BILL023(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 166

*BUDGET (BUD)

***BUDGET (BUD) Meeting**

Meeting Date: May 1, 2026 @ 10:30 AM

Support: 200

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 19

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Umida Stelovska	umida@carbotura.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Carbotura Inc.	Support	Apr 27, 2026 @ 11:00 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
George Tanabe	gtanabe@hawaii.edu	96791
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Haleiwa Waialua Historical Society	Support	Apr 27, 2026 @ 01:53 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Willa Tanabe	wjtanabe@hawaii.edu	96791
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Haleiwa-Waialua Historical Society	Support	Apr 27, 2026 @ 02:16 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Crystal Nichols	crystaln3@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 27, 2026 @ 10:03 PM

Testimony:

This part of town deserves a nice park with a shaded playground for the keiki that is clean and safe (no homeless).

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Thea Palley	thea.palley@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 12:44 AM

Testimony:

The Sheridan Park neighborhood is home to many children and draws children from other neighborhoods as well. Its a beatiful green space and perfect place for a large playground. We suffered an egregious crime having our previous playground burned by arson. My 4 year old daughter grew up in that playground and we live across the street. This event was traumatizing and brought down the morale of the neighborhood. With renewed budget allocation we can turn the neighborhood around and boost property values. We, the residents of the Sheridan Park neighborhood would be grateful to have our playground rebuilt and extra HPD attention to monitor the area regularly.

Thank you for your consideration,

Thea Palley

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Josiah Sinagra	josiahsinagra96@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Friends of Sheridan Park	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 12:53 AM

Testimony:

As a father of toddler, I know first hand how important it is to have a local playground within walking distance to take my child to

play. We were heartbroken when our park was burned and ha e been pariently waiting for a rebuild with no prospects in sight. Sheridan park is the local gathering place for children from 4 different schools and thats just within a mile radius. A playground rebuild would serve many families with children in this highly populated area that is rapidly growing and increasing in value.New buildings are coming up all around the neighborhood drawing more and more families with children.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
COREYLYNN FELLEZS	coreyfellezs@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 05:48 AM

Testimony:

My son is 9 and swims for Rainbow Aquatics, a swim team that has branches in Kaneohe and in town. Our team in town doesn't have enough pool space and time to swim at one pool everyday. We swim at 3 separate pools each week and fight to get permits. We share pools with other swim teams, water polo teams and divers who are getting scuba lessons. Finding pools to get our kids in the water is not easy. My son is a 3rd generation competitive swimmer and I have coached for over 20 years. Getting our kids swimming lessons and pool space is so limited it's beyond crazy.

VMAC is a gem of a pool. It hosts most of our meets and gives west Oahu a place to swim. Our kids need it, our community needs it. Please help support and fund VMAC. Swimming access is not just for recreation. Swimming is a life skill and a life saver.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brooke Watari	brookewatari@gmail.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 08:31 AM

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:
Jonathan Yee	jyee99@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 08:50 AM

Testimony:

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

I am writing to express my strong support for the $1 million in funding designated for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) under Bill 23(26).

When my daughter was growing up as a swimmer, VMAC was one of the very few facilities on the island truly capable of hosting proper swim meets. It isn't just about having water to swim in; VMAC stands out because of its overall capacity, the high quality of the facility itself, and the critical logistics like adequate parking and spectator access that make large community events possible.

Venues equipped to handle that scale are rare but absolutely vital for our youth athletes and their families. While $1 million won't fix every maintenance issue, it is a crucial step to preserve one of the few high-capacity athletic assets our community relies on. Approving this funding shows a clear commitment to the spaces that allow local youth programs to operate safely and successfully.

Please keep this essential funding in the budget. Thank you for your time and your service to our community.

Mahalo,

Jonathan

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jennifer Fullick	jennfullick@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 09:09 AM

Testimony:

Cost per each swimmer and polo player is a great use of funding when you think of how many kids grow up, including my own son, in our VMAC pools. VMAC is an accessible location and community gathering place on our island for all of our polo players and swimmers. Multiple tournaments yearly prepare my son and all athletes to compete, and to continue to focus on healthy activities! Please think about how much this means that we show by action: We show the children of

Oahu that we prioritize them and their healthy activities. Thank you for your consideration!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Cheehyung Kim	cheehyungkim@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 09:23 AM

Testimony:

Hello, Our Respected Council Members! I write to sincerely ask you to approve the bill that would bring much needed renovation to the VMAC pool at Patsy Mink Park. The pool is used by people from around the world. It’s a beautiful pool. But it desperately needs upgrades. This bill will make that happen. Thank you!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Alex Chiya	achiya09@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 10:02 AM

Testimony:

Improvements to VMAC will greatly improve the experience of the aquatics community. Updates to the restroom/locker facilities, starting blocks, and diving equipment are most urgent and would have immediate benefits to the athletes and people who visit. Additional stands/seating areas would also help to improve the facilities capabilities of hosting high level competitions.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dr. Amanda Wilson	straightsmile4u@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 28, 2026 @ 10:10 AM

Testimony:

My name is Dr. Amanda Wilson and I am writing in strong support of the funding for renovations at the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center.

As a parent of two NCAA swimmers who have trained here since 2013, I have seen firsthand how this facility serves as a launchpad for Hawaii’s youth. My oldest son, who swam with the Iolani Swim Club for 13 years, is now a student-athlete at MIT and intends to return home to serve as a physician. This facility doesn't just produce athletes; it fosters the next generation of Hawaii's professional leaders.

However, to maintain this legacy, we must ensure our infrastructure meets international natatorium standards. Without championship-level facilities, our local athletes are forced to travel to the mainland to remain competitive for scholarships. This creates a massive financial and personal burden on local families, often leading to a "brain drain" where talented student-athletes and their parents move away permanently. By investing in these renovations, we are ensuring that our children can train and succeed at home, keeping our families and our talent in Hawaii.

Mahalo for your time and for supporting the future of our student-athletes.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wilson

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Zane Dalgamouni	zadalgamouni@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 10:12 AM

Testimony:

Aloha, ʻo Zane Dalgamouni koʻu inoa, he haumāna au o ke Kula o Punahou a he lālā o Punahou Aquatics. Ua ʻauʻau hoʻokūkū au mai ka papa ʻelua mai, a ua aloha mau au i ka ʻauʻau. Kākoʻo nui au i kēia pila e hoʻomaikaʻi ai i ke kākoʻo kālā no ka ʻauʻau ma VMAC. Mahalo no kāu manaʻo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Eric Wong	eric@ericwonglaw.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 10:15 AM

Testimony:

For the last 5 years my daughter has participated in swimming at the (year-round) club and ILH levels. She's been in multiple clubs each with slightly different coaching philosopies. We have also made friends with parents of swimmers from different schools and different islands. What is universal in all the clubs, schools, parents, and coaches (and marshalls and meet supporters) we have met is they have undeniable PASSION for the sport. The "swim family" are dedicated and wonderful MARSHALLS of the benefits and facilities which they receive and use. I have no doubt that money spent to improve VMAC (which is the most used facility for swim meets) will do more than just elevate the particular facility. An improved VMAC will further elevate the sport, the families, the swimmers, and the overall community. VMAC is an immeasurably significant link in the larger community. Aloha and Mahalo!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kendal Furudera	furudera@hotmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 10:29 AM

Testimony:

I am a frequent user of the Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center in my role as a volunteer official for Hawaiian Swimming. I understand that USD 1 million is part of this bill and I would strongly support the use to refurbish and upgrade the facility. Hawaii has a long history of producing high caliber competitive swimmers and for them to compete with national/world class competition, they need an up-to-spec pool.

The current pool can use upgrades/replacement of starting blocks, scoreboard, bulkhead and stands to name a few. And the bathroom/changing facility needs refurbishing as well.

I hope this can be considered as an urgent need for funding.

Thank you.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Atilano Jeffers-Fabro	makalapapark@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ka Hui O Ka Paka Makalapa	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 10:32 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Mai Kakou,

I would like to submit testimony in support of Bill023(26)

RELATING TO THE EXECUTIVE CAPITAL BUDGET AND PROGRAM FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2026 TO JUNE 30, 2027. It supports many worthwhile projects including funds to improve Makalapa Neighborhood Park in Halawa. Please consider passage of this bill.

Mahalo,

Ati Jeffers-Fabro

Name:	Email:	Zip:
L Takayama	ltakayam@hawaii.edu	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 11:02 AM

Testimony:

VMAC is such an important venue for my 3 children. 2 of them have been swimming there with their swim club the last few years and the third will start soon. Having a facility that has the dive blocks is a huge difference in their training. Also it is the best facility we have on the island to have swim meets. It is difficult for the swimmers at other places like Kalani where there is no warm up or warm down pools. A lot of the other pools also can't accommodate all spectators comfortably and often parking is an issue. The touch pads and score boards also makes it a lot easier for the parent as spectators and also as timers.

Please consider the additional funds for improvements to VMAC, it is instrumental in the development of so many of our swimmers.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dawn Tauanuu	pcaboardpresident@gmail.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Pearl City Aquatics	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 11:03 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

VMAC is a second home to my children. Both are members of a competitive swim club and spend five to seven days a week at the facility. Having this pool just 15 minutes from our home allows them to train daily, but the impact of this facility extends far beyond exercise.

My daughter joined the swim team in September 2022. At the time, she was introverted and anxious, traits that were heightened by the pandemic. Since she started swimming, she has undergone a complete transformation. Over the last three and a half years, this pool has provided her with an outlet to build confidence, grit, and life lessons that she will carry into adulthood. She went from being unable to make eye contact during a conversation to being the loudest person on the deck cheering for her teammates.

VMAC has changed our family's life. These budget improvements will ensure the facility can continue to support and bless future families the way it has ours.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Griffith Jones	griffishllc@gmail.com	96712
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 11:37 AM

Testimony:

My 2 boys have played many water polo tournaments, ODP sessions, and clinics at VMAC, and living on the North Shore, it is the closest available pool complex to us.

VMAC provides water polo venues a place to hold important functions for the development of our islands youths.

My family supports VMAC!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Bonnie Andryeyev	bonnierhee@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 11:39 AM

Testimony:

Water polo is expanding nationwide. This year, more youth teams than ever competed in the Olympic Development Trials for USA Water Polo in the history of the sport yet Hawaii's team rosters were not at capacity. Hawaii is especially poised to produce and develop GREAT youth water polo players because of our unique geography that develops many of our youth into adept waterwomen and watermen. BUT, the lack of pool space and resources critically impacts our Hawaii athletes and as a result, they miss out on very important opportunities to advance in the sport.

As the former board president of Honolulu Water Polo Club, I will testify to the fact that pool space was consistently an issue when trying to organize clinics with Olympians and high level coaches or to host tournaments where we could invite top club teams from California to compete against Hawaii teams or even to host a tournament for local clubs. In the end, we did not hold many of the events we planned because we could not find a pool suitable to host such an event. Some of

our athletes go nine months without competing in a single water polo game compared to California athletes who compete almost every weekend. Many of our talented athletes must travel to CA or abroad to receive the opportunities they need to develop into strong players who eventually get recruited to college and club programs. But we could have many more athletes participating in college programs if we had the resources and the support to get them there.
We desperately need sites like VMAC to host water polo tournaments and clinics where our young athletes have the opportunities to train and compete. That is the only way we collectively raise the level of sport in the islands. Hawaii, in general, needs more aquatic facilities for our youth. The future of the sport in our state depends on it.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Steve Allnutt	allnutt@hawaii.edu	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
University of Hawaii, Swim & Dive Team	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 11:53 AM

Testimony:
The funding set toward the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center at CORP is a fantastic opportunity to invest in one of Hawai'i's most core activties: swimming and water sports.

This facility is the heart of swimming and other aquatic sports on island. All other comparable facilities are privately owned or not open to the public. VMAC serves the community for people from all over O'ahu and the outer islands. Many community groups and swim clubs use it on a daily basis. Additionally, over the past few decades it has attracted local, national, and international teams to come and experience competitive swimming in the most beautiful place on earth.

My role with UH Manoa as the head swimming coach, I see the impact of this community on all levels of aquatics. It hosts the majority of state-wide swimming competitions in any given year.
VMAC needs a refresh like any outdoor pool of it's age and usage rate, and this funding will help make sure it remains a suitable home-base for competitive swimming in our state.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Katie Joca	ktjoca@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 11:54 AM

Testimony:
The VMAC pool is the heart of Hawaiian Swimming for both club teams and high school programs. The funding for capital improvements will have a large impact not just for Oahu but for all the islands who travel to VMAC for swim and water polo competitions. The pool is in need of updated starting blocks (like the new Manoa pool upgrades), a new timing system, a new bulk head, updated bathrooms with more restrooms and spectator seating. If the City can get these upgrades in place the VMAC can continue to host high level meets and games for not only Hawaii but for Mainland teams. The Big Island and Maui have both implemented pool updates but let's bring Oahu up to the same standards.

