BILL023(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 154

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Apr 15, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 80

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 2

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Leelynn Brady	systemsadvocacy@alohailhawaii.org	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Aloha Independent Living Hawaii	I wish to comment	Apr 14, 2026 @ 08:59 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Russell Iwamura	russiwamura@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 04:09 PM

Testimony:

I am providing testimony in favor of Councilmember Weyer's amendment to the Capital Improvement Project budget adding $1,000,000 to improve the K. Mark Takai Veteran's Memorial Aquatics Center. As a USA Swimming certified official with 14 years' experience. I have participated in numerous swim meets at the facility. It is the center of the competitive swimming universe on Oahu and provides countless opportunities for children to experience the joys of athletic achievement. It is also in need of updating. The facility is showing the wear-and-tear of constant use over the years to the point where make-shift fixes are sometimes necessary during meets. This deterioration will worsen unless the facility is improved. The funds added to the Capital Improvement Project budget is exactly what is needed to keep the K. Mark Takai Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center the premier facility for swimming on Oahu.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Grace Schonhardt	gschonhardt@hotmail.com	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
VMAC Renewal Foundation	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 04:32 PM

Testimony:

My name is Grace Schonahrdt, and I strongly support funding to renovate the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

I grew up in the Leeward area, where my father worked as a sugar plantation laborer in the Waipahu and ‘Ewa plantations. When I was in the 4th grade, I remember walking from August Ahrens Elementary School to the Waipahu gym on Paiwa Street for swimming lessons. Those early experiences reflect something we all recognize in Hawai‘i which is that swim safety is not optional; it is essential.

That value has continued in my family. It was important to me that my children learn water safety, and they all took lessons at that same Waipahu gym. The approval of HB1234 in 2025, which strengthens water safety education and drowning prevention for our keiki, underscores the urgency of this issue. Drowning remains the leading cause of death in Hawai‘i for children ages 1–15, and our state ranks among the highest in the nation for youth drowning rates. Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander youth are three times more likely to drown compared to other ethnic groups in Hawaii.

Renovating and modernizing VMAC is essential to supporting the goals of HB1234. A safe, well-maintained facility ensures that students and community members have reliable access to high-quality swimming instruction and water safety education. Improvements to the pool deck, bulkhead, starting blocks, restrooms, and expanded spectator areas will

enhance safety and increase the facility's capacity to serve more learners and host programs aligned with statewide efforts. Investing in this facility is an investment in drowning prevention and community health.

Living on an island community, swimming is a life skill. My youngest son began learning to swim at six months old in a pool and is now a competitive swimmer who participates in meets at VMAC. Facilities like this are critical not only for safety, but for building discipline, confidence, and excellence in our youth.

Since its completion in 2005, VMAC has served the growing needs of our community. The current condition of the facility reflects how heavily it is used. VMAC remains a vital hub for daily exercise, lessons, team practices, and major competitions that bring together athletes from across Hawai'i and beyond. Events such as the Keo Nakama Invitational established in 1946 which is the longest running swim meet in Hawaii and the 2022 Junior Pan Pacific Swimming Championships highlight the facility's importance on both a local and international level.

Investing in these improvements will ensure that VMAC continues to serve our community safely and effectively, while honoring its history and meeting modern standards for training and competition. Most importantly, maintaining and improving this facility means continuing to provide a safe place where our children can learn to swim. By doing so, we can reduce preventable drowning deaths and inspire the next generation of swimmers, just as it has inspired my son and many local athletes, carrying forward the legacy of its namesake, Veteran Mark Takai.

Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting this important investment in our community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Eric Nagoshi	ericnagoshi@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
VMAC Renewal Foundation	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 04:41 PM

Testimony:

To: Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council

Subject: STRONG SUPPORT for Bill 23(26), CD1 – VMAC CIP Amendment

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

I am writing in strong support of the $1,000,000 amendment for the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) included in Bill 23(26), CD1.

As a board member of the VMAC Renewal Foundation, I recognize the urgent need to replace the facility's aging bulkhead, which is at high risk of failure. This funding represents the minimum necessary to address critical infrastructure needs and ensure the long-term viability of this important community asset.

VMAC serves not only competitive athletes, but also kupuna, first responders, and adaptive athletes. Investing in this facility helps preserve essential programs, supports community health and safety, and creates opportunities to host events that benefit our local economy.

I respectfully urge the Council to support and pass this measure.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Eric Nagoshi

Board Member, VMAC Renewal Foundation

Name: Carol PHILIPS	Email: director@gonorthshore.org	Zip: 96712
Representing: North Shore Chamber of Commerce	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Apr 14, 2026 @ 06:16 PM
Name: Kevin Nakamura	Email: kevin@vmacrenewal.org	Zip: 96789
Representing: VMAC Renewal Foundation	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 14, 2026 @ 07:00 PM
Name: Hanna Nakamura	Email: yemimihp@gmail.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: VMAC Renewal Foundation	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 14, 2026 @ 07:44 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

My name is Hanna Nakamura, and I serve as Project Manager for the VMAC Renewal Foundation. I am writing to respectfully ask for your support of the $1,000,000 CIP amendment for the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

VMAC has been a central part of my family's life for many years. My son joined his first swim club there at just six years old; he is now 15 and has competed at VMAC nearly every other month for nearly a decade. Personally, I have officiated swim meets there for over seven years. It is a place I care deeply about, and I have seen firsthand how it serves as the heart of our aquatic community.

Through the years, I have witnessed how much this facility means to athletes across all water sports, their families, and visiting teams. It is a vital venue for both training and competition, especially because there is no other facility on O'ahu that can accommodate athletes of all ages and skill levels at this scale.

However, I have also seen the facility reach a state of significant wear. When compared to modern facilities on the mainland, it is clear that VMAC requires meaningful investment to remain viable. While this funding will not address every

need, it is a necessary first step toward stabilizing the facility.

The most urgent requirement is replacing the aging bulkhead. This equipment has far exceeded its serviceable lifespan. Based on our foundation's research and recent industry quotes, the $1,000,000 appropriation is essential to cover not just the equipment, but the significant logistical costs of shipping, crane services, and specialized installation required here in Hawaii. Without this replacement, we risk losing the ability to host the very competitions that define this facility.

I humbly ask for your support of this amendment so we can begin restoring VMAC to the world-class standard our community and our athletes deserve.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and your service to our community,

Hanna Nakamura
Project Manager,
VMAC Renewal Foundation

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Cole Nakamura	cole@vmacrenewal.org	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 08:18 PM

Testimony:
Aloha! My name is Cole Nakamura and I am a student-athlete and the originating founder of the VMAC Renewal Foundation. I'm writing to ask for your support of the $1,000,000 amendment for the K. Mark Takai Veterans' Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) in Bill 23(26), CD1.

I founded this organization because I grew up at this pool, and I've seen how much it matters to the kids I train with every day. VMAC has been a home for Hawaii's athletes for over two decades, but the moveable bulkhead (which reconfigures the length of the pool for swimming and water polo) is now at high risk of failing. For athletes like me, that bulkhead is what makes the pool functional. If it breaks, we don't just lose a piece of equipment; we lose VMAC as a place to host competitions until it can be removed at enormous cost. Worse, we could lose access to the facility entirely, due to safety concerns.

My goal is to see VMAC become a world-class venue. Right now, many of my teammates and friends have to spend thousands of dollars to fly to the mainland just to compete in regional or national meets. By investing this $1,000,000 now, you are helping us bring those competitions home. It opens the door to Hawaii athletes to compete at the highest levels in their own backyard, especially those who may not be able to afford the high cost of travel.

Please pass this amendment to protect this facility for my generation and the athletes who come after me. Thank you for

investing in our future!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rene Iwamura	reneiwamura@gmail.com	96825-2539
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 08:26 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of VMAC Renewal Foundation Capital Improvement Project

Aloha Chair and Members of the Council,

I am testifying in favor of Councilmember Weyer's amendment to provide $1 million in funding to improve the K. Mark Takai Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center.

I support the amendment as both a parent of a swimmer and a USA Swimming volunteer official. My son has had the privilege of competing at this top-notch facility and gaining valuable lessons in the benefits of perseverance, determination, and hard work. As an official working at many meets at the facility I have witnessed a lot of other swimmers also experiencing the benefits of competing at this facility. I have also noticed that the pool and surrounding facilities are slowly breaking down due to use and exposure to the elements.

While the pool staff have done an excellent job to maintain the facilities, it is time for major upgrades. The added funds will provide the resources needed to keep this excellent pool available for use by future swimmers.

