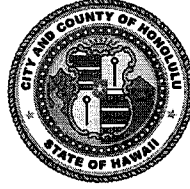


OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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February 17, 2023

The Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair and Presiding Officer
and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Waters and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Bill 41 (2022), CD2 Relating to Shoreline Setbacks

The Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency ("CCSR") strongly supports Bill 41 (2022), CD2, which amends Chapter 26 of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021 to increase shoreline setbacks and implement an erosion-rate-based shoreline setback formula.

O'ahu has already lost over five miles of sandy beaches to coastal erosion, shoreline hardening, and sea level rise over the past century¹. If no action is taken, we can expect additional impacts to approximately 5,640 acres of urban-zoned land and 3,800 existing structures totaling \$12.9 billion in economic losses². Confronted with these consequences, the City has a responsibility to protect life and property while ensuring the longevity and integrity of one of O'ahu's most important cultural, natural, and economic resources—our beaches. Shoreline setbacks are a critical tool the City uses to fulfill this responsibility, but existing setbacks are proving insufficient for the shoreline changes we have already witnessed. These shoreline changes require corresponding and adequate changes to shoreline management.

Bill 41, CD2 reduces further damage to properties by increasing shoreline setbacks for all development, as the science tells us sea level rise and its impacts will accelerate through this century and beyond³. Additionally, implementing an erosion-based setback

1 Fletcher, C.H., et. al. 2012. National Assessment of Shoreline Change: Historical Shoreline Changes in the Hawaiian Islands: <https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2011/1051/>.

2 Haw aii Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report. Haw aii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission. 2017: https://climateadaptation.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/SLR-Report_Dec2017.pdf.

3 City and County of Honolulu Climate Change Commission Sea Level Rise Guidance (July 2022):

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localizes protection to the parcel-level, accommodating the unique conditions of each individual zoning lot, rather than our current one-size-fits-all approach. Utilizing decades of studied historical erosion rates to determine the best way to protect individual lots into the future is a proven model for success in managing risk along the shoreline, as evidenced by erosion-based setbacks in place for decades for the Counties of Maui and Kaua'i, and other U.S. states and counties nationwide⁴.

Bill 41, CD2, in conjunction with the Council's consideration of Bill 42 (2022), CD2, advances implementation of the City's O'ahu Resilience Strategy and community-based Development and Sustainable Communities Plans, which underscore the need to revise our shoreline regulations given updated science and data that provide more accurate and empowering information for protecting public safety⁵. Swift adoption and implementation of these measures is essential for protecting residents' safety and beach access for generations to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments in support of Bill 41 (2022), CD2. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 768-2277 or via e-mail at resilientoahu@honolulu.gov.

Sincerely,



Matthew Gonser
Executive Director and
Chief Resilience Officer

Digitally signed by Gonser,
Matthew
Date: 2023.02.17 11:33:04
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APPROVED:



Michael D. Formby
Managing Director

https://www.resilientoahu.org/s/HonoluluClimateChangeCommission-SeaLevelRiseGuidance_Updated-July2022-sadb.pdf

⁴ City and County of Honolulu Climate Change Commission Guidance on Revisions to the Revised Ordinance of Honolulu Chapter 23, Regarding Shoreline Setbacks (December 2019):

<https://www.resilientoahu.org/s/HonoluluClimateChangeCommission-ROH23ShorelineSetbackGuidance-Dec2019.pdf>

⁵ Ola: O'ahu Resilience Strategy, Action 29: Protect Beaches and Public Safety with Revised Shoreline Management Rules: https://www.resilientoahu.org/s/Ola_Oahu_Resilience_Strategy-lfrm.pdf#page=46.