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Liese Barnes	fishgeekiam@yahoo.com	96744
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 11:59 AM

Testimony:

Please approve funding to repair and imprive the K Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Pool (VMAC). It is well used by people literally from ages 1-99, individual seniors for recreational swim as well as youth organized sports. My son practices and conpetes there regularly and swimming has been a really healthy and positive outlet for him. This is the only public pool with the capacity to conduct organized meets of any size and like any facility it needs maintenance to remain safe. Thank you

Name: Mayumi Light	Email: bigpig127@gmail.com	Zip: 96826
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 12:01 PM

Testimony:

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: TRACY A KAICHI	Email: tracy.a.kaichi@gmail.com	Zip: 96822-2673
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 12:14 PM

Testimony:

VMAC has played a meaningful role in my family’s life. One of my children began swimming at the age of seven and developed both skill and confidence in the water through consistent access to a quality facility. Today, that same child is continuing their athletic and academic journey as a swimmer at Seattle University. That path simply would not have been possible without a place like VMAC to train, compete, and grow.

My other child competes in water polo, a sport that depends heavily on access to appropriate facilities. Without VMAC, there would be no local venue to host games. That means fewer opportunities not just for my child, but for entire teams and families who rely on having a dedicated aquatic center in the community.

Beyond my own family, VMAC serves as a hub for athletes of all ages and skill levels. It provides a safe, structured environment where young people can learn discipline, teamwork, and resilience. It supports competitive swimmers, water polo players, and recreational users alike. Just as importantly, it brings the broader community together—families,

coaches, volunteers, and spectators all benefit from having a shared space centered on health and activity.

From early morning practices to weekend competitions, VMAC is more than just a pool. It is a place where goals are set, friendships are built, and lifelong skills are developed. VMAC facility needs our continued support, and maintenance is essential—not only for current athletes, but for future generations who deserve the same opportunities my kids had growing up.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jenine Isawa	scazee@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 12:21 PM

Testimony:

My name is Jenine Isawa, a Pearl City resident raising my husband and two daughters, ages 17 and 14, both competitive swimmers for Pearl City Aquatics Swim Club. For over eight years, our family has relied on the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC) for year-round practices, meets, and coaching—my oldest even coaches young swimmers there. Pearl City Aquatics is one of three clubs using VMAC nightly, hosting our annual invitational and competing in 95% of Oahu's swim meets, drawing teams from neighbor islands and the mainland.

VMAC's Unique Value

VMAC stands as Oahu's only convertible public pool, switching between short-course yards and long-course meters to match national seasons, and it's the island's fastest facility. It hosted the Pan Pacific competition five years ago, showcasing international talent and elevating Hawaii's aquatic profile. These features build elite athletes—my daughters have reached State Championships, represented Hawaii regionally, and my youngest eyes college swimming.

Critical Deterioration Issues

Broken starting blocks have sidelined lanes during meets, peeling bulkhead fiberglass irritates swimmers' skin during practice, and the unreliable scoreboard disrupts officials. Limited seating forces clubs to use tents on hillsides, compromising safety monitoring for spectators and athletes. Without upgrades, this vital asset risks further decline, sidelining Hawaii's swimmers.

Urgent Need for Funding

The proposed bill funds essential fixes like new spectator seating, bulkhead replacements, starter blocks, and a modern scoreboard—directly addressing these hazards. Approving this investment honors veterans through the K. Mark Takai namesake while safeguarding public recreation, youth development, and Hawaii's competitive edge for decades. As a committed user and parent, I urge your support to keep VMAC thriving.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Emily Diep	emily.diep16@gmail.com	96817

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 12:26 PM

Testimony:

I am writing in support of the funding of $1 million to improve the facility at VMAC. My son is 14 yo and is a swimmer who swims competitively. Swimming has been integral in his life as well as so many other kids. Swimming has allowed these kids to lead a healthy lifestyle and to give the kids a sense of belonging . We all know that metal health issues has been on the rise and physical activity have been on the decline. But studies have shown that physical activity helps with battling metal health issues. I am a primary care physician and it is very sad to have seen the rise of both anxiety and depression the past 10 years, especially since Covid, amongst my own patients. One thing I have observed is that athletes do better and there's many reasons behind that.

Therefore, I am writing in support of the $1 million to help improve vmac. To help improve a place where so many kids come to swim, connect, be healthy, and thrive.

Thank you

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Amanda CORBY	aacorby@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 12:37 PM

Testimony:

To whole or may concern,

Our family relies on the VEAC regularly — our keiki compete in swimming and water polo, and VMAC is where so many train, grow, and build community with their teammates and community.

Aquatic facilities like this one don't just serve competitive athletes. They serve every child learning to swim safely, every adult seeking low-impact exercise, and every family looking for a place to belong. For us, VMAC is irreplaceable.

The $1 million investment being considered is a meaningful first step — a signal that the City values this facility and the thousands of people who depend on it. I urge the Council to approve this funding and demonstrate that community infrastructure like VMAC is worth protecting and improving.

Our kids deserve access to quality facilities. Please invest in VMAC.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Samuel Bennett	Sbennett26@punahou.edu	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 12:55 PM

Testimony:

The VMAC pool facilities are used for sports like Water Polo and Swim meets. Funding a pool upgrade would mean making

the facilities better for people across the island.		
Name: Daniel Fullick	Email: Danfullick@gmail.com	Zip: 96821
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 01:03 PM
Testimony: It is important that we invest in K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center. This facility serves young athletes from every side of Oahu. Its upkeep and ongoing operation is crucial for keeping our athletes competitive with their mainland counterparts. VMAC is the hub of aquatic sports that brings athletes from all walks of life together for competition, growth and community.		
Name: Lesley Hong	Email: leshongie@gmail.com	Zip: 96797
Representing: Pearl City High School	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 01:16 PM
Testimony: To whom this may concern, My name is Lesley Hong and I am the current Swim/ Dive and Waterpolo Coach at Pearl City High School. I am also Granddaughter to Coach Kenneth Suenaga, one of the swim coaches that started VMAC. I fully support this matter, as being one of the first swimmers to actually swim and compete in this pool. As well as being able to utilize all the what VMAC has to offer. As the years have passed by there is an increase of things that need to be fixed at this pool. Recently I have noticed that some kids getting cuts from the diving blocks, lots of tiles missing, and it just has gone down hill from what it started as, and if there is a way to rebuild or revamp I'm sure more kids and swimmer would love to compete at this pool. Being someone that practices at this pool and there weekly something needs to be done before it gets worse. And how lucky are we that someone is trying to help out.		
Name: Seul Lee	Email: kukuistyle@gmail.com	Zip: 96818
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 01:39 PM
Testimony: I support the funding for improvements at VMAC. My family uses this facility regularly, and it is very important for our community and youth athletes. The upgrades are needed to keep it safe and functional.		
Name: Seon Lee	Email: spaghettikiller@hotmail.com	Zip: 96818

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 01:41 PM

Testimony:

strongly support the proposed funding for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

As a parent and supporter, I see firsthand how important VMAC is for our kids and for the entire swimming community. My children train here several times each week, and the facility plays a huge role in their athletic development, discipline, and confidence.

VMAC is well used and continues to serve hundreds of athletes and families, but the facility is aging and in need of upgrades to ensure safety, functionality, and the ability to host competitions.

Please support this funding to invest in our children, our community, and the future of aquatics in Hawaii.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Edward Lee	kukuistyle@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 01:42 PM

Testimony:

I support the funding for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

I swim at VMAC almost every day. It is where I practice hard, improve my times, and work toward my goals. My coaches and teammates are like family, and VMAC is our home.

The pool and facilities are old and sometimes hard to use. Upgrades would make it safer, more comfortable, and better for all the swimmers.

Please support VMAC so we can keep swimming and representing Hawaii!

Mahalo!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ethan Lee	seullee1130@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 01:43 PM

Testimony:

am writing to support the proposed funding for improvements at VMAC.

I love swimming at VMAC because I get to learn, practice, and compete with my friends.

It helps me stay healthy, learn teamwork, and build confidence.

The facility is old and needs repairs and upgrades. New improvements will help all the swimmers have a better and safer place to train.

Please support this important funding.

Thank you!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kenrick WONG	KENRICKZ@GMAIL.COM	96701-3019
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 02:28 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in Support of BILL023(26)

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 — 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:
Wenyi Zhou	wyzhou_98@yahoo.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 02:30 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to strongly support the proposal that includes $1 million in funding for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

As a swim parent and an official for many many years, I have witnessed the joy of my girls competing at the VMAC pool. I also noticed the degradation of the pool equipment and facility. VMAC has a great potential to be the best venue for all sorts of water activities. It desperately needs a working scoreboard, new diving blocks, shades for the stands, improvements for the bathroom and locker room, just to name a few.

I know $1 million is not enough to cover all the needs, but it is a great start and a good step forward to the right direction.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Martina Gin	martina.mazik@gmail.com	96789
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 02:37 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Members,

I grew up in Mililani and am now raising my own family there, so it is especially meaningful to see community resources that continue to serve the next generation. The Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC), the public pool located within Patsy T. Mink Central O‘ahu Regional Park, is one of those important community assets.

My daughter plays water polo, and access to a quality aquatic facility provides so much more than a place to practice. It helps young people build discipline, teamwork, resilience, confidence, and healthy habits. It gives them a positive outlet, supportive mentors, and a sense of belonging.

VMAC also benefits the broader community by promoting fitness, water safety, and opportunities for youth sports that keep kids active and engaged. For many families, these programs create structure, friendships, and experiences that shape children in lasting ways.

As someone who grew up in Mililani and now watches my own child benefit from community athletics, I respectfully ask that VMAC continue to be supported, maintained, and invested in for the families who rely on it today and for the next generation to come.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Name: Vernon Fullick	Email: Vernonfullick@gmail.com	Zip: 96821
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 03:42 PM

Testimony:

I have played in the pool there a lot for water polo and swam a lot. It is a good place where everyone comes together but it is a little broken down and it will be really cool to have that place looking nicer

Name: Bryan Helfer	Email: bryanhelfer@gmail.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2026 @ 04:39 PM

Testimony:

Please support our youth in funding much needed improvements to VMAC pool on Oahu. This facility is critical to the

aquatic athletics in Hawaii, and we are falling behind. Follow the example that Duke Kahanamoku and others have set before us in continuing to invest in our youth swimmers, divers, waterpolo players, and athletes, not to mention our families and kupuna that enjoy the facilities as well. Thank you for your consideration.
Please come to a sporting event here one day and see how much this means to our Keiki!

Thank you,
Bryan

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Yingfei Dong	yingfei@hawaii.edu	96822
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 04:45 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 a half of high-level meets (invitationals and state championships) 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:
George Matsui	gmatsui808@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Rainbow Aquatics	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 04:53 PM

Testimony:
Aloha all,

My name is George Matsui, a swim coach from BOWS swim club based in Palolo Valley. As someone who swam at VMAC throughout highschool and club meets. I have experienced all sides of VMAC facilities. That being locker rooms, bleachers/stands, pool deck and the pool itself.

Looking at other facilities on island. VMAC has the highest usage for any sporting event for our water sports. As someone who grew up around water, that being the ocean and the pool. I highly suggest a remodel of the facility.

VMAC is in terrible shape nowadays. I would love to see an overhaul for our future keiki, swimmers, water polo players, officials, coaches and parents.

The time to act is now. Especially since we can hold off on swim meets at VMAC in the near future due to the refurbishment of Manoa pool. We can have 2 updates pools to use in the future. Which will open a lot more doors for our community.

Please consider spending the money for the betterment of our community.

- George Ming Matsui

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Calvert De coligny	guereicde@me.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 05:56 PM

Testimony:

I am writing in support of the VMAC improvements. This public pool is a needed resource for the community. I have swum here on multiple occasions and have taught my son how to swim at this pool and other public pools like it. Familiarity with water and swimming competence is a critical community service that this pool provides. This pool allows for so many great programs for our Keiki and our Kapuna.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christine Granger	granger.christine@yahoo.com	96713
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 06:48 PM

Testimony:

Testimony for Bill 23 (2026) – Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center Improvements

Aloha Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

My name is Christine Granger and I am submitting strong support for the funding allocated to the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) in Bill 23 (2026).