Mahalo for your time and consideration, and for your continued commitment to our community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Stephanie Monahan	samonahan17@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 08:53 PM

Testimony:

As a parent of three former Hawaiian Swimming athletes and a USA Swimming Official since 2014, I've had the opportunity to experience the VMAC facility from many different perspectives over the years. I've also worked closely with the VMAC staff while volunteering at swim meets, and I've seen firsthand the care and pride they take in maintaining the facility.
Even with that level of dedication, the reality is that the facility is aging and no longer meets the needs of today's athletes or the standards of similar facilities on the mainland. Still, VMAC remains a vital part of our community. It supports swim practices and meets, water polo games and training, and includes diving amenities that allow it to serve multiple aquatic disciplines.
VMAC also plays an important role beyond competitive sports. It provides lap swim opportunities that are especially

important to many kūpuna, offering a safe and welcoming space to stay active and connected.
With the right investment and updates, this facility has the potential to become something much more, a premier aquatic center that better serves our athletes, supports community use, and allows us to host higher-level competitions. This would not only improve the experience for those who use the facility but also bring added visibility and economic benefit to our community.
Updating this facility would make a meaningful difference for our community. It would create a better space for athletes, families and kūpuna, and provide a place that our community can continue to enjoy and take pride in.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Darsha Lee	darsha@hawaii.edu	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 08:54 PM

Testimony:
Aloha,

I am writing in support of project 1998040, for improvement to the Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center at Patsy Mink Regional Park. The aquatic center provides an important space for learning to swim, recreation, competition, and promotion of healthy outdoor activities. In our communities, clean, well-kept, safe, and easily accessible spaces for recreation in turn support healthier and more resilient communities. I would appreciate your support of this project. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Mahalo nui loa,
Darsha Lee
District 8 Constituent

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brooke Watari	brookewatari@gmail.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 08:58 PM

Testimony:
I am a 14 year old competitive swimmer for Splash Aquatics and have been for about 3 years now. This bill gives $1million to the betterment of the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center, a place I hold dear to me. Ever since my first swim meet at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center, I have always appreciated the facility. I attend meets there often, and make some of the best memories there. Sometimes, the blocks can be shaky or broken, lanelines a bit faded, and the walls a bit dirty. It's with nothing but love for the facility that I wish for money to be allocated for the betterment. Swimmers around the state gather here for the most important meets of their lives, and providing a facility of high quality is something we should value. Swimmers will appreciate upkeep of the facility. Whenever we go to travel meets and see nicer pools, we feel like our competition is at the next level and appreciate swimming and the facility even more. Making VMAC a better place can

have impacts beyond just improved floor tiles or cleaner bathrooms, but it can increase appreciation, performance, engagement of the community, and provide a better atmosphere for citizens to enjoy some of their most memorable experiences at.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Noah Schonhardt	nschonhardt28@punahou.edu	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
VMAC Renewal Foundation	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:04 PM

Testimony:

I am a 16-year-old student who loves swimming, and I strongly support funding to renovate the Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Swimming has taught me important life skills that go far beyond the pool. It has helped me learn perseverance, discipline, and how to keep going even when training is difficult. In both practice and competition, I've learned that success comes from consistency, effort, and the willingness to improve over time.

Improvements to the bulkhead, starter blocks, and spectator area are important because they directly impact both safety and the quality of training. Outdated equipment can create unnecessary risks and limits how well swimmers can develop proper technique. Modern, well-maintained facilities would provide a safer environment where athletes can train confidently and focus on improving.

Swimming also teaches critical water safety skills. A strong, accessible community pool helps ensure that young people receive proper instruction and develop habits that can save lives. This is especially important in Hawaii, where drowning rates among youth are one of the highest in the nation. Improving access to safe swimming facilities can help reduce these preventable tragedies by giving more children the opportunity to learn how to swim correctly and respond safely in the water.

Investing in VMAC renovations shows that the city is willing to invest in its young people. It demonstrates a commitment to our safety, our growth, and our future by providing a safe place to learn swimming, build water safety skills, and develop confidence in the water. A renovated pool is not just an upgrade to a facility, it is an investment in preventing drowning, protecting lives, and supporting the next generation of the community.

Thank you for supporting the VMAC renewal project.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Tanya Alana	talana@punahou.edu	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:06 PM

Testimony:

I strongly support this bill. VMAC is used by at least 200-300 Keiki, along with there parents, every swim meet. The facilities could definitely use a few upgrades. Mahalo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Elle Lim	sydsetosy@gmail.com	96707

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:07 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of this measure to improve VMAC. Access to quality swimming facilities is essential for the health and wellness of our community. Swimming is deeply rooted in Hawaiian culture, and our keiki deserve a safe, well-maintained facility to develop their skills and love for the water.

Investing in VMAC is an investment in the future of Hawaii's youth and the overall well-being of our residents. I strongly urge the Council to approve this measure.

Mahalo for your time and consideration!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Martha Garcia	marthacgarciav@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:07 PM

Testimony:

Aloha

My family is part of the Hawaii Swimming community and we use the Venue throughout the whole year. Since this is the only facility that provides both seasons of swimming meets (short and long course) we would like to support any upgrades and renovations proposed. As regular users we noticed that the facility needs to be renovated to be able to continue to hosting events for the State and City community. We are greatfull to hear that there is a group of people
Interested on improving the venue. Thank you very much for the support. We see the the pool needs new bathrooms and plumbing upgrades as these are continuously clogged. Shade overhead at least on two sides of the pool for sun protection. New bleachers and shades, new scorer board and touchpads and full electric system, a storage room to store aquatic sports equipment, new security system to protect the kids during the training and events, pool upgrades, new blocks on both sides of the pool (20 total).
Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts and suggestions.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Alex Chiya	achiya09@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:08 PM

Testimony:

My son participates in various USA Swimming and various USA Water Polo events and competitions at VMAC. Project

1998040 would go a long way in providing an improved facility to give athletes of all levels a great experience during their events at VMAC. Facility improvements would also provide the high level athletes better preparation for regional and national level competitions and may also allow Hawaii to host such competitions.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Emily Diep	emily.diep16@gmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:12 PM

Testimony:

Project 1998040

I am writing in support of funding for VMAC. Swimming is an excellent sport that is good for lifetime fitness as well as teaches kids to build character. There are many kids who are swimming competitively and they need a competition pool that allows them to do so. Please allow funding to improve the swimming facility to give children the opportunity to achieve higher levels of competition.

Thank you

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Thomas Tran	ttran88@live.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
PAQ	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:13 PM

Testimony:

Bathrooms are outdated especially for an activity that requires frequent changing of clothes. I have a daughter and feel at times it might not be safe for her to change into dry clothes. Thank you for your consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jinee Hong	jineeh@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:14 PM

Testimony:

VMAC urgently needs an infrastructure upgrade to ensure safety and support the community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Philip Woo	philiptwoo@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:16 PM

Testimony:

I support project 1998040 which will continue to help improve current conditions of VMAC to help support healthy living.

It is a pool that is used by multiple generations from little Keki learning about water to older uncle's and aunties that use it to keep physical fit. As tax payers we ought to provide current and workable faculties. Yes to project 1998040!!!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Cheveyo Rodriguez	kawika.rod@yahoo.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:22 PM

Testimony:

It would be beneficial to the whole swimming community and bring more attraction to the sport

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Daniel Fullick	Danfullick@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:22 PM

Testimony:

The aquatics center known as VMAC is in need of upgrades and repairs. This facility is at the center of competitive aquatic sports for athletes of all ages from every side of our island. Investment in this facility is crucial in keeping our athletes safe, engaged and competitive to their mainland counterparts. Thank you.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kendal Furudera	furuderakt@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:23 PM

Testimony:

I would like to voice my support for a project within this bill for which I have first hand knowledge. The project, #1998040 to refurbish various aspects of the Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center is long overdue. With Hawai'i producing national caliber swimmers, it is important to have a up to date and functional public pool to support them. Recent championship swim meets highlighted the need for new touch pads, bulkhead and scoreboard as swimmers times did not display properly or times needed to be manually input into the system. There are many important and worthy needs in the overall bill but would like to call your attention to this pressing matter. Thank you

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Amory Hanson	ahanson28@punahou.edu	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:25 PM

Testimony:

I am a competitive swimmer in Hawaii, and I am writing to support of the bill funding the upgrade to the VMAC pool.

As a swimmer, access to a quality facilities is really important for safe and enjoyable competition. VMAC provides an invaluable service to the community by allowing independent and youth athletics to thrive and supporting public health.

Support of this bill will be a meaningful investment into the future and health of Hawaii's community, and I urge you to consider this when voting on the bill.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kenrick Wong	KENRICKZ@GMAIL.COM	96701-3019
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:26 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of CIP No. 1998040 – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of the improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center.

This facility serves our entire Central Oahu community, and upgrades to the spectator seating — ideally covered with PV shade structures — would make a tremendous difference during swim meets, where thousands of families gather in Hawai'i's heat to cheer on their children. New bulkheads, starter blocks, and a scoreboard will also bring the facility up to the standard our athletes and community deserve.

Naming this center after Congressman K. Mark Takai is a lasting tribute to his service, and it should be a facility worthy of that legacy.

