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LAND  
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson

Before the House Committees on  
WATER & LAND  
and  
HOUSING

Tuesday, February 9, 2021  
9:15 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 430

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1276  
RELATING TO STATE PARKS

House Bill 1276 proposes to allow the Board of Land and Natural Resources to adopt, amend, or repeal administrative fee schedules for certain activities related to state parks through regular or special board meetings rather than through administrative rulemaking and appropriates funds out of the state parks special fund to raise the expenditure ceiling of the special fund. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this measure.**

The Department's Division of State Parks (State Parks), through the successful implementation of the Ha'ena State Park Master Plan, has already begun to employ adaptive management strategies to the management of parking, pedestrian and shuttle entry by adjusting capacities for each category on the fly to accommodate such factors as resident vs. out-of-State visitor demand, and incentivizing shuttle use. It has long been the policy of both State and National Park areas to adjust pricing seasonally, and even more frequently, for various park fees, and camping and lodging amenities. Hawai'i, despite its more moderate weather, does experience seasonal visitation, and demand fluctuates significantly for park activities commensurate with these visitation patterns. Presently our rigid pricing models – embedded in a cumbersome Administrative rulemaking process, do not allow for the dynamic pricing which has become the standard in many places and travel-related industries

The Department suggests that SECTION 2 of this bill be expanded to include the flexibility to specifically allow the board to set a fee range , i.e. an amount not less than or greater than, that can be adjusted seasonally or in response to changing economic conditions, in order that during

times of low demand, we can have sales or kama'aina specials, etc. to maximize visitor opportunities and affordability, as well as allow for peak season pricing to enhance revenue in times of high demand – for example, the temporary winter spike in visitation to Diamond Head State Monument when Hawai'i hosted the Pro Bowl. This would allow for adjustments throughout the year to pricing without constantly returning to the Board, but establishing reasonable upper and lower thresholds.

The Department also appreciates the acknowledgement that without an increase in the State Parks Special Fund, the additional revenue realized through both our increased and increasingly flexible revenue generating paradigm, we will not be able to direct these additional revenues back into the park system to address the longstanding issues of the lack of management capacity and deferred maintenance throughout Hawai'i's valued and heavily visited State Park system.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.