VMAC is the most heavily used competitive swimming venue on the island of O‘ahu. On average, twice a month, it hosts meets for 10–15 local swim clubs, many of which bring up to 50 or more athletes each. For many families, swimming is one of the few affordable, year-round sports available. It provides structure, discipline, persistence, and a safe, healthy environment for children from a wide range of backgrounds. VMAC is where these athletes learn to set goals, work hard, and build confidence—skills that carry far beyond the pool.

Despite its importance, the facility is in urgent need of basic upgrades. Several of the starting blocks are broken and unusable, and VMAC does not have modern starting wedges or backstroke wedges that are standard at mainland competitive pools. The scoreboard is decades old and frequently fails to display times or connect with the touchpads, making meets difficult to run and frustrating for athletes and families. The spectator stands are deteriorating and lack shade, leaving parents, coaches, and volunteers exposed to the sun for hours at a time.

These are not luxury improvements, they are essential for safety, fairness, and the continued ability to host meets for young athletes each year. VMAC is the backbone of competitive swimming on O‘ahu, and without investment, the community risks losing one of the few accessible athletic spaces available to so many competitive swim teams.

The proposed $1 million will not solve every issue, but it is a critical first step. It signals that the City recognizes the value VMAC provides and is willing to invest in a facility that serves a broad, diverse, and growing community.

I respectfully urge you to keep this funding in the budget and help ensure that VMAC remains a safe, functional, and inspiring place for our swimmers.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.
Christine Granger

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jinee Hong	jineeh@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 07:18 PM

Testimony:
VMAC matters to our family as a key facility for our child’s swim competitions.
While we mainly attend for meets, we see how often the facility is used by athletes, teams, and families across the community. It provides an important space for training, competition, and youth development.
From our experience during meets, it’s also clear that the facility is aging and in need of upgrades to continue supporting athletes at a high level.
VMAC plays an important role not just for swimmers, but for the broader community, and improvements would make a meaningful difference for everyone who relies on it.
Thank you for consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Julie Chiya	Jn34@hawaii.edu	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 07:22 PM

Testimony:

Updating and renovating the pool facilities will greatly benefit the aquatics community. A lot of the metal components are rusty and the restroom sometimes breaks down.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jay Lin	jaylin777@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 08:15 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of continued investment in VMAC improvements.

VMAC has been an important part of our community and has had a meaningful impact on my family. It provides a safe, engaging, and positive space where students can grow; not just academically, but socially and emotionally as well. Opportunities like this are critical for keeping our children connected, active, and supported.

For my family, VMAC represents more than just a facility; it is a place where relationships are built, confidence is developed, and students feel a true sense of belonging. These experiences are not easily replaced, and they matter deeply to our keiki and our community.

Investing in VMAC improvements is an investment in our youth, our families, and the long-term well-being of our community. I respectfully urge you to support this measure.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Alex Beatty	adoptsheridanpark@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 09:02 PM

Testimony:

I am writing in strong support of Councilmember Nishimoto's proposed CD2 amendments to Bill 23, identified in Council Communication No. 76 (26), specifically those that fund improvements at Sheridan Community Park.

Since last year, after the playground was burned down and an attempted murder took place, AdoptSheridanPark@gmail.com has worked hard through the adopt-a-park program to rebuild community confidence that this park is safe and worthy of neighborly love. DPR's Urban Forestry showed love by planting native trees along Piikoi, shading passersby and welcoming those to the park. The efforts of the adopt-a-park program are somewhat limited to building social networks, cleanliness, and minor landscaping improvements; however, what is missing is the premier play apparatus for all, from keiki to kapuna, of all abilities and all needs. This is the opportunity.

With neighborhood investment and social capital growing, now is the time to recommit to family oriented recreation in the City's premier neighborhood for affordable and sustainable living. Councilmember Nishimoto's proposed CD2 amendments go a long way in doing that by providing additional dedicated funding beyond simply replacing the equipment. With the additional funding, the rapidly growing neighborhood could be properly served with a public facility worthy of our community.

Thank you all for your consideration, and please include the funding for Sheridan Community Park as proposed by Councilmember Nishimoto in CC 76(26). Bill 23 would be improved by including this amendment.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Connie Choy	cchoy.456@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 10:19 PM

Testimony:
All I ask is that you support "Councilmember Nishimoto's Proposed CD2 Budget Amendments for Bill 23 (26), noted in Council Communication 76 (26), to support Sheridan Community Park Improvements."

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Richard Oshiro	oshirorh@hawaii.rr.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 10:28 PM

Testimony:
As a longtime resident of Waipahu and our Neighborhood Board, I support the passage of Bill 023 (26) and specifically the funding of improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center. This swimming complex is vital to our children who use the Aquatics Center for swim practices and competition. This funding will go a long way to support our children and swimming community. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Aaron Saito	ajsaito02@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 28, 2026 @ 11:39 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jennifer Carney	piblokto2k1@yahoo.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 06:04 AM

Testimony:

The VMAC is a community and centered campus that's has allowed my son and family to spend healthy large chunks of time during swim events, like invitationals and other wonderful gatherings. The pool itself and the spectator areas, as well as bathrooms are in very poor condition and really need to be renovated to ensure that VMAC remains safe and functional for all of our community. This is one of the few places that we can all gather for swim events that includes so many different teams and schools. It is so inclusive and we would like to keep it that way. Please help us maintain and improve the structure of the swimming area so that families swimmers coaches can all look forward to coming to VMAC! It was once such a beautiful place, so let's please honor the facility and not let it go.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Emily Silver	elesnick@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 07:22 AM

Testimony:

As a parent of a toddler, I am always hungry for more public parks and spaces. Investing in public works and facilities makes us all more connected.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Isabella Lee	igladihana@gmail.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 07:44 AM

Testimony:

Many people in our community rely on this pool, including myself, my friends, and my family. It supports a variety of sports and activities, and it's an important place where people can stay active and participate in the things they love.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
David Ball	dmball@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 29, 2026 @ 07:45 AM

Testimony:

Dear Councilmembers,

I am writing today as a civic educator and a swim dad to support appropriations for the facilities at Veterans' Memorial Aquatic Complex (VMAC) at Patsy Mink Park in Waipio. Our family has benefitted enormously from the large and

supportive competitive swimming and water polo communities that use these facilities nearly every weekend. Having a safe and supportive recreational environment is essential to the development of our young people, and in many respects VMAC is just this environment for our swimmers and our water polo players--spam musubi concessions to support local organizations, families building strong community ties with one another during the (admittedly quite long) two-day swimming competitions, events that often attract our friends on neighbor islands as much as the entire Oahu community. Yet the condition of some parts of the facility, especially the bathrooms, needs immediate attention, leading my daughter to say she feels unsafe when she swims. Our young athletes deserve better than this, and the appropriations under consideration would help immensely toward a safer environment for our keiki. As the outpouring of support from these water sports communities shows, appropriations for VMAC would uplift so many in our community and create a stronger Oahu.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

David Ball

Waialae-Kahala

Name:	Email:	Zip:
MARGARET GLASGOW	Ladynav135@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaiian and USA Swimming	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 07:53 AM

Testimony:

VMAC facility improvement is necessary to promote this facility as the premier swimming venue in Hawaii. In the past, we have had the opportunity to host the World Aquatics Pan Pacific Junior National Meet, Japan Masters Meet, Hawaii State Swimming Championships, HHSAA Swimming Championships meets, and Invitational Meets with International participation. This facility needs upgrades and repairs that Oahu can maintain and promote VMAC as a world class facility.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Haylie Kaichi	hayliekaichi@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 08:05 AM

Testimony:

The Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) is important to me because it is where I've learned discipline, teamwork, and how to push through challenges alongside teammates from across the island who share the same passion. It is home to aquatic sports across O'ahu and throughout the state of Hawai'i. It serves athletes of all ages and backgrounds in swimming, diving, and water polo, and many more. For many students and children, it is the central location where they train, compete, and build lifelong skills through sports they are deeply passionate about. For many of us, this is the only place where we can compete at a high level. Schools from all over O'ahu come here because it is the central hub for aquatic sports. It brings together athletes from different communities and gives us the chance to represent our schools or clubs and do something we truly care about. I've personally seen how important this facility is during major competitions.

It has hosted large tournaments and even international events like the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships, in which I had the privilege to watch. That shows how important this pool is not just to us locally, but on a much larger stage as well.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sharon Smart	ssmart11@mac.com	96825-1050
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 08:07 AM

Testimony:

To: Budget Committee

Subject: VMAC Funding: A Critical Catalyst for Local Athletics

Dear Budget Committee,

As a swimmer and water polo player and coach who trains at VMAC, I see firsthand the incredible potential—and the urgent needs—of this facility. I strongly support the proposed financial investment. While we know this won't fix every issue, it is a necessary catalyst to show the community that the City is serious about maintaining high-quality athletic venues. VMAC provides a space for high-level competition, safe training, and youth development that can't be found elsewhere.

Please approve this funding to build the momentum needed for VMAC’s long-term success.

Best regards,

Shari Smart

Former Head Coach University of Hawaii Women's Water Polo

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Katherine Bohringer	Akevial@gmail.com	96786
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 01:02 PM

Testimony:

I am so thankful for the proposal to improve the VMAC pool. It's hard to precisely qualify how much VMAC has influenced my family. Thanks to VMAC, my kids discovered water polo, which has given them the opportunity to travel around the US. VMAC has also introduced them to swim team. I've spent more hours in the stands at VMAC watching my daughters in the pool than I could possibly count. Thanks to the availability of VMAC, both my girls are strong, safe swimmers; they're athletic, they're healthy, they have a love of sports that will (hopefully) set the stage for continued fitness into adulthood. This community pool is a godsend, and deserves so much love.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Michael Twilbeck	mtwilb2@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 01:57 PM

Testimony:

We relocated our family from Hawai'i Island to O'ahu for several reasons, but primarily because we have two young children and wanted them to have greater access to parks, community, and social opportunities. While Hawai'i Island offered more space, we felt that the limited park and social infrastructure would not be the best long-term fit for our family.

However, the cost of living in Hawai'i, and especially in Honolulu County, is significantly higher than in Hawai'i County. As a result, we are now living in a small condo rather than a house with land. Like many families here, our best opportunity to get our children outdoors, socialized, and active is by taking them to public parks.

We were excited to move to O'ahu because of the number of parks available, but we have been deeply disappointed to see a great local park, located within two blocks of our residence, maintained and operated in its current condition. For families like ours, these parks are not optional luxuries; they are essential community spaces.

For these reasons, we are in full support of Bill 23.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sophie Bender	sophiebender04@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 01:58 PM

Testimony:

I grew up as a swimmer and water polo player in Hawai'i, spending every weekend at VMAC with my teammates. I remember my first swim meet ever, I was only 8 years old, I swam 25 freestyle and 25 backstroke. I continued spending many, many weekends at VMAC. From water polo clinics to swim meets, to even meeting an Olympian at VMAC, that pool raised me. Thanks to all those long days at VMAC, I now play Division I water polo at Bucknell University. It is such an honor to represent my community on the mainland, and I have VMAC facilities to thank. It is such an important space for people just starting swimming, competitive swimmers, and the water polo community. Please allocate money to this important place so that young athletes, like I was, can compete and achieve their goals in such a special place.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Saori Mayeda	saotzu@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 04:58 PM

Testimony:

My name is Saori Mayeda and my 9 year old daughter joined Pearl City Aquatics (PCA) last August. She goes to VMAC three times a week for practice and has also participated in swim meets there. What I have witnessed at VMAC with PCA (and the other clubs that use the facility) is the wonderful sense of community and ohana amongst these young swimmers. All these athletes are not only dedicated and talented, but they also have a bond with one another unlike anything I've witnessed at my daughter's school. There are swimmers of all different ages and skill levels cheering each

other on and becoming friends. The older ones are role models for the younger ones, who will eventually become leaders themselves.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Seth German	sethgerman@hotmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 05:45 PM

Testimony:

I support the budget to revitalize Sheridan park

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kiyo Kashiwazaki	saotzu@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 06:14 PM

Testimony:

I joined Pearl City Aquatics last August. I am 9 years old and I really love it at the VMAC. I love it when we have our swim practices at VMAC because they have diving boards for us to dive off from. I also like it because they have three different parts of the pool so that more than one swim team can swim here at VMAC. Everyone at PCA cares about each other and cheers them on during Swim Meets and Relays. Everyone gets along extremely well. I am so happy that me and my swim mates have a big open pool to swim in and diving blocks to dive off from here at VMAC.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Allyn Wijnveldt	Highrevvinitb@gmail.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 29, 2026 @ 08:59 PM

Testimony:

Hi,

VMAC is an important swimming complex for the water polo community, swimmers, and divers. Having venues to raise strong swimmers is important in our islands and keeps kids safe when they venture out into our many beaches.