I respectfully urge your support for this appropriation. Mahalo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jennifer Carney	piblokto2k1@yahoo.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:26 PM

Testimony:

The VMAC center is vital for families and children. It sets a foundation for health, activity and community bonding but the infrastructure is lacking. The pool, bathrooms and changing rooms needs refurbishing and a total upgrade. There is limited shade for parents and families to support children activities. The spaces should be modernized to give the sense of safety and warmth. Bring the gathering place back to standards.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Daniel Schar	dwschar@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:26 PM

Testimony:

VMAC, veterans memoral aquatic center is in dire need of improvements for safety of the community. The pool, which is considered one of the featured in the state is way behind all the facilities on neighbor islands and is borderline unsafe for use for competition. competitive swimmimg offers oportunities for local children to learn valuable life skills and helps them when they get older in the college admission process as it opens up doors for college scholarships. Oahu deserves better, we have the most athletes and a very rundown poorly maintained facility compared to other islands. Please support this as it is giving back to so much in our community, aquatic sports teaches so much to kids, gives them something to find pride in. Water is the life and history of the Hawaiian people it is sad when we have such a poorly maintained "premier" facility.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Michael Carney	mcarney@hawaii.edu	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:32 PM

Testimony:

I am strongly in favor of additional monetary support for the VMA C center. It is a jewel of the island of Oahu. There are so many people that use the facilities, including my family. My son is a swimmer and regularly. He has his meats at the center. The VMAC is indeed in need of maintenance and repair for the safety and well-being of the community. Thank you for working to make our facilities great for the kids and families of Oahu.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Hitoshi Hayakawa	hawaiianstyle1@me.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:33 PM

Testimony:

VMAC needs infrastructure upgrades for safer and more effective swimming facilities for Keiki and Adult swimmers

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Josette Gose	jkgose@me.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:33 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of CIP No. 1998040 K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center

Aloha,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center at Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park. This facility is a vital resource for our entire Central Oahu

community.

Upgrading the spectator seating, ideally with PV shade structures, would significantly enhance the experience during swim meets, where thousands of families gather under Hawai'i's sun to cheer on their children. Additionally, installing new bulkheads, starter blocks, and a modern scoreboard will elevate the facility to the standards our athletes and community rightfully deserve.

Naming this center after Congressman K. Mark Takai serves as a meaningful tribute to his dedication and service, and it is essential that the facility reflects the legacy he represents.

I respectfully urge your support for this appropriation.

Mahalo Nui!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Blayke Takara	blayke.takara@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:37 PM

Testimony:

I have been a competitive swimmer for many years and little to no changes were made to improve safety. When we have swim competitions, there can be many problems. Sometimes in the lockers it can get flooded. But around the pool there can be sharp objects that stick out and can cut someone's foot. Also with the dive blocks, there are objects that protrude from the pieces that break. Lastly the bulkhead has sharp fiberglass that gets loose and cause irritation. These are some of the things that would be helpful to know.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Elizabeth Burgin	Kea29@mac.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:40 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Strong Support of Funding for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC)

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Elizabeth Burgin and I am a parent of two competitive swimmers who compete regularly at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. I am writing in strong support of funding for VMAC because for families like mine, this facility is not just a pool. It is where our children train, compete, and grow.

Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center is one of the few facilities on O‘ahu capable of hosting competitive swim meets. Every meet, I watch young athletes give everything they have showing discipline, resilience, and pride in representing their team and community. But, they are doing so in a facility that is clearly in need of major improvements.

The wear and tear at VMAC is not just cosmetic, it impacts safety, performance, and the overall experience for athletes and families. For a sport that demands precision and consistency, the condition of the facility matters. Our keiki deserve a space that reflects their level of commitment.

Swimming in Hawai‘i is more than a sport, it is a life skill. It builds confidence, creates opportunity, and quite literally saves lives. Investing in VMAC is an investment in our children and our community.

I respectfully urge you to support funding for VMAC improvements. This is a chance to strengthen a vital resource and give our athletes the environment they deserve.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Burgin

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Yuki Agresti	aloha_yuki@hotmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:44 PM

Testimony:
VMAC needs renovation this is the place where swimmers use very often and they grow out of here. Please find it to renovate it.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Felix Wang	ramenpandahi@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:49 PM

Testimony:
As a student athlete who uses the facilities on a frequent basis, I would say improvements to the Central Oahu Regional Park pool is much needed and would be equally appreciated by all who use said facilities. The swimmers starting blocks have been the same for at least a decade and multiple children have reported injury due to the sharp edges by the degrading blocks.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Marchelle San Diego	marchelle.u.sandiego@gmail.com	96819

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:49 PM

Testimony:

I'm sharing my testimony in support of BILL023(26) to improve VMAC. This facility means so much to our community.

VMAC is where the majority of our swim meets, water polo practices, and scrimmages take place.

It hosts the state swimming championships, bringing in athletes from our neighboring islands, and regularly welcomes teams who travel in from the mainland to compete. It has even been the site of a large international meet.

With improvements, VMAC has the potential to host even larger events, like Western Zones, bringing in dozens of mainland teams and creating incredible opportunities for our local athletes.

Just as important, providing our swimmers with an updated, well-maintained facility directly supports their growth and development. When athletes have access to quality training environments, it helps them improve, stay motivated, and reach their full potential.

More than anything, VMAC is a vital community space. Our swim clubs and water polo clubs depend on it, and so many families benefit from what happens there every day. Supporting this bill is an investment in our keiki, our athletes, and our community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rick Barnes	rickbarnes2000@yahoo.com	96744

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:50 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of CIP No. 1998040 – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center

My child has been swimming competitively for 5 years now, since he was 9 years old. Swimming has been a very positive influence for him and all of his team mates. He has made so many friends from swimming and the whole swimming community is truly one big Ohana. This facility serves not only all of Oahu but also hosts meets for our outer island swimmers. It's unfortunate that this pool, that should be the pinnacle of Oahu public pools, is falling into disrepair. A new scoreboard, bulkheads, and starter blocks will bring the facility up to the standard our athletes and community deserve.

I respectfully urge your support for this appropriation. Mahalo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
David Coleman	dcoleman2011@gmail.com	96822

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaiian Swimming LSC	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:52 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of Renovation and Upgrades to Veteran’s Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC)

Aloha Chair and Members,

On behalf of Hawaiian Swimming LSC, representing USA Swimming, I respectfully offer strong support for the renovation and upgrading of the Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center.

VMAC serves as the primary competition venue for swimming across Hawai‘i, hosting most major meets throughout the year. More than 3,000 athletes, along with their families, coaches, and officials, rely on this facility regularly. It is also the site of the majority of our state championship events and supports additional aquatic sports, including water polo and high school swimming.

While VMAC was thoughtfully designed and has served the community well, it is now showing its age. The proposed upgrades—including new spectator seating, a modern scoreboard, and replacement of aging starting blocks—are essential to ensure the safety, functionality, and continued excellence of this facility.

Investing in VMAC is an investment in Hawai‘i’s youth, in community health, and in the future of competitive aquatics in our state. With these improvements, VMAC can not only continue to serve as our central competition venue, but also grow into a premier aquatic center for the Pacific Basin.

Mahalo for your consideration and support.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kisan Jo	kisanjo@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
VMAC Renewal Foundation	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:52 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is Kisan, and I am a parent of young swimmers who train and compete at the Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (“VMAC”). I am also working with the VMAC Renewal Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting the renovation and improvement of this important community facility.

As a parent, I have watched my children — and so many others — grow through the sport of swimming. Early-morning practices, long meets under the sun, learning to handle pressure, learning to fail and try again — these experiences shape them into resilient, disciplined, confident young people. VMAC has been the place where these lessons happen. It is where friendships form, where teams bond, and where kids discover what they are capable of.

But VMAC is more than a pool for competitive swimmers. It is a gathering place for families learning water safety, seniors staying active through aerobics, water polo athletes training hard, and children experiencing the water for the very first time. It is one of the few public spaces where people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities come together with a shared purpose: to learn, to grow, and to stay healthy.

Because this facility is so heavily used and deeply loved, its aging condition is becoming harder to ignore. The bulkheads, starting blocks, and scoreboard need repair or replacement. The limited spectator seating makes it difficult to host meets safely and comfortably. The infrastructure is worn, and the community cannot fully benefit from a facility that no longer meets the needs of the people who rely on it every day.

Our community deserves better — and our children deserve a safe, well-maintained, inspiring place to train, compete, and build lifelong skills.

Through the VMAC Renewal Foundation, we are working to raise awareness and funding to support these improvements. We want VMAC to continue being a place where young athletes discover their potential, where families feel welcome, and where the community can gather with pride. This is not just about upgrading equipment; it is about investing in the health, safety, and future of our community.

VMAC has given so much to so many of us. I have seen firsthand how this pool has shaped my children and countless others. With your support, VMAC can continue to provide these opportunities for generations to come.

