



Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on
TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS and
WATER AND LAND

Wednesday, February 11, 2015; 2:45 pm

By
HAWAII SHORE AND BEACH PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 617 RELATING TO BEACH PROTECTION

Senate Bill 617 expands the Department of Land and Natural Resources' (DLNR) beach restoration plans to include beach conservation plans and allows the DLNR to include studies about the effect of sea level rise and other coastal engineering studies. The bill proposes to rename the "Beach Restoration Special Fund" as the "Beach Restoration and Conservation Special Fund." Along with permit fees, proceeds from the lease of public lands for an existing shoreline structure, matching funds to carry out a beach restoration and conservation plans, the bill allocates \$3,000,000, annually (to maintain a balance of \$7,000,000) of transient accommodations tax revenues to the Beach Restoration and Conservation Special Fund to be expended by the Board of Land and Natural Resources and Board of Directors of the Hawaii Tourism Authority, under a mutual agreement.

The Hawaii Shore and Beach Preservation Association (HSBPA)* strongly supports Senate Bill 617. Hawaii's beaches have become increasingly threatened by erosion. According to the United States Geological Service (USGS) National Assessment of Shoreline Change for the Hawaiian Islands, 70% of Hawaii's beaches are eroding and 13 miles of beach have been lost over the last century. Beach erosion effects shoreline access, recreation and cultural activities, coastal environments, and our tourism-based economy. Beaches are the backbone of Hawaii's \$15 Billion tourism industry and are central to Hawaii's unique culture and lifestyle.

The HSBPA supports the development of special discretionary funds to facilitate improved understanding and management of Hawaii's coastal resources. The fund will be critical to the development and the implementation of local and regional beach conservation and management plans and projects. The DLNR has a proven history in successfully developing beach conservation plans and managing coastal assets as exemplified by the 2012 Waikiki Beach Maintenance project.

The HSBPA held a Beach Restoration Workshop in November, 2014 that included HSBPA members and invitees representing a cross-section of stakeholders involved with coastal



management. Increased funding for agencies tasked with coastal management to support beach conservation, restoration, and coastal land use planning was identified as a key recommendation from workshop participants.

*The Hawaii Shore and Beach Preservation Association (HSBPA, <http://www.hawaiishoreandbeach.org/>), formed in 2014, is an organization of private sector, academic, and government professionals, students and local community members dedicated to the preservation and restoration of Hawaii's beaches and coastal environments. The HSBPA aims to bring together various members of the coastal community to foster dialogue and cooperation on beach and coastal resource conservation, management, and regulation; supporting professional development of chapter members; and providing education to students and community members on Hawaii's beaches and coastal environments.

Thank you for considering our testimony on this bill. Please consider HSBPA a resource should you have any questions or want more information about beach preservation and restoration. We can be reached at aloha@hawaiishoreandbeach.org.