Growing up, I had precious few aquatic facilities that I could play water polo at, with only private schools and UH manoa capable of hosting such games. VMAC is such an important facility for our community, water polo, and swimming alike. Thank you for your time.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Daniel Rodriguez	manuelaearthworks@gmail.com	96712
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 09:12 PM

Testimony:

Aloha. I appreciate the efforts taken to make this possible. I give you all my full support to make this happen. Mahalo

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Naomi Takai	grandmatakai@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 09:47 PM

Testimony:

Will be providing an oral testimony at the hearing.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Risha Tanaka	rtanaka31@punahou.edu	95701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 10:02 PM

Testimony:

I am a current competitive swimmer and have been since before I can remember and have swam so many meets at VMAC that I can no longer count. I have made so many of my favorite memories there. The location and size are perfect for meets. But some of the utilities are outdated, or just unable to keep up with all the athletes it hosts. I hope that VMAC is updated so that my friend and I can continue making memories for years to come with having to worry about our safety.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Arlene Sato	akobuke@me.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Swim Club and Tropic Lightning Diving	I wish to comment	Apr 29, 2026 @ 10:08 PM

Testimony:

Hi,

I’m a huge advocate for funding needed to improve VMAC.

My children have been swimming and diving at VMAC for over 5 years.

VMAC is in need of an upgrade.

Over the years, I’ve noticed the deterioration of the facilities.

Stiffening springboards, fiberglass peeling away from the Starting Blocks and cracked pool tiles are becoming increasingly noticeable and have become a safety hazard to the swimming community.

Daily practices and Championship swim meets are held at VMAC and attended by all Hawai’i swim clubs as well as visiting swim teams from the neighbor islands and the mainland.

VMAC should become the showcase pool that it was meant to be.
Instead, I've visited Kona and Maui facilities that far exceed VMAC.

The Kona community pool has an excellent smart digital scoreboard, Olympic style starting blocks, shade sails for the spectators in the stands, and warm showers in the locker rooms for the swimmers.

VMAC desperately needs this funding to become an aquatic center that the swimming community on Oahu can take pride in.

Swimming and all water sports are a vital part of living in Hawaii.
Our community needs a facility that exemplifies our love of the water.

The decision to use the funding to upgrade VMAC is an obvious one.
A simple visit to the aging facility will support my testimony.

Thank you.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kevin Nakamoto	pukapig@yahoo.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 10:22 PM

Testimony:
The sport of swimming has taught my daughter, a swimmer of 10 years and current high school senior that while life has its ups and downs, you must always get back up. In her case, it was literally up- on the blocks. She has been setback with numerous injuries and each time has taken the road less traveled back into the pool. As she embarks on the final chapter of her swimming career preparing to study nursing at Creighton University, she once again had to overcome chronic migraines that nearly derailed her senior year.

The VMAC was the setting where all this happened and I am grateful that the City has afforded us with such a wonderful facility. While my daughter's career is coming to a close, there will be future generations that will traverse the same path. Infusing funding into the maintenance of the facility will ensure that. I humbly ask that the City consider the far reaching benefits of the facility and its importance for future generations of swimmers.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Larry Oshiro	Larryoshirosr@yahoo.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 29, 2026 @ 10:34 PM

Testimony:

I am the Head Coach of Manoa Aquatics. We use the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center for swimming competition. We held our 44th Annual Harry Mamizuka Invitational Swim Meet at the Mark Takai Veteran Memorial Aquatics Center on April 18-19, 2026 since the Manoa Pool was in renovation. This swimming complex is widely used by the general public for physical fitness and not only for competitive swimmers. This funding will help maintain and upkeep this aquatic facility. Thank you for your consideration, and please support BILL 023(26).

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Darsha Lee	darsha@hawaii.edu	96789
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:36 AM

Testimony:

Aloha pumehana kākou,

I am writing again in support of project 1998040 for improvements to the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) at Patsy Mink Central Oʻahu Regional Park. Open public spaces that are well-maintained are essential to promoting healthy communities. In particular, the pool at VMAC offers an opportunity for swimmers to engage in exercise, competition, and preparation for safely participating in other water/ocean sports. I urge the council members to please join in support of this project and in turn in support of health promotion and resiliency in our community.

Naʻu me ka ʻoiaʻiʻo

Darsha Lee
District 8 Constituent

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jingxin Dong	jdong26@punahou.edu	96822
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:37 AM

Testimony:

I support this bill because I am a swimmer who uses the Patsy T. Mink Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center, and I have seen the Aquatic Center take on more strain as we continue to use it for Hawaii Swimming official meets. Improvements to the bulkhead and starting blocks to make them less slippery would make the pool safer, and improving the bathrooms would benefit all who use the facilities.

This pool serves many families, veterans, and a large part of the local swim community and it deserves maintenance to keep it in good condition. I urge you to pass this bill and invest the much-needed funds in these improvements.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
MICHELLE HSIA	mhhsia@gmail.com	96789

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 04:57 AM

Testimony:

I am writing in support of funds allocated to improve the VMAC facility.

My 11 year old daughter is a competitive swimmer for Hawaii Swimming Club and uses the VMAC facility every week. She uses it for club swimming in the evenings, as well as during the lap swim hours for extra practice. We have meet so many people of all ages (seniors at lap swim and school age friends at club practice) at this facility!

We have also participated in the free diving program and had an amazing experience! It's been our only chance to learn to dive off a spring board and platform!

Allocating $1 million dollars for improvements at VMAC would highly benefit the community and many school-aged swimmers from elementary to high school. There's so many swimmers of all ages that use this facility that there has been wear and tear that need addressing. Please consider allocating this much needed funds to improve this amazing facility.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Martha Garcia	marthacgarciav@gmail.com	96818

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 06:19 AM

Testimony:

We are very happy to see that the community voice matters. The VMAC improvements budget should be approved to address some of the issues the venue has. It is important for the swimming community, as a swimmer parent we spent almost all weekends attending competitions meets. The pool need new equipment for these events. The venue is critical and host statewide events as it has every to host and gather a lot of people, but it is time to make some upgrades in the bathroom, lockers, pool and equipment like touch pads and scoreboard and public areas. This is a place that brings communities together every weekend for different aquatics events.

Thank you for listening and investing in our children.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Albert Mccollum	albiem808@gmail.com	96825

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 06:25 AM

Testimony:

As a child I frequently visited and used many city recreational facilities. It allowed me to grow and learn in a safe atmosphere away from bad influences present in my neighborhood at the time. As an adult and an employee of the Honolulu Fire department I again frequently visited city facilities as a recreational user and as part of my duties as a city employee. It was again a safe place to learn and grow and a place where I could help and teach young children enjoy the spaces as I did when I was younger. Now, as a parent I bring my child to many of the same facilities. Sadly, many of them are deteriorating and cannot be used in a safe manner as they once were. In this moment we have an opportunity to maintain and improve a safe and significant recreational space in our community. Please do not let this opportunity pass

us by and regret it later. It will only cost more if we take on this project at a later date.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Akayah Mottl	amottl28@punahou.edu	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:27 AM

Testimony:

Please save our VMAC. Our family has enjoyed swim meets here for the last 10 years. This community resource is vital to so many Hawaii residents. Mahalo nui.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Julia Frano	julia.frano@icloud.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:29 AM

Testimony:

I am a 11 year old swimmer for Hawaii Swim Club and I wish to tell you that VMAC is extremely helpful in my life. I use it not only for practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays but for additional open swim practice. VMAC is the only pool close by that will let me dive off the blocks. This helps me get in my dives even when I am in a different pool.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Pepi Mottl	pmottl26@punahou.edu	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:30 AM

Testimony:

Please support this bill and save VMAC. I have been a Club swimmer and ILH swimmer since the age of 7. This pool Shaped me as athlete. As I head off to college to swim DIII in a few months, I ask you to save this pool for future generations.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Felix Wang	felixtaigawang@icloud.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:33 AM

Testimony:

Please heavily consider passing this bill. The community and people not only in the area of the affected facilities but also in almost every part of this island use these facilities for recreational purposes. The pool area is used for water polo games, swim meets, practices, adult classes and members of the community alike. The parts of the pool being replaced are one if the most important parts but currently they could be considered dangerous. The starting blocks have sharp edges which have and will continue to injure people. The bulkhead is made of fiber glass and it is possible to get tiny

needles is glass all in your hands. These are not quality of life upgrades, these are safety measures and precautions. Thank you for your time

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sharon Tisza	drsherrtisza@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:33 AM

Testimony:

Sorry, I just did this but I think it didn’t save.

Please save VMAC. My son has been a swimmer at this pool for nearly 11 years! This pool has been vital to his swim career and he heads off to college to swim in a few months, I’d like to see many swimmers after him also enjoy this amazing community resource.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Seiko Wang	seiko.wang@me.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:35 AM

Testimony:

All 3 my kids grow up with VMAC as swimmers. We enjoyed countless meets, practices there so do island athletes from outer islands and all over the nation. VMAC is THE HUB of Hawaii water sports and we're proud of the facility. Yes we know it is old facility, that's why let's keep the facility in decent shape and take care of it.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Joe Mottl	jrmottlesq@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:35 AM

Testimony:

VMAC is a priceless community pool. Please help save it. My son has been a PAQ swimmer for over 10 years. We can’t let it fall to severe disrepair. Let’s save this pool for generations to come.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ron Iwamoto	roniwamoto@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Pearl City Aquatics	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:36 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Grace Schonhardt	gschonhardt@hotmail.com	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

VMAC	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:38 AM

Testimony:

Thank you for supporting our efforts to make Hawaii safer for our youth.

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 ʻEwa 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 Hawaiʻi which is that swim safety is not optional; it is essential.

That value has continued in my own 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 Hawaiʻi 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 Hawaiʻi 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:
Noah Schonhardt	nschonhardt28@punahou.edu	96819
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
VMAC	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:41 AM

Testimony:

Thank you for your continued support.

I am a 15-year-old student who loves swimming, and I strongly support funding to renovate our city pool.

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:
Adam Schonhardt	akschonhardt@hotmail.com	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
VMAC	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:45 AM

Testimony:

I am writing to express my strong support for allocating city funds to improve and renovate the VMAC pool. This facility serves as an important space for recreation, exercise, and community connection, and investing in its safety and functionality is both necessary and responsible.

Over time, wear and tear can compromise not only the appearance of the pool but also the safety of those who rely on it. Addressing issues such as aging infrastructure, outdated bulkheads and starting blocks, will significantly reduce the risk of accidents and ensure the pool meets modern health and safety standards.

Beyond safety, renovations would enhance accessibility and inclusivity, making the pool more welcoming for residents of all ages and abilities. Improvements such as updated entryways, improved lighting, and clearly marked depth indicators can make a meaningful difference in how the space is used and enjoyed.

The pool is more than just a recreational amenity, it is a valuable public resource that promotes physical health, provides a safe environment for youth activities, and strengthens community ties. Investing in its upkeep demonstrates a commitment to the well-being of residents and the long-term vitality of our city.

I respectfully urge you to prioritize funding for these much-needed upgrades. Ensuring that the pool remains a safe, accessible, and high-quality facility will benefit our community for years to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kacey Jo	kaceymjo@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:46 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kisan Jo	kisanjo@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:51 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jin Oh	jinoh0304@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:54 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
John Flanagan	honu17@aol.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:14 AM

Testimony:

Upgrades to the VMAC facility is much needed.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Katelyn Brittain	Kmbrittain12@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Kailua High School Water Polo	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:27 AM

Testimony:

I would like to express my support for funding improvements to the Central Oʻahu Regional Park, Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. This pool is vital to many aquatic sports across not only Oʻahu but across the pae ʻāina, it is a place we host all Oʻahu Interscholastic Association (OIA) high school water polo games, along with countless high school meets. It

provides appropriate competitive facility to our student athletes so when they compete or are invited to attend mainland or international schools for sport they can have more legal playing field as they aren't as intimidated by the facilities. This pool not only gives space for O‘ahu athletes, it is used to hold countless swim meets for the competitive swim clubs across the islands hosting teams regularly from Kaua‘i, Māui, & Hawai‘i whivh he‘ps propel the sport of swimming state wide, this provides so many opportunities for keiki to learn, build confidence, strength, friendship and more. It is so wonderful that City & County of Honolulu has provided these wonderful facilities to our community, but it is so important to keep funding them to make sure they remain in good working order to help perpetuate the importance of aquatic activity & safety to our community. Mahalo Hui loa for your time & support.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nani Rodriguez	naniliu@yahoo.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:39 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

Our son is a club swimmer with KSC and has been competing at VMAC for 6 years. He has created many positive memories, friendships and continues to learn lifelong skills while swimming there as he is now 15.