I respectfully ask for your support in funding the renovation of this special and well-loved community facility. Thank you for your time and for considering this important project.

Sincerely,

Kisan

Name:	Email:	Zip:
anuschka De aguiar	scubrazil@hotmail.com	96753
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Hawaiian Swimming.org	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:53 PM

Testimony:

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Anuschka de Aguiar, and I am writing in support of funding for the VMAC aquatic facility.

In 2025, I had the opportunity to serve as the Meet Referee for the Age Group State Championship, traveling from Maui to officiate the event. While I appreciated the opportunity to be part of such an important competition, I was very disappointed by the condition of the facility.

During the meet, the pool temperature exceeded 87 degrees, creating unsafe conditions for athletes—particularly for long-distance events. As a result, I was required to reschedule certain events to ensure swimmer safety. Currently, there is

no cooling system in place to regulate the pool temperature during the summer months, which is a significant concern given the high-level competitions hosted at this venue.

In addition, the bathroom and locker room facilities are in need of upgrades to better accommodate athletes, officials, and spectators.

For a facility that hosts premier events, these issues impact not only performance but also the overall safety and experience of everyone involved. I strongly support funding to improve and modernize the VMAC facility so it can meet the standards expected for competitive aquatic events.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at 808-276-0349.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anuschka de Aguiar

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Wenyi Zhou	wyzhou_98@yahoo.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:54 PM

Testimony:

I would like to provide strong support in particular for the project #1998040 under this bill. VMAC is the place that hosts swim practices and meets for all the swim clubs on Oahu. During the Championships meet, it is hosting swimmers from outer islands and even mainland clubs. It is the home for my kids. I am one of the many parent volunteer officials for the swimming meets. The facility needs an upgrade desperately to be able to serve our community better. We worked through the challenges for in-consistency in the connectivity for the scoreboard, the cracks on the starter blocks, the slippery of the bulkheads for flip turns, just to mention a few. The money requested in this bill, if get approved, it will be put into good use and improve this facility and allow us to host even more higher level swim meets and attracting more clubs from mainland to come competing here. This brings more business to Oahu and in turn supporting the city budget.

Thank you for your time!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kacey Jo	kaceymjo@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
VMAC Renewal Foundation	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:54 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in support of Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is Kacey Jo, and I am an 8th grader at Punahou School and co-founder of a nonprofit organization, VMAC Renewal Foundation which was established to support the renovation of our community public pool, Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center ("VMAC"). I am currently a swimmer at school and the swimming club who has spent many hours training and participating in swim meets at VMAC.

Through swimming, I have learned to be resilient, disciplined, and how to push through challenges. From waking up early for practice, to staying focused during challenging swim sets, and competing under pressure; swimming has taught me that through endurance and perseverance, success can be achieved. Swimming has laid a solid foundation for me into who I am and will be, not only as a swimmer but as a person.

I believe that this swimming pool has offered those opportunities that I have experienced to other students, families, and community members of all ages. It is a special place that brings people together through training for swimming and water polo, learning water safety, seniors staying active through aerobics, and kids discovering confidence in the water for the first time. While VMAC is the well-loved place by community, the condition of the facility is showing its age and makes it challenging for the community to fully benefit from it.

The equipment, including but not limited to bulkheads, starter blocks, and scoreboard is in need of repair or replacement. The spectator seating is limited, and it would be beneficial to offer more seating in a safer setting to welcome people and host other swim meets. Our community loves this pool and people who utilize the facility such as swimmers, water polo players, kids, aerobics participants, and so many others deserve a safe, well maintained, inspiring place to gather.

Through the VMAC Renewal Foundation, I would like to give it back to the community in helping to create a space where community members feel supported, inspired and empowered to reach new heights. We are working to raise awareness and funding to improve the facility so that our community can continue enjoying what this well-loved place can offer.

This pool is very special to me. I have lots of memorable moments with coaches and my friends. It helped me grow as a person, connect with others, and continue to learn how small actions can lead to meaningful change. With your support, I strongly believe that it can continue to provide similar opportunities and experiences that have been provided to me to others. With the VMAC Renewal Foundation, I will continue to contribute my energy, experience, and ideas to the cause

that matters.

I respectfully ask for your support in funding the renovation of VMAC, a special and well-loved community facility. Thank you for taking the time to consider the budget for this renovation project.

Sincerely,

Kacey Jo

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rupa Wong	raleighrupa@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 09:58 PM

Testimony:

VMAC is a place where so many of the state's kids go for swimming and diving. Whether it's summer programs or swim meets, it allows our children to compete in the sports they love. It deserves our investment.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ty Yamato	kryze.swim@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:02 PM

Testimony:

I am personally a vmac swimmer, I swim 5 days a week and enjoy every day. However, there are several concerns. The diving blocks are very outdated, needing replacements. The locker rooms are a struggle, not being taken care of or cleaned.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Mayumi Light	bigpig127@gmail.com	96826
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:04 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of CIP No. 1998040 - K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support
of the improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center at Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park. This facility serves our entire Central Oahu community and upgrades to the spectator seating deally covered with shade structures would make a tremendous difference during swim meets, where thousands of families gather in Hawai'i's heat

to cheer on their children. New bulkheads, starter blocks, and a scoreboard will also bring the facility up to the standard our athletes and community deserve.

I respectfully urge your support

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chisa Eskin	aloha744@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:07 PM

Testimony:

Our family has been using the aquatic facility aka VMAC for 15years and I can see many areas needs upgrading. I hope Hawai'i will approve the budget to all the renovations this is the place many locals had been using and for swimming and waterpolo athletic event can continue to grow as well.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christian Simon	Christianmae0510@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:08 PM

Testimony:

I support continued grants and improvements for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center to enhance swimmer safety and community access. Upgrades to safety equipment, lifeguard staffing, and facility maintenance are essential to reduce risk and ensure a secure environment for all users. Investing in these improvements will strengthen water safety and better serve keiki, families, and competitive swimmers across the community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Avary Olson	avary.olson@icloud.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:11 PM

Testimony:

I believe that the VMAC pool earning this large sum of money will benefit the community greatly. This money could go to renewing the diving blocks. By doing this, the performance of swimmers can improve exponentially and there could be some confidence boosts. Some areas in the pool complex are cracked or broken. If the pool complex funded, it will become a much safer environment. Adding to that, at times during swim meets, there is no soap, paper towels, and a lack of cleanliness in the locker rooms. These little details can go a long way. Overall, the money can help the swimmers, coaches, and communities who use VMAC.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christopher Regala	cregala@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:12 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to support funding to improve the Veterans' Memorial Aquatic Center. The facility provides a fantastic facility for the recreation and health of the youth of Hawaii.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kristi DAGDAGAN	ilovelemondropmartinis@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Splash Aquatics	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:12 PM

Testimony:

Like so many other local swim clubs, families from Splash Aquatics spend many hours at K Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center and can testify that while this is the best aquatic facility on island; it is in grave need of repair, from the bathroom facilitiies to the concession to the pool itself and beyond. It would be a shame to allow even more disrepair to come to this great facility that so many of us enjoy. From the tiniest swimmer to those achieving Olympic trial times - something I have witnessed firsthand at this very pool - each of them deserve to swim at the best facility the city can provide. There is no doubt in my mind that money committed to improvements at VMAC will be well spent as it supports the development of our student athletes and the wellness of other community members.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nikki Toma	mamatoma96782@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:17 PM

Testimony:

In support of project 1998040 regarding improvement at K. Mark Takai Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center

Aloha,

I am in complete support of this improvement project. As the biggest swim competition facility on the island, K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center has hosted tons of competitions ranging from local high school and club athletes to college teams, and olympians training. There is a proud history of swimmers that have come through this pool.

This aquatic facility is a treasure and deserves to be treated as such, updated with equipment to preserve its competitive edge, and to encourage the participation of all ages and abilities of those who train and compete there.

As the parent of swimmers who regularly compete at this pool, I know swimmers would greatly appreciate updated dive blocks and a digital scoreboard similar to the other pools they compete at in mainland competitions. And, as a regular spectator of these events, I would gladly vouch for the need for shaded areas for the audience.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Monica Kim	monicakim09@yahoo.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:20 PM

Testimony:

My children swim for Kamehameha Swim Club and Punahou Aquatics Club; and most of our big swim meets including State Champs are held at Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center. The center in Waipio needs repairs and upgrades. The dive blocks are very old and don't hold up for big competitions. The touch pads are also old and always broken. The entire pool and facility really needs upgrades.

