

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



MICHAEL D. FORMBY
MANAGING DIRECTOR
PO'O HO'OKELE

KRISHNA F. JAYARAM
DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O HO'OKELE

February 27, 2024

The Honorable Tommy Water
Chair and Presiding Officer
and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 S. King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Waters and Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Resolution 24-50 – Relating to the Establishment of
a Department of Ocean Safety

I apologize for signing up to speak and subsequently being conflicted by a meeting. I am offering this written testimony instead and Deputy Managing Director Jayaram can answer questions on my behalf, if any.

Mayor Blangiardi and I stood up an Ocean Safety Task Force (“task force”) in 2023 to review and study the feasibility of having Ocean Safety as a stand-alone first-responder department from the Honolulu Emergency Services Department (HESD). The task force met on eleven (11) occasions between July 25, 2023 and January 9, 2024. Our understanding is the task force has reached a general consensus but has yet to finalize their Executive Summary. Upon receiving the Executive Summary, the Mayor and I would also like the opportunity to discuss their recommendation(s) with members of the task force.

Today, the Ocean Safety Division (“OSD”) in HESD is comprised of 242 employees with 36 contract positions. OSD provides a critical dawn-to-dusk first responder operation with a FY24 approved budget of \$23,012,358, of which \$20,704,813 is salaries.

Until Mayor and I receive the task force Executive Summary, we are respectfully withholding our position on Resolution 23-50 out of deference to the work of the task force. We look forward to providing testimony on this Resolution in the future.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael D. Formby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael D. Formby
Managing Director

MAYOR'S MESSAGE 35