The facility has been the home to the swimming community and is a safe place to watch our keiki compete and is a place for families and friends to gather. Over the 6 years we have seen the facility deteriorate including the bathrooms being closed during a major competition. Competitors and ohana were forced to use the facility at the tennis courts creating a chaotic situation at a crucial time.

During a State competition, the water temperature in the pool was too hot causing delays and changes in the swim schedule. Swimmers that trained all season for the meet had to in turn adjust their schedules and events creating many poor performances during a most crucial meet for swimmers to qualify for the next tier.

The community needs the funding for upgraded bathrooms, shade for viewers, and new swim blocks among other improvements! Mahalo for the consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nathan Higa	NATHAN.HIGA@K12.HI.US	96786
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Leilehua High School	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:43 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kiana Ganancial	ganancial.kiana@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:46 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of the $1 million in funding proposed for the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC).

For three years, my family drove from Kapolei to VMAC nearly every weekday for practice. What started as wanting our boys to learn how to swim as a life skill became something we never expected — a community we didn't know existed. Swimming has taught our children discipline, hard work, and consistency that carries far beyond the pool. It has kept them active and healthy, taken us to neighbor islands for the first time, and this past March to our first meet in California, with more mainland meets to come.

VMAC will always be part of our family's story. We are already looking to the future as our oldest hopes to practice and compete there in high school next year. I urge the Budget Committee to invest in a facility that has given so much to so many families like ours.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Raymond Nunez	lokahiwpc@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Lokahi Water Polo Club	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:48 AM

Testimony:

Lokahi Water Polo Club is a club of about 50 keiki of various age levels and backgrounds.

The water polo community is in dire need of more pool spaces on Oahu. VMAC is a key pool that hosts important water polo events like the Makahiki Tournament as well as many of the OIA games. Anything we can do to support VMAC would greatly benefit the thousands of keiki playing water polo on Oahu. The sport is rapidly growing at the club level and VMAC is a key pillar of that.

Thank you!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Matthew Stimpson	matthewstimpson@yahoo.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:51 AM

Testimony:

In support of funding for the necessary improvements to the Veteran Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). VMAC provides

critical opportunities not just for competitive athletes, but for the broader community. From swim teams and training programs to recreational use and water safety, it supports physical health, discipline, and connection. For many, it's also a place to build confidence and life-saving skills that extend far beyond the pool.

Personally, I've seen how valuable this facility is in both its offerings and its limitations. While it continues to serve the community well, there are clear needs in terms of maintenance, modernization, and capacity to keep up with demand. Investing in VMAC is an investment in public health, youth development, and community well-being.

Thank you,
Matt Stimpson

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lisa Furudera	thefuruderas@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:59 AM

Testimony:
I frequent the Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center as my younger son is a competitive age-group swimmer. In addition to the fragile bulkhead (critical for the use of the pool), the general physical equipment at the pool has fallen into disrepair, including the starting blocks and bathrooms. And because the scoreboard often only displays a few of the lane times as others are broken, the spectators are left wondering about their child's swim time and place in their heat after the race.

Truly hope that the funds earmarked for VMAC will be approved for its intended purpose.

Thank you

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kimi Regula	kimireg@yahoo.com	96734
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:18 AM

Testimony:
Water safety and aquatic sports are not just for recreation on our island community but an imperative life skill. K. Mark Takai VMAC is the most widely utilized venue for swimming/diving and water polo competitions on island and is in dire need of repairs. As a swim parent, coach, official, volunteer, and advocate for water safety and aquatic sports I am asking for your assistance to maintain and improve this important facility. My now 22 year old son competed at VMAC in 2014 at his first state championship meet, and my 19 year old son, now a member of the UH Manoa's Swimming & Diving team won multiple divisional and league titles at VMAC. Now my 15 year old daughter and 10 year old twins enjoy competitions there at least once a month. I cannot count how many hours we have spent on that pool deck! The facility is not only in

need of upgrades to continue to support island, state and ideally national/international level events, but it needs repairs for safety and sustainability. As an island nation Hawaii can and should be home to premier aquatic facilities. Thank you for your consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Robert Smitson	robert.smitson@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:26 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Robert Smitson, and I am writing to strongly urge your support for Bill 23(26), specifically the $1 million allocation for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

As a father, I have watched my daughter, Isla, grow up on the pool deck at VMAC. The experiences she has had within those walls have been truly life-changing. Beyond just learning how to race, Isla has developed a level of grit, sportsmanship, and community pride that she wouldn't have found anywhere else. VMAC is the stage where our children learn that hard work pays off, but for that to continue, the stage itself needs our help.

We are at the facility constantly, and while the spirit of the athletes is high, the physical needs of the pool are becoming impossible to ignore. This $1 million is a vital first step in ensuring that Isla and her teammates have a safe, functional, and reliable place to pursue their dreams.

Our family is asking you to keep this funding a priority. Please invest in our keiki by investing in the VMAC.

Mahalo for your time and for your support of our swimming community.

Sincerely,

Robert Smitson

KSC Parent

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Amber Motz	ambersmotz@yahoo.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:26 AM

Testimony:

My daughter is now 15 but started racing at VMAC when she was 7. Those meets have been monumental in her development. VMAC is the best racing pool in the state but is still behind pools on the mainland. Considering more and more mainland teams are coming to race here we should have a state of the art facility to support all our swimmers. My daughter has also spent many water polo practices there also. It provides so much support for both swimming and water polo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Steven Motz	stevenmotz@yahoo.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:27 AM

Testimony:
My daughter is now 15 but started racing at VMAC when she was 7. Those meets have been monumental in her development. VMAC is the best racing pool in the state but is still behind pools on the mainland. Considering more and more mainland teams are coming to race here we should have a state of the art facility to support all our swimmers. My daughter has also spent many water polo practices there also. It provides so much support for both swimming and water polo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kirk Shitaoka	hnlntnfan@hotmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:35 AM

Testimony:
I strongly support the proposed funding request for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). Our family, part of the swim club community, has enjoyed this popular, heavily used facility over the past several years. We have also been to other pool facilities, both on the island of Oahu, but also on the neighbor islands and the mainland. Unfortunately, VMAC is not currently up to the same level of maintenance and upkeep as these other facilities, and can definitely put to good use the proposed funds for improvements. I appreciate your continued support of this important facility and making the necessary long-term investments. Mahalo!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lee Britos	lee.britos@gmail.com	96825-1836
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:35 AM

Testimony:
The Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) in Waipahu is THE MOST IMPORTANT swimming venue for our swimmers. It is the largest venue for swim competitions on Oahu, but yet it is super outdated. Most of the time, the time board does not work properly and the swim blocks are in dire need of an upgrade. The bathrooms are also in need of renovations and oftentimes the toilets are backed up. In addition, when the swim meets are large enough, swim teams from the Mainland and other countries will fly here to compete. Not only does this generate dollars for our economy, but brings healthy competition for our local swimmers. If our facility is not up to par with others on the Mainland and internationally, these other teams will compete elsewhere. Lastly, I'd like to also add that at swim meets, swimmers, coaches, officials, and parents are there for several hours, sometimes from 7am to 5pm. What would be super helpful is if there was shade, especially in the stands, at the starting blocks, and where the officials are. As much as we like living on this island, the sun can be brutal on our skins. Please help our swimmers out by providing them with a facility that they can enjoy competing at. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Holly Yamamoto	hpkincaid@hotmail.com	96734

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:01 AM

Testimony:

Dear committee,

Please provide much needed funds for VMAC. This facility has provided for my entire house hold. My children use it frequently with swim meets and an occasional water polo game. I am starting to use it as well for master water polo. We come all the way from Kailua because of the limited facilities on O'ahu for these opportunities. The opportunities it provides for my kids will deeply impact their futures. If that means swimming in college or just having the experiences that help shape them to be good representatives in our community as well as representing Hawai'i on the mainland. The facilities must stay safe and updated to allow on going opportunities for our youth and adults.

Thank you for allowing my voice to be heard

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Aubry Andersen	aubryandersen@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:04 AM

Testimony:

My child is in the Aulea swim club and he uses the VMAC swimming pool during large swim meets with other clubs from Oahu and neighbor islands. It is an important venue for children's swim clubs and needs the funding. The spectator seating and athlete seating is currently very limited for the many people who attend these events.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brian Hew	hewbrian@gmail.com	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:13 AM

Testimony:

Dear Members of the Budget Committee

I strongly support funding for renovations at VMAC. This facility means a great deal to my family and to many others in our community. My daughter uses the pool to practice diving, and it is the only public pool we know of on the island that offers this opportunity. Access to diving boards here is extremely limited, and without VMAC, athletes like her simply would not have a place to train.

Because of this, our kids are already at a disadvantage compared to athletes on the mainland or those with access to private facilities. They work just as hard and have just as much passion, but without consistent access to proper training space, it is incredibly difficult for them to stay competitive. VMAC helps bridge that gap, and it gives our children a chance.

We feel very fortunate to have been able to use this pool, but it is clear that it needs continued investment to remain a

safe and viable resource. This is more than just a facility, it is a place where kids grow, build confidence, and pursue goals that would otherwise be out of reach.

Please support this funding. It will make a meaningful and lasting impact on young athletes and families across our island.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Minhye Lee	bbjakelee@gmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:17 AM

Testimony:

I am in support of the renovations of the V-MAC pool. I feel that the community would greatly appreciate an update to the facility.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ken Williams	ken@koolina.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ko Olina Community Association, Inc.	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:26 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
R Johnson	rodd.h.johnson@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:31 AM

Testimony:

Having used the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) for the last 20 years (this month), usually 2–5 times each week. It would be a worthwhile endeavor to support this facility with proper funding.

I'm involved in the diving program and to see kids grow up into adults while diving, to see adults gain new skills and confidence and just to see the pure joy experienced by each diver provides a tremendously gratifying experience for everyone.

Please vote "yes" for Project #1998040 to be funded. Thank you for your kindness. R. Johnson, Waipio Gentry, Waipahu

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ethan Kim	ethankim07@icloud.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:32 AM

Testimony:

VMAC is an important pool for thousands of swimmers every year. I've competed there multiple times, and even though it is a great pool, there are definetly certain things that can be done to upgrade it to a higher level. This would benefit

thousands of competetive swimmers every year who are seeking to swim at the next level (college). The bathrooms and showers need improvmenets (some showers don't work). The blocks need to have wedges and should be replaced entirely. And the scoreboard could be improved because sometimes it glitches and is hard to read.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sweetie Nelson	sweetie.nelson@koolina.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Ko Olina Resort Operators Association, Inc.	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:33 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kaily Smitson	kailysmitson@gmail.com	96816-5239
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:38 AM

Testimony:

I am writing to formally express my support for the proposed funding to improve the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). This facility is a vital asset for our youth and the entire O‘ahu community.

As a parent, I have seen firsthand how swimming serves as a powerful vehicle for character development. My 11-year-old daughter, Isla, has spent several years competing at VMAC, and it was there that she achieved the milestone of winning a state championship in the backstroke. Beyond individual accolades, the time spent at this facility has taught her the value of discipline, resilience, and the camaraderie inherent in team sports. Swimming demands a unique level of dedication, and the lessons learned on the starting blocks translate directly into academic and personal success.

It is important to emphasize that VMAC is the only public facility on the island capable of hosting large-scale, high-caliber competitive meets. While some private institutions maintain their own aquatic spaces, VMAC is the essential equalizer that ensures the broader community and our public school athletes have access to a championship-level venue. Without it, our youth athletes would lack a proper venue to test their skills and pursue their swimming ambitions.

When the facility is well-maintained, it serves as a premier hub where athletes from every corner of the island gather, fostering a sense of community that extends far beyond the water. Providing adequate funding for VMAC is not just a matter of infrastructure; it is an investment in a unique environment that keeps our children active and engaged in a healthy, structured lifestyle. I urge you to support the necessary improvements to ensure this island resource remains a safe and functional space for the next generation of swimmers.

Thank you for your time.

Kaily Smitson

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Michelle Schwengel	aloha.art@gmail.com	96789

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:42 AM

Testimony:

Aloha kakahiaka,

I'm writing to submit testimony in support of Bill 23 (26).

The Central O'ahu Regional Park's Aquatics Complex has a pool bulkhead which has already exceeded its expected lifespan, and replacing it is critical. Just the bulkhead is $700k, and if it fails or gets stuck, repairs could be even more expensive and disruptive. Without a working bulkhead, we will lose swim meets, club practices, waterpolo games, kūpuna aquatic classes, etc....it's going to be bad! So many community members benefit from this resource. Please allocate appropriate funding to keep it in safe and working order.