Our children really deserve an up-to-date facility

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Hee Moon Park	radtamc@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:37 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to voice my enthusiastic support for bill 23(26), CD1 – VMAC Capital Improvement Amendment. I participate in the aqua aerobics program at VMAC, whenever I can. It's been extremely therapeutic and healing since I recovered from a heart attack and triple bypass surgery several years ago. I don't know what I would do without the wonderful community services offered by VMAC!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Quinn Toma	quinn.leilani96782@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:40 PM

Testimony:

In support of improvement project 1998040 about K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Aloha,

I am a competitive swimmer representing Splash Aquatics. I am in full support of improvement project 1998040. As a swimmer, I have many memories at K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. It truly is an amazing pool. That pool has a history of many remarkable swimmers who trained and competed there. In my time training and racing there I have noticed that the blocks aren't in the best condition. Some swimmers get cut on the jagged parts and the blocks are unstable. With improvements swimmers get the best chances of getting the best results in our swims. The lane lines are also a bit faded and there are many broken off pieces which are a hazard to users, risking injury from cuts. This facility has been used in many different ways varying from waterpolo to local high school swim meets and even state championships. Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center is an amazing pool and so much of us swimmers have great memories there. With these new improvements users at Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center get the best experience and opportunities to be their

best self ,while being safe and having fun.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Yingfei Dong	yingfei@hawaii.edu	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:43 PM

Testimony:

K. MARK TAKAI VETERANS MEMORIAL AQUATICS CENTER (we all called it VMAC) is the most important public swimming facility for kids on the Island of Oahu and also is used hosted State Swimming Championship every year. I have been a volunteer for various swimming meets (from 10-year under to high school seniors meets) in the past 10 years. Every year, at least 10 or more meets were held at VMAC (more than 30% of meets at Oahu, based my personal estimation). When you see 400+ kids are cheering for their relay teams, it is such an emotional sight. All kids love this pool and enjoy so much have meets there, because it is the most convenient place for large meets with large space and parking areas.

If you ask any kids in a swimming club on Oahu (and other islands), she/he can tell you how much she/he enjoys the meets there. The facility at the pool is getting old, and the score board and touchpads have problems more and more often. Sometimes, the touchpad does not work at all. It is really frustrated for meet volunteers and very disappointed for all the kids, especially for the important meets such as State Championships. For the advanced kids, they really need to get the best time to qualify for inter-state, sectional, future, and junior Olympics meets.

We had many good swimmers who actually went to D1 swimming teams for colleges. They represent the best of Hawaii. We should create the best environment for our kids to succeed. VMAC is such a place to need to fix and maintain for Hawaii's future.

All kids and their parents will be gratefully to see VMAC get improved.

There are about 20+ meets every year. (my rough guess: VMAC hosts about 1/3 of these meets). All organized by parent volunteers. They are the great resources to help anything make Hawaii better. If you need people to help, come to the meets and you will find plenty supports.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Yvette Matsumoto	yvette.matsumoto@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:45 PM

Testimony:

As the premiere swim facility for Oahu where dozens of competitive swim meets, States championships, and international swim meets are held, the Mark K.Takai aquatic facility is an important venue where beginning swimmers to future Olympians convene after countless hours of practice to race one another, inspire, and show visiting teams the high caliber

of Hawaiian club swimming. The venue however is in sore need of repairs and nowhere near the high standard of swimming that occurs in its pools and supporting lockers and bathrooms.

The sewage system has nearly overflowed during a swim meet in 2025 and bathrooms were closed to prevent toilet flushes from causing a sewage spill. The smell was overpowering and affected many swimmers who were preparing to swim at the starting blocks.

At every swim meet there is always a faint but pungent sewage smell. A new sewage system must be built to accommodate the volume of swimmers in a given weekend and swimmers should not be subject to the sewage smell on a regular basis.

The bathrooms are very old and there are simply not enough stalls to support the hundreds of swimmers who enter each meet. In the women's bathroom there's a total of four stalls and lines will extend to the door. There are only 3-4 stalls and two urinals for boys. This cannot be sanitary by the ratio of swimmers to stalls. More stalls are required to be built.

There is a grassy area with dirt and mud right behind diving block where dozens of swimmers congregate. As it rains often, the area gets very muddy and we often see swimmers with muddy feet dive into the pool. Again this is unsanitary given hundreds of swimmers who enter the pool in a weekend with numerous events being swim by each swimmer. This grassy/dirt area should be eliminated from the high traffic diving block area.

Diving blocks are old and in several cases unusable which eliminated an entire swim lane from the competition.

Our timing system is also antiquated and separate from the pool. 30 minute delays are common and one hour delays are not unheard of due to old equipment /cords associated with the timing system. Elite level facilities have integrated timing systems built into the touchpad that ensures accurate times for swimmers and less delays in a swim meet.

The Mark K Takai aquatic center is a magnet for swimmers across the state, from the US mainland, and around the world but in sore need for repairs. The repairs will pay for themselves in the Hawaii economy in a 2-3 year time span as more mainland teams sign up for Hawaii swim meets. Travel meets are popular among swimmers and Hawaii being a large tourist destination. The facility should also inspire our island Keiki to compete at the highest level but sadly the facility is known as a dump and does not compare to our neighbor island and mainland facilities. I urge you to approve the necessary funds to build a facility that matches the high level of swim talent in our islands and the thousands (including swimmers families) who visit the facility from beyond Hawaii.

Mahalo for your time.

Yvette

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Cheehyung Kim	cheehyungkim@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Splash Aquatics Swim Club	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:49 PM

Testimony:

To honorable city council members:

As a resident of Honolulu, I write to urge the council to pass the bill to renovate Patsy Mink VMAC pool. This pool is the

center of swim events not only in Hawaii but the entire Pacific region. We love this pool and its surroundings. It can surely use upgrades and improvements in many areas, including the restrooms, changing rooms, and the pool itself. We can also use some permanent gorgeous shades. I would be grateful if this is passed. Thank you!

Cheehyung Kim

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dean Otaka	deankazuyoshi@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Splash Aquatics, USA swimming	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:50 PM

Testimony:

My name is Dean Otaka. I am a prominent official currently for USA swimming as well as former coach for Splash Aquatics. I have been officiating for nearly 10 years. I am submitting support for funding to provide upgrades to the K. Mark Takai Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) at the Central Oahu Regional Park. This is for CIP No. 1998040. A few years ago, I officiated at this pool for the Junior Pan Pacific Meet (An International Meet) and this pool serves and important function not just for Hawaiian athletes, but for athletes who come to Hawaii to compete at the highest levels INTERNATIONALLY. I have been to comparable pools at Kihei (on Maui) and the Pool in Kona (on the Big Island) and unfortunately, their pools are much more advanced, have better starting blocks, and overall, present better location for competitions. Being that VMAC is a key pool on Oahu (the most populated island), it stands to reason that this pool should be upgraded to represent Oahu well. As the head Meet Referee for State Championships recently, I was very concerned because the starting blocks were starting to fall apart, the stands needed covering (which both Kihei and Kona pools provide), and there are other necessary upgrades to the pool that are necessary to make this pool a world class facility. Please consider adding dedicated funds to achieve this so that we can provide excellent facilities for our youth as well as put on a good face when international and national level athletes come to Oahu.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jung Ja Won	jinawonhm@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:50 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to ask that you please support bill 23(26), CD1, the VMAC Capital Improvement Amendment. As a supporter of the paralympics, VMAC is a vital resource for athletes with disabilities in our community. I love VMAC, but it’s definitely showing its age and is in desperate need of some TLC! Mahalo!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dawn Chu	dawnlaw@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 10:55 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of CIP No. 1998040 – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center

I am in support of the improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center at Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park.

This facility is well used by our swim community, and upgrading the spectator seating with PV shades would provide much needed shades for swimmers and spectators. New bulkheads, starter blocks, and a scoreboard will also bring the facility up to the standard our athletes and community deserve.

I urge your support for this appropriation.

Thank you!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Julie Chiya	jn34@hawaii.edu	96914
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 14, 2026 @ 11:04 PM

Testimony:

More than $1M should be allocated for VMAC to restore and repair the facility. Tiles, restrooms, and other areas are in need of renovations as well as updating.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Hiroko Shinoda	hirokos0319@yahoo.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 12:06 AM

Testimony:

VMAC is the main swimming pool for the large swimming competition, however the facility is very old and needs major improvements.

The scoreboard frequently malfunctions and there is no shade for the spectators.

Starting block needs improvement as well. Other islands have recently renovated competition pool, but Oahu does not have one.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Saint-Marie Gough	saijgou@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 12:06 AM

Testimony:

Letter of Support — Bill 023 (2026), Item No. 1998040 — K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center

Aloha Chair and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

I write today in strong support of Item No. 1998040 and the betterment line items contained in Bill 023 (2026) for the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). This is not a form letter. I am a community member who has volunteered at VMAC events for more than a decade, whose sons have worked at Veterans Memorial Park, and who has seen firsthand what this facility means and what it costs us when it falls short of what it should be.

VMAC is not simply a pool. It is one of the most important public health and athletic infrastructure assets on O'ahu, and I would ask the Council to consider it in exactly those terms when reviewing this bill.

