the Division to implement that Data Management Plan and satisfy the final substantive requirement of the CAP. Funding and implementing this project is essential to lifting of the Division's status as a "high risk" recipient of federal funds. Just as importantly, implementing and completing this project will allow the Division to make all of its data available electronically. Thus making that data more useful, enhancing the effectiveness of Division operations, and improving the protection and management of Hawai'i's historic assets, as well as facilitating needed economic, housing, and infrastructure development.

HISTORIC HAWAII FOUNDATION

TO: Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair
Committee on Water and Land

FROM: Kiersten Faulkner, Executive Director
Historic Hawaii Foundation

Committee: Monday, February 9, 2015
10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 325

RE: HB 611, Relating to the Digitization of Historic Preservation Records

On behalf of Historic Hawaii Foundation, I am writing in **support for HB 611**. The bill would appropriate funds for personnel at the State Historic Preservation Division in order to establish, implement and maintain a data management system for historic preservation records through a project to digitize existing paper reports, maps, inventories, determinations and correspondence; and to create and manage a document system integrated with the geographic inventory system and several databases.

A comprehensive, digitally-based and integrated data management system will assist the department with more efficient management of its cases, provide better information and service to the public, support preservation projects, and assist the department to achieve the corrective actions to retain compliance with provisions of the federal historic preservation grant to the state.

Since 1974, Historic Hawai'i Foundation has been a statewide leader for historic preservation. Its members and supporters work to preserve Hawaii's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believe that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, economic viability and environmental sustainability of the state.

Therefore, Historic Hawai'i Foundation supports HB 611.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

LATE

TO: Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
House Committee on Water & Land

FROM: Sara L. Collins, Ph.D., President
Society for Hawaiian Archaeology
sara.l.collins.sha@gmail.com

HEARING: February 9, 2015, 10:00 AM, Conference Room 325
SUBJECT: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 611 (Relating to the Digitization of
Historic Preservation Records)

I am Dr. Sara Collins, President of the Society for Hawaiian Archaeology (SHA). We have over 150 members that include professional archaeologists and advocates of historic preservation in general. On behalf of SHA, I am presenting testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 611 (Relating to the Digitization of Historic Preservation Records). HB 611 appropriates monies for the digitization of historic preservation records and establishes a special fund.

Section 1 of HB 611 states that the purpose of the Act is to appropriate moneys to implement an acceptable data management plan for creating and accessing historic preservation records electronically. Since 2010, the National Park Service (NPS), in its reviews of the operations of State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD), has continually emphasized the need to digitize SHPD's records and review process as a critical component of a statewide inventory. The inventory should be accessible online and be web- and GIS-based. Once fully functional, the data management system will significantly improve access to information on the location, distribution, and nature of historic properties identified throughout the State. Section 2 of the subject bill appropriates \$520,000 in general fund revenues for each of fiscal years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 with the moneys being deposited into the State Historic Preservation Special Fund (Special Fund). Section 3 of HB 611 calls for DLNR to expend the appropriated funds. Section 4 describes the staff positions needed to carry out the requirements of HB 611.

We strongly support HB 611 and believe that its passage and implementation will greatly improve SHPD's ability to carry out its mandated responsibilities. Having a comprehensive and accessible database for staff to consult will increase the efficiency and quality of SHPD's reviews. Public stakeholders will also benefit from having reliable information on historic properties readily available. We would note that although other bills offered this session have proposed that SHPD carry out pilot surveys of historic properties, they were limited to certain types of historic properties. HB 611 includes all types of historic properties and creates a mechanism by which all survey information can be managed and accessed.

As has been demonstrated throughout the country, GIS and its linked databases are invaluable planning and preservation tools. Those proposing projects will be able to identify known or potential historic properties and cultural resources within or near their projects much more efficiently and do so early in the planning process. Agencies reviewing project and land use applications will have efficient access to information during the permitting and approval process. Those with concerns about the appropriate treatment and preservation of Hawai'i's historic sites could raise concerns earlier and be better informed when they do. The GIS and database functions are particularly critical for SHPD staff who review thousands of projects every year and rely heavily on the kinds of information that are more effectively managed by GIS systems. The GIS function is also vital to our membership, many of whom need this information when preparing compliance documents in accordance with HRS Chapter 6E and its implementing regulations or when conducting research.

Many other State Historic Preservation Offices across the nation already have functioning GIS systems that serve as a primary portal to a state's official inventory of historic properties. Creating and maintaining a statewide inventory in some form is a requirement of all State Historic Preservation Offices in the nation receiving federal funds and, in Hawai'i, this mandate is reiterated in HRS 6E-3(3) as a mandate of the State Historic Preservation Division. Having the GIS Specialist in a permanent position is an essential commitment to fully developing and sustaining this badly needed function.

We respectfully ask that HB 611 be passed. Should the bill pass out of this committee, we request to be consulted as a stakeholder in future deliberations on an amended bill. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the above email. Mahalo for considering our testimony.