Mahalo,

Michelle Schwengel

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Mai Kinimaka	mai.kinimaka@gmail.com	96701

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:06 AM

Testimony:

VMAC is a wonderful venue that hosts many swim meets. It has become an aquatic center that is dear to my heart as my son participates in swim meets at VMAC as often as 6 days a month. It has come to symbolize a place of courage, joy, hard work, and fitness for us. It is the best aquatic center on Oahu and it has provided countless swimmer and families with a safe, spacious, comfortable location for swim meets. Please help to fund the maintenance of VMAC so swimmers on Oahu can continue their swimming journey in a safe and lovely environment.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Thomas Wang	aquasenses@gmail.com	96818

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:08 AM

Testimony:

I would like to express my support for the continued funding of the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. This center provides exceptional swimming facilities to our local community. I have three children who have utilized the center for swimming meets and water polo sports. I urge you to maintain this center's funding to ensure that we have a high-quality facility for water sports events. Thank you for your consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dean Otaka	deankazuyoshi@gmail.com	96782

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:12 AM

Testimony:

My name is Dean Otaka. I've been a coach for 2 different swim teams and an official for nearly 10 years. My experience as both a coach and an official with the Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center has been extensive. I've enjoyed the facility over the years in the capacity of swim meets and practices, but I've also seen the deterioration of the equipment, bulkhead, starting blocks, and the spectator stands. The sport of swimming had provided my 2 children, Landen and Landri, great opportunities as my son is swimming at the Collegiate level and my daughter may soon do the same. I'm grateful for that and I put a lot of my time officiating many swim meets now (and I plan to do so more in the future). As my position as an official has grown, I've done many swim meets on the neighbor islands, and it's frankly embarrassing to see VMAC facilities deteriorate compared to the more updated, state of the art facilities we experience in Kona (on the Big Island) and Kihei (on Maui). It's my wish that this bill will address the shortcomings of the VMAC facility to represent Oahu well. As a Meet Referee in charge of many meets, I've had to contend with broken starter blocks, issues with failing spectator stands, and there is the possibility that the bulkhead equipment may fail any day now (it has exceeded it's normal wear and tear lifespan). At the end of the day, this facility has been responsible for provided MANY athletes and coaches great experiences in the sports of swimming, diving and waterpolo. It is my wish that this facility get the upgrades necessary to provide those same opportunities to the new generation of athletes.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Cole Nakamura	cole.nakamura@gmail.com	96788
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:20 AM

Testimony:

Aloha, my name is Cole Nakamura.

VMAC is not just a facility. It is a memorial and an important place where our community comes together and grows stronger. I am here in strong support of Bill 023(26) because the aging infrastructure is starting to limit what VMAC can offer, and our community deserves better.

As a swimmer, I have been fortunate to see some of the best facilities in the country, and I genuinely believe VMAC has that same potential. With the right upgrades, it could raise the level of competition here in Hawai‘i and open up more opportunities for local athletes to train, compete, and succeed at higher levels.

Right now, critical parts of the facility like the bulkhead need urgent replacement. It has already exceeded its expected lifespan, and waiting will only make the problem more expensive and more difficult to fix. Investing in VMAC now is not just maintenance—it is a smart decision that saves money long term and strengthens our community.

This is also about the next generation. There are kids in our community who have not had the same access or

opportunities yet, and improving VMAC means giving them a place to grow, compete, and discover what they are capable of.

Mahalo,
Cole

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Emily Reynolds	emmr127@gmail.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:29 AM

Testimony:
I use VMAC as a local Oahu resident and swimmer and am so thankful for the city and county services. This funding is really critical for the bulkhead and other operations of the pool - and it would be a terrible shame for it to fail and have the pool unusable. We love using these resources and it is one of the things that makes Hawaii so special and friendly for all users.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sarita Rich	sarita.rich@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:35 AM

Testimony:
Aloha,
I support BILL023(26), CD1, specifically the funding of the improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC) at the Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park. This facility is important to my family because my keiki are members of the Lokahi Waterpolo Club. Our team does not have a dedicated pool space to practice in, and every year, VMAC generously supports our team by hosting the Makahiki waterpolo tournament in November and allows us to use their space for scrimmage games in the months leading up to the U.S. Waterpolo Junior Olympics, the biggest youth waterpolo tournament, held in Orange County, CA in July. This space has been integral for our team development and has allowed us to represent Hawaii proudly at the national tournaments. Thank you for considering what the park improvements will mean to our keiki and families who work hard every day to build competitive teams that are proud to represent Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Sarita Rich
Honolulu resident

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jeff Wong	jeffwhawaii@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:35 AM

Testimony:

Dear Chair and members of the council,

I am writing today in strong support of the proposed funding for improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). It is by far the best public swimming pool facility in the islands, but it is in dire need of maintenance and upgrades. My child is an 8th grader, and he competes regularly at swim meets there, as well as water polo camps and tournaments. In addition, I am a swimmer who enjoys using the facility for open swim. There aren't any other public pools that can give the level of competition for these type of events.

The funds are critical to ensure safety for our keiki and adults. Please support this budget request to preserve this essential community asset. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeff Wong, M.D.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Theresa Candelaria	tsa.candelaria@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:39 AM

Testimony:

Aloha,

Thank you for considering this. As you may already know, almost half of Hawaiis residents cannot swim.
Pools offer a safe way to learn and a place to go during the jellyfish days.

Plus, with all the taxes we pay, swimming is the one service a city can give that has health benefits such as better heart rate, mental health gains, and safety in the water.

Thank you so much for reading. I assure you that each dollar invested in parks and recreation brings the best returns.

Mahalo

Theresa andelaria

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Michelle Simmons	michelle.simmons08@yahoo.com	96744
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**

Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:40 AM

Testimony:
VMAC is an essential facility for swimmers around the state. There are so few facilities in the state that are able to accommodate big swim meets (including diving). I am a swim coach for Kalaheo High School as well as Kamehameha Swim Club, and can't even imagine the challenges we would face if this funding is not approved. When I am working with young swimmers, they are learning lessons about discipline and overcoming challenges that they can then apply to every other aspect of their lives. It is essential that we provide them with top notch facilities to keep them on this path.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Hanna Nakamura	yemimihp@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:04 PM

Testimony:
I am writing in strong support of Bill 23(26) for funds to improve the Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center at Patsy Mink Regional Park.

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 close to 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 one of the only facilities on O'ahu that can accommodate athletes of all ages and skill levels at this scale, making it an essential hub for both training and competition.

This is why I believe so strongly that investment in VMAC is not just about repairs—it is about infrastructure renewal that directly strengthens our community. When we invest in facilities like this, we are investing in youth development, water safety, athletic opportunity, and long-term community health. We have seen across Hawai'i that strategic reinvestment in aquatic infrastructure can transform a facility into a true community asset that serves keiki, families, and future elite athletes alike.

However, I have also seen VMAC reach a state of significant wear. When compared to modern facilities on the mainland, it is clear that meaningful reinvestment is needed to keep it viable and competitive. While this funding will not address every need, it is a critical first step in stabilizing and restoring the facility.

The most urgent requirement is replacing the aging bulkhead, which has far exceeded its serviceable lifespan. Based on our foundation's research and recent industry quotes, the $1,000,000 appropriation is essential not only for the equipment itself, but also for the significant logistical costs of shipping, crane services, and specialized installation

required here in Hawai'i. Without this replacement, we risk losing the ability to safely host the very competitions that define VMAC's role in our community.

This is exactly the kind of infrastructure investment that has long-term returns. Strong aquatic facilities elevate entire communities—supporting local swim programs, improving access to safe water spaces, and even helping attract elite-level competition that raises the standard for all athletes in Hawai'i.

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

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kūhiō Lewis	kuhio@hawaiiancouncil.org	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaiian Council	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:07 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christina Henline	sundotflags@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:18 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

My name is Christina Kamaka O Kalani Henline and I am in support of the funding needed to help support the veterans memorial aquatic center. I have been lucky enough to learn swimming skills through the UH Mānoa coaches that have helped me in my open ocean and pool training. Swimming is essential to a happy life here in Hawaii, and keeping our pools safe, open and functioning to their best capacity is very important for our island and our community. As I live nearby in Palisades, I hope to use the VMAC in the near future and hope that this bill passes to help keep the pool open, not only for myself but for our entire O'ahu and Hawai'i pae 'āina community.

Mahalo nui for reading my testimony!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ashley Ahn	ashley.ahn10@gmail.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:36 PM

Testimony:

My name is Ashley, and I am submitting this testimony in strong support of sustained funding for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Complex (VMAC) in Waipi'o. As a former competitive swimmer, a current open water swimmer, and a swim coach here on O'ahu, I have a deep and personal connection to this facility, and I believe its continued investment is essential to the health, safety, and vitality of our community.

My relationship with VMAC spans multiple roles, but they all come back to one thing: it is a great place to swim.

As an open water swim coach, we rely on public pool access when ocean conditions are unsafe. I regularly refer my athletes to VMAC to train independently on off days, participate in classes during the off-season, and use open lap swim when the water is not suitable.

VMAC is a cornerstone of not only the O'ahu swimming community, but also the state through age group championships. It is also a preferred facility, centrally located, well-known, and historically a reliable aquatic resource for our community. On a personal note, I have watched meets from the stands, competed in its lanes, and referred countless individuals and families there in search of a safe, clean aquatic facility. It has long served as a hub for age group competitions, Masters-level meets, and open lap swimming, drawing participants and families from across the island and state for decades.

On a broader scale: as an island state, water safety should not be optional. Clean, well-maintained public pools like VMAC are the foundation of water-safe communities. They are where keiki learn to swim, where lifesaving courses are taught, where athletes train, and where community members of all ages access affordable, low-impact exercise. When a facility like VMAC is underfunded, the ripple effect is broad and lasting: fewer children learn to swim, youth programs lose a safe training environment, athletes lose competitive opportunities, and the entire aquatics ecosystem weakens. A well-funded VMAC lifts all of that, and more.

VMAC is also part of the great swimming cycle we have here in Hawai'i. A child learns to swim there, joins an age group team, transitions to Masters, and along the way discovers the ocean. An adult picks up swimming later in life, becomes a regular at open swim, finds community, and invests in something larger than themselves. The ripple effect takes many forms, but all of them depend on the pool being there and being well maintained.

That is why the condition of VMAC's infrastructure cannot be overlooked. The bulkhead has exceeded its life expectancy, and without replacement, the entire facility risks being taken out of commission. That would not just close a pool, it would sever every one of those connections: the swim lessons, the age group teams, the Masters programs, the open water athletes, the community members who show up week after week. The cost of inaction far exceeds the cost of investment.

This pool is not just a pool. It's a place that provides lifelong skills, competitive opportunities, community, and belonging. VMAC has served generations of swimmers, divers, water polo players, coaches, and families and, with proper funding, it can serve many more generations to come.

I respectfully urge the Honolulu City Council to prioritize funding for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Complex. This is not an investment in a building, it is an investment in the safety, health, and future of our community.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Marcy Fleming	marcyfleming@earthlink.net	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:42 PM

Testimony:

I am writing in support of funding $1 million for VMAC.

As a volunteer high school water polo coach for the Kalaheo Mustangs, I have coached many games over several seasons and seen how the VMAC pool benefits the community.

I am writing to strongly support funding of $1 million for the VMAC pool with priority given to repairs to the bulkhead. This is an essential feature of the pool that allows it to be configured for multiple purposes. As a coach on deck I have seen how heavily this facility is used and how dependent programs are on the bulkhead functioning safely and reliably . the loss of VMAC - even temporarily -would have a profound negative impact on athletes, families and the broader community. preventative investment now is prudent, It is far less costly than emergency replacement or prolonged closure later.

The initial funding is especially critical, addressing the bulkhead first stabilizes the facility and protects all of the programming, just as importantly, visible community and legislative support at this stage will position. VMAC for future funding to tackle additional long serving needs.

VMAC is more than a pool, it is a training ground a competition venue and a community hub for many young athletes where they first learned discipline, teamwork and confidence. Continued safe operation of this facility depends on making the right infrastructure investments now.

I respectfully urge you to support the $1 million funding requested for VMA beginning with bulkhead replacement to ensure uninterrupted operations, protect public investment and signal long-term commitment to a sports and community wellness

Mahalo for your time consideration and support.

Aloha , Marcy E Fleming

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Heide Weber	hweber.pcnb@yahoo.com	96782

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:43 PM

Testimony:

Regarding:

Project #1998040

Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park

Design and construct sustainable and resilient park improvements

*****

Our City and County of Honolulu parks are in desperate need of funding. The 269-acre Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park (CORP) is a recreational gem; however, without the needed funding for maintenance, repairs and improvements, the facilities at this park will deteriorate and fail causing significantly higher costs for larger repairs and replacements.