Swimming is survival in Hawai'i. Just a quick reminder, our state holds the second highest resident drowning fatality rate in the nation. Drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death for children ages 1 to 15 in our state, and nearly all of those victims (facts which can be found on our State website) 88% are residents, not tourists. Devastating as those numbers are, the underlying cause is knowable and preventable: less than two percent of Hawai'i's second graders currently possess the basic skills to avoid or recover from a drowning incident. Swim lessons and aquatics sports like water polo, reduce drowning risk by up to 88 percent. A functional, accessible, world-class aquatic facility is not a luxury. It is infrastructure that saves keiki lives.

VMAC has long served as a hub for competitive swimming across O'ahu and the broader Pacific region. The 50-meter competition configuration, diving well, and capacity for both short-course and long-course programming make it one of the most capable aquatic facilities in the state. Swim clubs and age-group programs across O'ahu depend on it. Youth athletes train there. Families come to learn water safety. This is a facility that touches the entire state's population, and it deserves to be maintained accordingly.

That regional and international significance will only grow in the next two years. With the 2028 Olympic Games opening in Los Angeles on July 14, 2028, national swimming teams from across the Pacific Rim and beyond will be actively seeking quality training venues ahead of competition. Hawai'i's geography, climate, and time zone alignment with Asian nations make it a natural pre-Games training destination for teams making their way to the mainland. A well-maintained, competition-grade 50-meter facility here is not a hypothetical draw. It is a realistic one, and one that carries real economic and reputational benefit for the county. We have the opportunity to position Honolulu as a serious destination for international-caliber swim programs preparing for Los Angeles. That opportunity disappears if our flagship public pool cannot meet the standard those programs require.

The betterment line items in this bill represent targeted, responsible investment in a facility that is already here, already serving our community, and already capable of more than its current condition allows. Restoration is not rebuilding, but true stewardship. The Council has an opportunity to say, clearly, that Honolulu takes its aquatic infrastructure seriously: for the keiki learning to swim, for the competitive athletes training toward national and international goals, and for the international teams that will look to O'ahu as they prepare for the biggest athletic stage in the world.

I respectfully urge the full Council to support Item No. 1998040 and move the betterment funding forward without delay.

Mahalo nui loa for your service to this community and for your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Saint-Marie Gough

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Christina Cox	christina_clinton@hotmail.com	96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 15, 2026 @ 02:14 AM

Testimony:

Honorable Council Members,

I am writing to respectfully urge your support for the renovation of the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. This facility plays a vital role in our community and across the state, yet it is currently in a condition that does not reflect its importance or the level of use it receives.

As a parent of five hardworking children who are dedicated competitive swimmers and water polo players, I have spent countless hours at this facility. I have seen firsthand the commitment, discipline, and teamwork that aquatic sports foster. However, I have also witnessed the challenges athletes, families, and spectators face due to the facility's deteriorating condition.

The Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center is not just a local pool—it is one of the few major aquatic venues in our state capable of hosting large-scale competitions. Teams from the outer islands regularly travel here to compete, and mainland teams also visit, making it a central hub for aquatic sports in Hawai'i. Despite its significance, the facility is in urgent need of improvement.

Basic infrastructure issues, such as inadequate shaded seating and unreliable plumbing, greatly impact the experience for athletes and spectators alike. The lack of shaded bleachers exposes families, officials, and visiting teams to prolonged sun, while plumbing issues create ongoing inconvenience and reflect poorly on our ability to host events.

Investing in this renovation is not simply about upgrading a facility—it is about supporting youth development, promoting healthy lifestyles, and maintaining Hawai'i's reputation as a place where athletes can train and compete at a high level. It ensures that local programs can continue to grow and that we can proudly host competitions that bring together communities from across the islands and beyond.

Our athletes work tirelessly to represent Hawai'i with pride. They deserve a facility that matches their dedication and allows them to perform at their best. I respectfully ask that you prioritize funding and support for the renovation of the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center so that it may continue to serve current and future generations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Christina Cox

Name: Nadine (Takai) Day	Email: nadine.day.usms@gmail.com	Zip: 61858
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 15, 2026 @ 03:45 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

My name is Nadine Day, formerly Nadine Takai. I am speaking today on behalf of the Takai ‘Ohana. As an avid lifelong swimmer and the current Chairperson of World Aquatics Masters, I have dedicated much of my life to promoting swimming around the world.

It has been ten years since my brother, K. Mark Takai, passed away. In his honor, the Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center was renamed the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center — a fitting tribute to a man who lived his life as a true servant leader for the people of Hawaii.

Mark was a passionate swimmer from a young age — a four-time high school champion, an All-American, and a Western Athletic Conference champion at the University of Hawai‘i. He proudly served in the Hawaii National Guard and as a dedicated politician -from State House to Congressman who worked tirelessly to support the people of Hawaii. He always wanted to make a real impact — making our islands safer and healthier for every family and every child.

This facility, with its Veterans Memorial name, honors both his love for aquatics and his lifelong commitment to public service and the well-being of our community.

VMAC is a world-class aquatic center that serves our entire state of Hawaii. It is the only Olympic-size pool on the Leeward side of Oahu. Every day, it welcomes kupuna for water aerobics, children and adults for swim lessons, and our local high school swim teams from Leilehua, Mililani, Pearl City, Waipahu and other pubic schools. This is the only diving facility on the west side. Kalani HS divers drive to VMAC to practice. It has proudly hosted High School State Championships, age-group swim meets, dive meets, and water polo games. VMAC also host other aquatic events locally, nationally and internationally.

Yet the original plans for this facility were never fully completed. The mauka side still lacks proper seating, limiting its ability to fully serve our community and host larger events. There has not been a capital upgrade since it's inception.

With the right renewal and upgrades, VMAC can truly become a premiere aquatic facility — capable of supporting everything from beginner lessons to international competitions. In a state surrounded by water like Hawaii, swimming is more than a sport; it is a *life-saving skill*. Every child and adult deserves safe, accessible pools so they can learn to swim and be confident and safe around the ocean. This directly reflects Mark’s deep desire to make Hawaii safer and healthier for all.

On behalf of the entire Takai ‘Ohana, and in loving memory of my brother Mark — a dedicated swimmer, National Guard member, and Hawaii Congressman who always put the people of Hawaii first — we fully and enthusiastically support the renewal project for VMAC. Completing this facility will honor his legacy of servant leadership while providing a lasting gift to the families, keiki, and athletes of Central and Leeward Oahu for generations to come.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to share our strong support.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Celi Dogan	celifranke@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 05:38 AM

Testimony:

Our kida and athletes deserve a better environment to practice , compete and represent Hawaii state

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Joyce Follis	joyceufollis@gmail.com	96740
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 06:07 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Council members,

My name is Joyce Follis, and I am writing in strong support of BILL023(26), specifically the infrastructure upgrades for the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center.I grew up swimming in Hawai'i. After attending college and working with teams on the mainland, I made the decision to come home and give back through this sport. I returned to Hawai'i to serve as Head Coach of Kona Dolphin Swim Club, and I have coached for clubs on both O'ahu and Hawai'i Island.

VMAC is the heart of swimming in Hawai'i. It is not just another pool. It is where local meets are held, where championships happen, and where our athletes have the chance to compete on a stage that reflects the level of talent we have in these islands. It is a facility that serves our keiki, our families, our coaches, and our broader aquatic community across the state.

Swimming changes lives. I know that because it changed mine. I grew up poor, and without swimming, and without the fundraising our community did to help athletes like me travel to meets on the mainland, I would not have had the opportunities I did. Swimming gave me structure, discipline, purpose, and a path forward. It gave me a future. More importantly, it gave me a reason to come home and make an impact in my own community.

When we invest in facilities like VMAC, we are investing in much more than lanes and equipment. We are investing in a place where kids learn discipline, resilience, accountability, and teamwork. We are investing in a healthy outlet that keeps keiki engaged, goal-oriented, and connected to positive mentors and community. Research consistently shows that physical activity supports children's health, brain health, and academic performance, and that swim skills and water safety training are important tools in drowning prevention.

In Hawai'i, that matters even more. We are surrounded by water. Water safety is not optional here. It is a life skill. Facilities like VMAC help produce strong swimmers, safer communities, and future generations who are more confident and capable in and around the water. That matters for our keiki, and it matters for our kūpuna and families too, because every

generation benefits when water safety and aquatic access are treated as priorities.

Our athletes go on to higher education, careers, public service, and leadership. Many of them return home with those skills, values, and experiences and become the kind of adults who strengthen our communities, support local families, and contribute to Hawai'i's future. That is what this investment helps build. It helps us raise young people who carry excellence with them and bring that excellence back home.

Having local, national, and international meets at VMAC is critical. It gives Hawai'i athletes exposure to high-level competition without always forcing families to take on the enormous cost of travel. It also allows our state to continue hosting events that inspire young swimmers to dream bigger and see what is possible for themselves.