There are many areas at CORP that need funding for upgrades, repairs and improvements to make the park more sustainable and resilient. As we experience more severe weather systems, we must consider how to adapt our infrastructure and green spaces to handle those changes. As global supply interruptions impact our energy supply, we must build for the future using the abundant resources available in Hawaii, specifically harnessing the sun for photovoltaic energy production.

The Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park will officially be 25 years old on July 21, 2026. Let's celebrate the legacy of Patsy T. Mink and the future of recreation in Central Oahu by funding park improvements.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Andrea Fitzgerald	andreafitty22@gmail.com	96734-3860
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:46 PM

Testimony:

Aloha! I wanted to share my high support. VMAC is where I spend many hours officiating swim meets and where I have watched my kids compete in competitive swimming for the last 10 years, with 4 more years to come. The size and set up is perfect for so many clubs and swimmers to participate and encourage/support the joy and learning that come from team sports! My family and I are at VMAC at least once a month, if not more. Many family and team memories.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jerelyn Watanabe	jerelyntw@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 12:58 PM

Testimony:

I am writing in support of funding capital improvements for VMAC.

VMAC has been an important place for my family for many years. We spent many weekends at swim meets along with many other swimmers and their families. Those days were a time to connect with others through a lifelong sport that encourages health and builds community.

In later years my children participated in Olympic Development Program trainings for water polo. These experiences led to opportunities to play at college and now they share their experiences with younger athletes through coaching. VMAC has also provided me with opportunities to learn to swim and play water polo as an older adult.

It is vital to maintain VMAC as the premier aquatic center for the island through timely capital improvements. VMAC has positively impacted our family and will certainly impact many others if properly maintained.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christine Olson	christineolson05@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 01:13 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I'm writing to support funding for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

As someone who swims regularly and coaches locally at the University of Hawaii, I've seen how important this facility is. It's one of the few places that can support both learn-to-swim programs and high-level training, and it plays a big role for local clubs, athletes, and persons of all ages.

Even for those who don't use it often, its impact goes beyond the pool. It supports water safety, fitness, and the broader ocean sports community.

I hope you'll prioritize funding to maintain and improve VMAC for the people who rely on it.

Mahalo,

Christine Olson

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Piper Weber	piper.e.weber@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 01:29 PM

Testimony:

Project # 1998040

Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park - K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC)

Plan, design, construct, inspect and provide related equipment for sustainable and resilient park improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center, including but not limited to, the installation of new spectator seating and the replacement of existing bulkheads, starter blocks and scoreboard.

*****

Aloha! I am a student diver who has been diving for over 7 years with the VMAC Diving Program, and I believe that some of the money should go to replacing our old diving boards. In the last diving season, I found one of the nuts from the board that had rusted and fallen off, creating a health hazard for the divers. In the summertime, many children, ages 3-16, along with adults and elder men and women come out to take part in this diving program, and if the boards are becoming too old to use, it poses a threat to all of us. I also happen to know that the Mililani High School Diving Team uses that end of the pool for their training in-season. Springboard Diving competitions are also held there. At the most recent competition that I took part in, there were teams from the Big Island of Hawai'i and Maui, and I overheard a conversation with one of our coaches. A diver from Maui was telling him how there are no 3-Meter boards on the island of Maui, and that they could not train with the 3-Meter until the day of the competition. If we replace the boards, then it will show the other island divers that we care about our facilities, and provide them with an all-around good experience.
Mahalo for taking this into consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Naomi Takai	grandmatakai@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 01:33 PM

Testimony:
As a swimming family we have had the opportunity to use the K Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (KMTVMAC) for local swim meets which hosted outer island swim teams as well as teams from the mainland and Guam.

I am here to express my support for the $1 million allocation dedicated to the renovation and improvement of the KMTVMAC facility.

This facility is an asset to our community but it needs your approval for the funding to upgrade to meet health, safety and competition standards not only as a local venue for competition but for national and international as well.

We have an Olympian currently preparing for the next Olympic Games who chooses to train at this facility. This speaks loudly due to the geographic location of our state, yet the facility itself needs to accommodate these athletes in key areas for improvements. A few of these areas that need to be addressed are:
(1) Health and safety standards - comprehensive renovation of restrooms and locker room facilities
(2) Competition equipment - replacement of outdated starting blocks and bulkheads to name a few
(3) Spectators, athletes and vendor areas - for athletes, families and friends viewing areas and concession stands

To accommodate large aquatic events parking should also be considered. The large unpaved area adjacent to the facility could be a consideration to address this need.

An investment in the improvement of the KMTVMAC facility
is an investment in Hawaii's economy. By upgrading the facility we will be able to sponsor events that will bring needed revenue to our Hawai'i nei.

My husband and I frequently use this facility for lap swimming and we see both the current value and the much needed improvements.

To the members of this body, if you have not visited or used the facility, I invite you to do so. Seeing the current state of the infrastructure makes the need for this $1 million investment undeniable.

Please approve this proposal to ensure that KMTVMAC can serve our local community, national and international sporting world for years to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my mana'o.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Emily Cardone-Dennis	emilycardonedennis@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 02:04 PM

Testimony:
Aloha,

My name is Emily Cardone-Dennis, and I am writing to express my strong support for the funding for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

VMAC is one of Honolulu's most important public recreational and athletic facilities. It serves a wide and diverse population, including youth swim teams, masters swimmers, open-water athletes in training, seniors maintaining mobility and health, and community members who rely on affordable access to aquatic exercise. For many residents, VMAC is not simply a pool, it is a critical public health resource and a gathering place that strengthens community connection.

As someone who actively trains in Honolulu's aquatic community, I have seen firsthand how essential consistent access to a high-quality pool facility is for both competitive athletes and everyday residents. Public pools like VMAC provide safe, structured environments for physical activity that are accessible regardless of income level. In a city where ocean conditions are not always safe or predictable, facilities like VMAC are indispensable.

Honolulu is internationally recognized for its ocean and endurance sports culture. Maintaining strong public aquatic infrastructure supports that identity while also encouraging lifelong fitness habits among residents of all ages. Investments in VMAC benefit keiki learning water safety, adults managing their health through low-impact exercise, and older residents maintaining independence through movement.

Funding will help preserve the facility's safety, usability, and accessibility for current and future generations. Supporting VMAC is an investment in public health, youth development, athletic opportunity, and community wellbeing across Honolulu.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your continued commitment to maintaining vital public recreation resources for our community.

Respectfully,
Emily Cardone-Dennis
Honolulu, Hawaii

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jaime Ubongen	tjubongen@aol.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 02:18 PM

Testimony:
Aloha Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

My name is Jaime Ubongen, and I am writing in strong support of Bill 23(26), which includes funding for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

VMAC is more than just a pool—it is a vital hub for our community. It serves swimmers, triathletes, water polo athletes, keiki, kūpuna, and families across Oʻahu. As someone deeply involved in the endurance and swimming community, I have seen firsthand how important this facility is for training, competition, and overall health and wellness.

This proposed $1 million funding is a critical first step. The condition of key infrastructure—especially the bulkhead—is a serious concern. If the bulkhead fails, it could shut down the entire facility. That would mean no swim meets, no team practices, no community programs, and a major loss for thousands who rely on VMAC.

Investing in VMAC is investing in public health, youth development, and community connection. It supports safe spaces for our keiki, active lifestyles for our residents, and opportunities for athletes to grow and compete.

I respectfully urge you to support and prioritize this funding. The community has shown up because this matters, and we

are asking you to stand with us to ensure VMAC remains a strong and functioning facility for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jaime Ubongen

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Akira Kanamaru	kanamaruakira@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 02:38 PM

Testimony:

As a long time member of the Hawaii swimming community, I cannot overstate how essential VMAC is to the sport. It is the primary pool for swim meets - not only for local meets, but for the entire state. There is no other pool on the island that can be used in the capacity VMAC can. It has a full Olympic-sized pool, diving boards, a diving/warm-up pool, and ample space for swimmers, families, and spectators. It is also public - so while there may be other decent pools on island, this is the best pool for wide spread competitive swimming use.

Having swam in other states in the US, as well as in other countries, I can say that while VMAC is Hawaii's best pool, the facilities are still lagging behind national and international standards. This new funding is essential in bringing VMAC up to those standards and can help to promote the sport by allowing Hawaii to facilitate larger competitions.

Swimming is an amazing sport that promotes comradery, hardwork, water safety, and discipline to Hawaii's youth. It is also a sport that heavily relies on government/institutional support for it's existence and unfortunately, Hawaii's government officials have been doing little to support this community. Stricter pool reservation guidelines, lower funding for maintenance, understaffed lifeguard workforces, etc. Approving this budget increase would be a great first step in showing the people of Hawaii that the government supports this community and the development of youth sports.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Elizabeth Minor	elizabethaminor@yahoo.com	96819
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 02:43 PM

Testimony:

Please support upgrades to the VMAC pool on Oahu. My children use the pool at least 3 days per week as part of competitive swim team. The pool, and swim team, are important to our family and a central part of our community engagement. Thank you for your support of community facilities including VMAC.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christine Keogh	keolla12@gmail.com	96734

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 03:00 PM

Testimony:

Subject: Support for Funding Improvements at Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC)

Dear Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

I am writing in strong support of funding improvements for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

As a parent of a competitive swimmer, this facility means so much to our family. VMAC is not just a pool—it is the heart of competitive swimming on O'ahu. It is the largest pool on the island and one of the only venues capable of hosting major meets. Swimmers travel from neighbor islands to compete here, making it a gathering place for the entire Hawai'i swimming community.

We spend countless hours at VMAC throughout the year, and it has become a place filled with memories—early mornings, long meet days, cheering from the stands, and watching our daughter grow in confidence, resilience, and dedication. These are moments that stay with families forever.

VMAC provides more than just a place to train and compete. It gives young athletes a safe, positive environment where they learn discipline, teamwork, and perseverance. It brings together families and communities from across the islands in a way that very few places can.

At the same time, it's clear that this important facility needs investment. While $1 million won't solve everything, it represents a meaningful first step and a strong signal that our community and our keiki matter.

Please support funding for VMAC improvements so it can continue to serve current and future generations of athletes across Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christine Keogh

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Erin Keogh	nugsbear@gmail.com	96734

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 03:03 PM

Testimony:

Subject: Support for Funding Improvements at Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC)

Dear Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

My name is Erin, and I am a 9th grade student and competitive swimmer. I am writing to support funding improvements for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

I have been swimming at VMAC since I was in 3rd grade. Over the years, it has become like a second home to me. I've spent so many early mornings and long weekends there competing, and it's where I've grown not just as a swimmer, but as a person.

VMAC is a really important place for swimmers across Hawai'i. It's the largest pool on the island, and it hosts big meets where swimmers come from other islands to compete. It's exciting and inspiring to race against people from all over the state, and it brings our whole swimming community together.

Swimming is a very popular sport in Hawai'i, and VMAC is a big part of why. But the facility needs improvements to keep up with how much it's used and how important it is to so many athletes.

I hope you will support funding for VMAC so it can continue to be a place where swimmers like me can train, compete, and make memories for years to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Erin

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Bobby Ky	morningmanamatcha@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 03:04 PM

Testimony:
I strongly support providing funding for the Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC) to complete the renovations to its pool and surrounding facilities. This center has been more than just a place to swim—it has been a cornerstone of our community for generations.

Growing up in Hawaii, VMAC was a central part of our childhood. Many of us spent countless hours there, whether it was for daily practices, weekend recreation, or the excitement of major swim meets. It wasn't just about competition—it was where friendships were formed, discipline was learned, and a love for the water was nurtured. The energy during those

big swim meets was something special, bringing together families, teams, and the broader community in a shared experience that left lasting memories.

Over the years, however, the facility has aged, and the need for improvements has become increasingly clear. Renovating VMAC is not simply about maintaining a pool—it's about preserving a legacy and ensuring that future generations of keiki have access to the same opportunities we were fortunate to have. Safe, modern, and well-maintained facilities are essential for supporting youth programs, competitive swimming, and community wellness.

Investing in VMAC is an investment in our community's health, our youth, and our shared history. I wholeheartedly encourage support for this funding so that the center can continue to serve as a vibrant hub for recreation, competition, and connection for years to come.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ryan Keogh	ryankeogh00@yahoo.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 03:05 PM

Testimony:

Subject: Support for Funding Improvements at Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC)

Dear Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

I am writing in support of funding improvements for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

As a father of a competitive swimmer, I've spent a significant amount of time at this facility over the years. VMAC is the primary venue on O'ahu capable of hosting large swim meets, including events that bring in athletes from across the state. It plays a critical role in supporting a sport that is widely participated in throughout Hawai'i.