Please support BILL023(26) and the infrastructure upgrades to VMAC. In doing so, you are supporting the keiki of Hawai'i, the families who sacrifice to keep them in sport, the coaches and mentors who guide them, and the surrounding community that benefits from a strong, vibrant aquatic center.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Joyce Follis
Head Coach, Kona Dolphin Swim Club

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lisa van der Spoel	lisapvds@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 06:16 AM

Testimony:
I am writing in strong support of Bill 023(26), which proposes upgrades to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

As a parent of a child who trains and competes at VMAC in both swimming and water polo, I have seen firsthand how important this facility is to our community. It serves as a vital hub for youth athletics, health, and development. However, it is clear that the current condition of the facility limits its full potential.

VMAC has the capacity to become a premier aquatic center—not only for local athletes, but also as a destination for specialized clinics, training camps, and competitive events. With proper upgrades and modernization, the facility could attract high-level coaches, regional and national competitions, and expanded programming that would benefit athletes of all ages and skill levels.

For families like mine, this means more opportunities for our children to grow, train, and excel without needing to travel far from home. For the broader community, it means increased engagement in healthy activities, economic benefits from

hosted events, and a strengthened reputation for supporting youth sports.

Investing in VMAC is an investment in our keiki and in the future of our community. I respectfully urge you to support Bill 023(26) and help unlock the full potential of this important facility.

Mahalo for your consideration.If you want, I can make it more formal, more emotional, or tailor it for a specific council hearing or submission format.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rod Peroff	rodperoff@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 06:31 AM

Testimony:

Fully in support of improving VMAC, this is something. The government.shoudl support financially.

There are many swim meet held at this location for local children.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Aiden Leung	aleung1411@gnail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 07:14 AM

Testimony:

As a competitive swimmer, vmac is a facility that other swimmers and I use often. We appreciate the opportunity to swim there and think that allocating funds to improve it would help to make the experience there better. This is a very important place to so many community members, and thus should be taken care of. New scoreboards, blocks, lanelines, and other projects would only heighten swimmers' experience and enjoyment. Please consider as this is a very important place to many.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Barbara Kopra	bkopra.swim@gmail.com	96743
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 07:19 AM

Testimony:

I am an assistant swim coach for Academy Swim Club (70 swimmers) and president of Big Island Swimming, which consists of six teams running our meets on-island. We (our team and other island teams) have swimmers traveling to Oahu to compete in the Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center facility 4 to 6 times a year. It is a very exciting opportunity for our swimmers to travel and get to compete in the VMAC pool. In the past couple of years, it has become obvious that there is some serious maintenance / improvements that need to occur - some for safety, some for appearance, and other

projects to prevent further deterioration. I would like to see the bill passed to support this incredible facility which provides our swimmers an important high level competition venue.

Thank you.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kevin Flanagan	swimksc@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 07:21 AM

Testimony:
The pool gets used by a huge population of our youth. This isn't an investment in the facility, it is an investment in our kids.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Amber Motz	ambersmotz@yahoo.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 07:32 AM

Testimony:
In support of VMAC improvements.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Anna Borondi	amborondi@msn.com	96756
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 07:37 AM

Testimony:
This facility plays a critical role not only for the O‘ahu community, but for swimmers and teams across all Hawaiian islands. Because of its central location, it serves as a primary venue for major competitions, bringing together athletes from throughout the state. For many swimmers, this is where they experience high-level competition, develop their skills, and represent their communities.
Investing in these improvements is essential. The current facility needs upgrades to ensure it remains safe, functional, and capable of hosting large events. Without these improvements, we risk losing a vital space that supports youth development, competitive athletics, and community engagement.
Beyond competition, this facility provides opportunities for fitness, water safety, and lifelong health. It is an investment not just in infrastructure, but in the well-being and future of our keiki and community.
Funding these improvements will ensure that Hawai‘i continues to have a premier aquatic venue that can serve current and future generations.
I respectfully urge you to support this measure.

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Natalie Posey	natalieposey808@gmail.com	96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 15, 2026 @ 07:39 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Natalie Posey, and I am writing in strong support of allocating funding for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

I am a mother of two competitive swimmers, one of whom dreams of competing in the Olympic Games. In 2024, our family relocated to O'ahu from Kailua Kona on Hawai'i Island to provide greater opportunities for our children, particularly in the sport of swimming.

Swimming is not just a sport in Hawai'i. It is a deeply rooted part of our culture and identity. Long before modern competition, ocean swimming was a way of life for Native Hawaiians. Hawai'i has produced world class swimmers and Olympic champions, including the legendary Duke Kahanamoku, who once said, "Out of the water, I am nothing." His words reflect the deep connection our keiki have to the water and the immense potential that exists across our islands.

Prior to World War II, Hawai'i was already establishing itself as a powerhouse in swimming, producing elite athletes who competed on the world stage. That legacy continues today, but only if we invest in the infrastructure needed to support it.

I have seen firsthand what that investment can do.

While living in Kona, I led efforts to secure over $700,000 in funding to renovate the Kona Community Aquatic Center. I worked closely with then Mayor Mitch Roth and county departments to help transform that facility into one of the best and fastest pools in the state, not only for competitive swimmers, but for the entire community. The impact has been profound, with increased access, stronger swim programs, and a safe, welcoming space for keiki, kūpuna, and families.

The Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center has the potential to do even more for O'ahu.

This facility is an integral part of the island's swimming community. With proper investment, it could become a premier training destination capable of attracting elite athletes, Olympians, and coaches who would elevate the level of swimming across the state. More importantly, it would provide a safe, accessible space for our children to gather, learn life saving skills, and build confidence in the water.

As a taxpayer, a businesswoman in Hawai'i, and a parent, I strongly believe that we must reinvest in our community infrastructure. Our facilities are aging, and our keiki deserve better. Access to safe aquatic spaces is not a luxury in Hawai'i. It is a necessity.

I fully support this bill and respectfully urge you to pass it, not only for our competitive swimmers, but for our entire community.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Natalie Posey

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lies Barnes	fishgeekiam@yahoo.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 07:39 AM

Testimony:

Please approve funds to maintain the K Mark Takai Veterans Pool. It has served well as the premier practice and competition pool in Hawaii but is now in need of basic maintenance and repair. So many people of all ages rely on it to provide a wholesome activity. It is nearing the point of being unsafe in some regards and hopefully it can be kept up before the tipping point when it will be taken out of service because the repair cost would be too great.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Terence Matsuoka	teemats@yahoo.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 07:56 AM

Testimony:

Scoreboard and starting blocks and facility overall need major improvement

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lee Britos	lee.britos@gmail.com	96825-1836
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 08:01 AM

Testimony:

I have 2 teenage boys who swim competitively. Many of their competitions are at K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC) in Waipahu. This facility can really use an update. The starting blocks are old, the board barely works and when it does, some of the times in certain lanes don't get recorded, while the bathrooms are old and the toilets get clogged. The drainage around VMAC needs fixing as well. When it rains it floods really fast, especially in the very front entrance to the facility. I recall one time when rain unexpectedly fell and the entire front area was flooded. There was no other way to leave and many people, myself included, had to walk in the rain while wearing our sneakers. Needless to say my sneakers were destroyed due to the water and mud damage.

Since VMAC is Oahu's largest swimming facility, many swim competitions, especially the large ones that attract teams from the Mainland, are held here. We really need to offer a nicer and more updated facility if we want to continue to attract Mainland teams. Otherwise, they will travel elsewhere and our island will lose valuable visitor dollars.

Thank you for your consideration. VMAC is a great facility. I don't know when it was last updated, but it's time. We need to do better for our swimmers.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Deborah Faildo	Debbie@flexxfitnesshawaii.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 08:09 AM

Testimony:

I've been going to swim meet at VMAC for over a decade and I volunteer as a swim Official to help kids swimming and waterpolo. Hawai'i kids need a place to learn to swim as well as all indivials. A place to compete and learn discipline of sports and exercise. There multiple organizations who use the facility. VMAC has hosted internal and many mainland teams to come to Hawaii to compete. The facility need to be upgraded for future use for so many people let's keep Hawaii kids active and our Hawaii people learn to swim.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Michiko Maniaci	michikohawaii@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 08:15 AM

Testimony:

Need to be roof for our young athletes and better board.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nadine (Takai) Day	nadine.day.usms@gmail.com	61858
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 08:52 AM

Testimony:

Previously sent

Want to speak if allowed and time permits to elaborate on rationale on cost

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dan Worden	dworden@hawaii.edu	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 15, 2026 @ 09:01 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I am writing to voice my support of project number 1998040, which would provide for improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center. I vividly remember my first time entering the facility during the Keo Nakama Swimming Invitational in 2004, and I continue to enjoy every opportunity I get to swim and dive there. Improvements to the park and the aquatics center are necessary to ensure that future generations are able to train, compete, and mostly importantly develop skills to safely participate in a variety of watersports here in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion, and I appreciate your time and consideration

Mahalo,

Dan Worden

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Apr 15, 2026

The Honorable Tommy Waters, Chair
Honolulu City Council
20th Session
Honolulu Hale
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

SUBJECT: Bill 23 (2026), CD1 — Executive Capital Budget and Program for FY2026-2027

Chair and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on Bill 23 (2026), CD1, relating to the Executive Capital Budget and Program for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) is a federally recognized Center for Independent Living that serves rural Oahu and all neighbor islands. We recognize the enormous responsibility involved in shaping the City's capital investments for the coming year. We appreciate the Council's ongoing efforts to address infrastructure, housing, and resilience needs across our island, and we offer the following comments and requests to ensure that Bill 23 helps build a city that is truly accessible and inclusive.

1. **Capital projects should expand *accessible* housing and community facilities**

We support using the capital budget to advance affordable and supportive housing, shelters, and community facilities. As you make decisions about which housing-related projects to fund and at what levels, we respectfully ask that the City:

- Commit to meaningful numbers of fully accessible units in any City-supported housing and shelter projects, beyond minimum code

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compliance.

- Ensure that common areas, entrances, restrooms, community rooms, and outdoor spaces in new or renovated facilities are designed to be readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

- Integrate universal design principles and trauma-informed design wherever possible, especially in projects intended to serve people exiting homelessness or living with significant health conditions.

These design choices can significantly improve housing stability, safety, and dignity for disabled residents, who are disproportionately represented among people experiencing homelessness and housing precarity.

2. **Transportation and streets projects should prioritize walk/roll access**

We recognize the importance of capital projects that maintain and improve our roadways and transit infrastructure. For many disabled residents, however, the difference between a usable city and an unusable one comes down to sidewalks, crossings, and bus access.

As you consider transportation-related CIP items, we respectfully urge the Council to:

- Prioritize sidewalk infill, curb ramps, and safe crossings in areas where disabled residents live and travel, including routes to bus stops, clinics, community centers, and shelters.

- Ensure new and improved transit facilities and bus stops are fully accessible, including firm, level boarding areas, clear paths of travel, seating, and lighting, so that they can be safely used by people who rely on mobility devices or paratransit.

- Where possible, explicitly connect transportation capital projects to measurable accessibility outcomes, not only to vehicle throughput or congestion reduction.

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Designing streets and transit infrastructure with accessibility at the forefront benefits everyone, while neglecting these features leaves disabled residents with no safe way to move around their own city.

3. **Capital investments are an essential part of disability-inclusive emergency preparedness**

Recent severe weather events have underscored the need for strong emergency preparedness and resilience infrastructure. For disabled residents, this includes having accessible places to go and stay safe when conditions worsen.

We ask that the Council and Administration consider, within Bill 23:

- Investments in accessible emergency shelters, resilience hubs, and community centers with features such as accessible entrances and restrooms, backup power for medical devices, and clear communications systems.

- Flood control, drainage, and other resilience projects that take into account residents with limited mobility, sensory disabilities, and chronic health conditions, so that evacuation routes and shelter sites remain usable during emergencies.

- Coordination between capital planning and the City's emergency management efforts, so that facilities funded through this budget can meaningfully support disabled residents before, during, and after disasters.

These investments can significantly reduce the need for crisis responses later and help ensure that disabled community members are not left behind during emergencies.

4. **Location and equity: land and facility decisions are access decisions**

We understand that Bill 23 includes or contemplates land acquisitions and major site investments. Decisions about where to acquire land and site major facilities are inherently equity decisions.

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We encourage the Council to:

- Evaluate major land and facility projects by asking whether disabled residents in underserved neighborhoods will have real, practical access to the services and amenities that are ultimately located there.

- Where possible, prioritize capital projects that bring accessible housing, services, and public spaces closer to communities that currently face long travel times and limited transportation options.

5. **Process and accountability**

Finally, we encourage the City to build accessibility and disability equity into the capital planning process itself, by:

- Incorporating a disability access review step into planning and design for major capital projects funded under Bill 23.

- Reporting publicly, after project completion, on key accessibility features for major City-funded facilities and infrastructure (e.g., number of accessible units, presence of accessible routes and restrooms, accessible transit connections).

We offer these suggestions in a spirit of partnership and respect. Our goal is not to oppose investment but to ensure that the substantial investments contemplated in Bill 23 result in a city that is more usable, safer, and more equitable for disabled residents and their families.

Conclusion

Mahalo for your work on this complex budget and for considering the experiences of disabled community members in your decisions. We respectfully urge you to advance Bill 23 (2026), CD1 with a clear commitment to accessible housing, inclusive transportation infrastructure, and disability-aware emergency preparedness, and to embed accessibility considerations throughout the capital planning process.

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We would welcome the opportunity to meet with Councilmembers and staff to discuss how specific projects can better support disabled residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,



Roxanne Bolden

Executive Director

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Einwechter & Hyatt

Robert Walker
Director
Integral Consulting

Bill Ward
Director
Corcoran Properties

Virginia Wallace
Administrator

Marsha Taylor
Community Outreach
Coordinator

Honorable Tommy Waters, Chair
and Presiding Officers and Members
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Suite 202 Honolulu, HI, 9681

April 14, 2026

Comments on Bill 22 – Office of Economic Revitalization Staffing

Dear Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

The North Shore Chamber of Commerce respectfully offers comments on Bill 22 regarding the proposed reduction of approximately 20 positions within the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER).

We recognize the City's responsibility to make thoughtful budget decisions. At the same time, we would like to highlight that the North Shore community is still actively recovering from the recent Kona Low storms. Many small businesses and agricultural operations continue to face ongoing challenges, including reduced revenue, infrastructure impacts, and limited access to resources.

In this context, OER staff play an important role in supporting economic recovery by helping businesses navigate assistance programs, access funding, and rebuild operations. A significant reduction in staffing may make it more difficult for impacted communities to fully recover.

We also note that there are currently very few clearly designated Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for the North Shore, which further limits recovery support through infrastructure investment. This is particularly important given that the North Shore is not only home to a vibrant local community, but is also a region heavily enjoyed by residents from across the island and is widely recognized as the second most visited area on Oʻahu outside of Waikiki. Despite its significant contribution to the island's economy and quality of life, the limited level of targeted CIP investment underscores the need for continued support through programs like OER, especially during this recovery period.

We respectfully encourage the Council to consider the timing and potential community impacts of these staffing reductions, particularly for rural and disaster-impacted areas such as the North Shore.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments and for your continued service to our community.

Respectfully,

Carol Philips

Carol Philips, Vice President
North Shore Chamber of Commerce

The North Shore Chamber of Commerce is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization,
Federal Tax ID# 99-0265444

VMAC RENEWAL FOUNDATION

To: Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council
From: Kevin Nakamura, President, VMAC Renewal Foundation
Date: April 15, 2026

Subject: **STRONG SUPPORT for Bill 23(26)**, CD1 – VMAC Capital Improvement Amendment

To Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

I am writing on behalf of the VMAC Renewal Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, to express our profound support for the **$1,000,000 amendment** to the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Budget for the K. Mark Takai Veterans' Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC), as incorporated into Bill 23(26), CD1.

Our foundation's immediate priority is the replacement of the facility's 23 year-old fiberglass bulkhead, which has reached the end of its serviceable life due to age and heavy use. While currently operational, it is at high risk of mechanical failure. Based on current industry proposals, the base equipment and crating costs alone exceed $734,000. However, this figure excludes essential and volatile costs such as ocean freight, crane services, specialized rigging, port to pool transport, local installation, and removal and disposal of the existing bulkhead. Given the unique logistical challenges and current tax rates in Hawaii, the $1,000,000 appropriation represents the baseline funding required to ensure this project is viable and can be seen through to completion.

Securing this funding is an investment in restoring VMAC as a world-class competition venue. A fully functional, modernized facility allows Hawaii to:

• **Bring High-Level Competition Home:** A premier venue opens the door to regional and national events, allowing Hawaii's athletes to compete at the highest levels in their own backyard rather than forcing local families to bear the immense cost of mainland travel.

• **Drive Economic Benefit:** Hosting major aquatic events brings in visitors and supports local businesses, providing a clear return on the City's investment.
• **Support the Broader Community:** VMAC is a vital regional resource for Kupuna wellness, First Responder training (Fire and Rescue), and Adaptive Athletes who depend on the facility's specialized accessibility.

By approving this $1,000,000 investment, the Council is practicing proactive fiscal responsibility—protecting a vital community asset before an avoidable equipment failure necessitates a far more expensive emergency response.

We would like to thank Councilmember Matt Weyer for his leadership in sponsoring this amendment and Budget Chair Val Okimoto for her committee's support. We respectfully urge the Council to pass Bill 23(26), CD1.

Mahalo,



Kevin Nakamura
President, VMAC Renewal Foundation
Resident, Mililani Mauka (District 8)