From a practical standpoint, there is no comparable facility on the island that can accommodate the size and scope of these competitions. That makes VMAC an essential piece of infrastructure—not just for local teams, but for statewide events that require a pool of this capacity.

The level of use is high, and the need for investment is clear. Continued wear and tear on a facility of this importance, without corresponding upgrades, will eventually limit its ability to serve the community effectively.

The proposed funding is a reasonable and necessary step. While it won't address every issue, it signals that the City recognizes the value of this facility and the role it plays for athletes, families, and the broader community.

I encourage you to support funding for VMAC improvements and help ensure it remains a viable, functional venue for

years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ryan Keogh

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Christopher Bond	cbond_kauai@hotmail.com	96814
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 03:24 PM

Testimony:

To whom it may concern:

My name is Christopher Bond, and I reside at 814 Laula Way, which is just a street away from the Sheridan Community Park on Piikoi. My wife Emily and I, along with our three children, moved into this neighborhood back in May of 2025. When deciding on a new place to live, being within close proximity to a park with a playground was something we heavily valued. Our two youngest children, Oliver and Milo, are six and nine years old, and it is sometimes challenging for them to fully utilize the basketball courts at the park, but they fell in love with the playground. We made the trip across the street multiple times a week, and the time they got to spend playing with other children from the neighborhood was invaluable, and I believe helped to strengthen our local community.

Unfortunately, that playground was taken from the community, and for the past 10+ months, we have been forced to leave our neighborhood when trying to get outdoor time as a family. We are blessed to have the beach and the mountains so close, but sometimes those aren't easily available options during hectic work and school schedules. Having a local community playground again would be a true blessing to not only ourselves, but to all the children in this area.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Christopher Bond

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Russell Iwamura	russiwamura@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 04:14 PM

Testimony:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in favor of the amendment to the budget adding $1,000,000 for the

purpose of improving the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC). I am both a parent and a USA Swimming certified official. As a parent, making sure my son is a strong swimmer was a priority. Living on an island it is only a matter of time before he ends up at the beach and I wanted to make sure he was comfortable in the water. That priority led to my son getting involved in competitive swimming. I became an official to support his athletic pursuit. Many of his meets over the years have been at the VMAC. During those meets, my son has learned so many important life lessons like the benefits of determination, sacrifice, and hard work. As an official, I have seen numerous other swimmers learn similar lessons through competition at the VMAC. This valuable facility is now in need of improvement. Frequent meets and being exposed to the elements day in and day out have taken their toll on the pool and support equipment. It is still possible to have events there, but short-term fixes are needed increasingly. This is the perfect time to improve the facility using the $1,000,000 in the amendment before the fixes become even more expensive. Making these funds available will go a long way to making sure this excellent facility is available for future generations of swimmers to enjoy competitive swimming and learning the essential life lessons that come with that competition. Thank you.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Boyd Ready	readyboyd@gmail.com	96712
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Haleiwa Waialua Historical Society	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 04:33 PM

Testimony:

The Waialua Hongwanji is a crucial, threatened part of Waialua and deserves adaptive reuse.

Boyd Ready

Local Historian

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jessica Cheng	jessicacheng06@yahoo.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 04:56 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

I am writing to express strong support of Bill 23(26) for funding improvements to the pool at Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC), a vital facility that serves our community in countless ways.

VMAC is more than just a pool—it is a hub for youth athletics, community events, and public health. As a parent and active member of the local swim community, I have seen firsthand how heavily this facility is relied upon for swim meets, training, and gatherings that bring families together from across the island. Our family has been swimming at VMAC for over 4 years and it is the main facility that hosts swim meets on the island, without it the options to the Oahu Swim League and Hawaiian Swimming communities are drastically limited.

However, the facility is in urgent need of repairs and upgrades to remain safe and functional. One of the most critical needs is the replacement of the bulkhead, which is currently failing. This is essential not only for competition use, but for ensuring the safety of all swimmers. In addition, improvements to spectator seating, starting blocks, locker rooms, and

restrooms are long overdue. We have travelled to the outer islands for meets and one of the things that we have noticed is that in Kona and Kihei the bleachers are covered, greatly reducing the need for travelling teams to bring tents. Having the bleachers at VMAC covered would be such a huge help and keep spectators and swimmers out the sun during long days of competition. In addition, there have been issues with the bathroom plumbing backing up and being rendered unusable. These are basic amenities that directly impact the experience of athletes, coaches, officials, and families who spend long hours at the facility.

Sincerely,

Jessica Cheng

Swim parent/member of the Rainbow Aquatics Swim Board

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nadine (Takai) Day	nadine.day.usms@gmail.com	61858
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 05:01 PM

Testimony:

SWIMMING SAVES LIVES!!!!!!!!

AQUATICS FOR ALL

My name is Nadine Day, formerly Nadine Takai.

I have been part of Aquatics for 50 years.

I am in support of Bill 23 (26), regarding the Plan, design, construction, inspect and improvements of the K Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. (VMAC). VMAC was 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. Many things at the facility doesn't work properly. The bulkhead which serves as a partition needs replaced and upgraded to meet the current requirements.

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 water. (Hawaii is surrounded by water)

Mahalo for your time and continue service to the community.

Nadine (Takai) Day

Name:	Email:	Zip:
John Starmer	john@johnstarmer.com	96753
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 05:19 PM

Testimony:

Aloha-

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,00 for the refurbishment of the K Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). I have been visiting this facility for over 6 years for USA Swimming state and junior championships, both the long-course (50 m pool) and short-course (25 m pool) seasons. That has been four trips to VMAC in some years. I understand that the bulkhead, which allows the pool to be sized to the competition pool length needs, has reached the end of its life. Its failure would mean the closure of the pool and loss of this resource to the local community as well as all the teams that visit this facility for the USA swimming events. This would mean no swim meets, no club practices, no water polo games, no kūpuna aerobic classes. I understand that replacing this major piece of equipment would run close to $700,000 before factoring in labor.

While total closure of the pool is the extreme case, I would add that the facility, while spacious, is not well-suited for larger swimming events. During championship meets, spectator seating is also lacking. None of the area have sun protection, which means that teams have to source temporary canopies. Some teams are relegated to the grassy area across from the bleachers, which is pleasant when dry, but turns into a mud bog when it rains, which often happens overnight.

Funding could further support updating diving blocks and updating the aging scoreboard.

I would add that this facility has hosted international events, and the shortcomings at the VMAC reflect not just the City and County of Honolulu Parks and Recreation's attention to this facility, but also reflect poorly on the State as a whole.

Please consider providing the full amount requested to maintain the VMAC and, hopefully, provide a slight upgrade.

Mahalo nui-

John Starmer,

Parent of two swimmers and USA Swimming referee

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Debra Tang	tangdebra@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 05:34 PM

Testimony:

Dear Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the Budget Committee,

My name is Debbie Tang, and I am a resident of Pearl City. I am writing in support of the proposed funding for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). I swim for my physical and mental health and really appreciate having such a first-rate pool nearby in Central Oahu. I enjoy taking the instructive stroke refinement City and County swimming class there and also use the pool for lap swimming. The large size can accommodate many people, which is particularly useful, and I know it is an indispensable facility for many schools and organizations. In the mornings, I find it so heartening to see many kūpuna gathering there to stay fit and connect with each other. This is one of the best if not the best public pool in the state. It provides a quality space for multiple uses and is well worth the funding to keep it maintained and safe considering the long-term benefits.

Mahalo,

Debra Tang

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kelli Nishikawa	tignpu@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 05:46 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

Veterans' Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) has been a vital place for our family for the past 10 years. Our family considers this place our second home, as we are there for club swim practices on weekdays, and meets on weekends. I, who am not a swimmer, found myself swimming there during Covid when the facility was practicing social distancing, just so I could get my children practicing while team sports were shut down.

This is a place that has made our family many friends and helped my children continue the sport of swimming past their high school years, be it swimming in college or by coaching during their vacation from school.

Over the last 10 years, we have seen the deterioration of the facility. The bathrooms are broken down, the bulkhead causes fiberglass splinters, the diving blocks have caused swimmers injury, and the tiles in the pool have cut swimmers. When colleges hold their training trips at VMAC and when Jr PanPacs were held at VMAC, I find it embarrassing that such events are held at the facility because of the state that it is in.

VMAC is supposed to be a "top of the line facility" but I can tell you, it is not.

Please provide funding for this facility so we can bring this back to the facility is should be.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nohea Lileikis	nlileikis@punahou.edu	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 06:39 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Marci Reeves	President@hickamhurricanes.com	96818
Representing: Hickam Hurricanes Swim Club	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 30, 2026 @ 06:57 PM

Testimony:

This competition level facility is necessary to support these young athletes. If repair, maintenance or improvements are being considered please know they are of vital importance to keep this pool running safely and effectively for our youth and overall community. I am aware of too many drained pools over the years, that we really need to keep facilities like VMAC working top tier, since we really don't have other options for our swimmers. When attending swim meets, I've experienced restroom issues. Following this especially wet winter, drainage (and mud) were a big issue, which is compounded because there is a shortage of seating for families (that are not allowed on the pool deck). I've seen weathering/wear and tear of equipment such as the starting blocks, and bulkhead, that is key to making this pool work for both Long and Short course events. Any or all of these issues need attention. Thank you for your consideration and time.

Name: Agnes Loi	Email: ahploi@gmail.com	Zip: 96816
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:00 PM

Testimony:

I am writing in strong support of allocating $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

A significant portion of this funding is critical for the bulkhead, which alone costs approximately $700,000—excluding labor, which could add several hundred thousand dollars more. This component is essential to the facility's operation. If the bulkhead were to fail or become inoperable, the entire aquatic center would be forced to shut down.

Such a disruption would halt all activities, including swim meets, club practices, water polo games, and kūpuna aquatic fitness classes. In short, the loss of functionality would impact the entire community that relies on this facility.

Name: Dave Gibson	Email: dave.swim.gibson@gmail.com	Zip: 96745
Representing: Kona Aquatics Club, Inc.	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:03 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

Over the past five years on the Big Island, we have completed nearly $500,000 in improvements at the Kona Community Aquatic Center. The impact has been transformative—for both the community and the swim teams that rely on the facility. Many elements of the pool had far exceeded their expected lifespan and were barely functional. Today, thanks to these upgrades, the facility stands as one of the premier aquatic centers in the state of Hawaii.

The VMAC facility has tremendous potential, but years of continuous use without major upgrades have taken a visible toll. Hawaii's environment is especially demanding on outdoor infrastructure, and aquatic facilities are no exception. Since VMAC was built, pool technology and design have advanced significantly, raising the standard for safety, efficiency, and user experience.

To keep pace and properly serve the athletes and community members who depend on it, VMAC requires ongoing investment. As one of the most heavily utilized swim facilities in the state, it has experienced steady wear and tear year after year.

We respectfully request funding to repair, modernize, and revitalize VMAC. With the right investment, this facility can once again meet today's standards and continue to serve as a cornerstone for Hawaii's aquatic community.

Mahalo,

Dave Gibson
Head Coach and President of Kona Aquatics Club, Inc.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Justin Schiltz	schiltz5477@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:06 PM

Testimony:
I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kai Jo	jinoh0304@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:11 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kevin Nakamura	kevinnak@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:19 PM

Testimony:
Aloha Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

I am writing in strong support of funding for improvements at the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

I work with a student-athlete founded nonprofit dedicated to revitalizing VMAC, and through that work I've seen how much this facility means to our community. Every day, it brings together young athletes, families, and teams from across O'ahu—many of whom rely on this pool as their primary place to train, grow, and belong.

As a veteran, the name of this facility carries real weight. It represents service, sacrifice, and a commitment to something larger than ourselves. Maintaining a facility that reflects those values—and that honors Congressman Takai's legacy—is deeply important to me and to many others.

At the same time, VMAC is showing its age. Key infrastructure like the bulkhead has exceeded its intended lifespan, and aging equipment like the starting blocks impacts both safety and daily operations. These aren't cosmetic upgrades—they are necessary investments to keep the facility safe, functional, and able to serve our entire community.

Mahalo to Councilmember Weyer for his support of this funding.

VMAC has given so much to our community over the years. This is an opportunity for us to take care of it in return.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support and preserve this funding.

Thank you for your consideration!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Erik Takai	grandmatakai@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:25 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Frank Tauanuu	tauanuufrank@yahoo.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:29 PM

Testimony:

VMAC is my kids 2nd home. This facility has given them a life long skill that they will pass onto their families!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Katherine Mobley	kmobley808@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:31 PM

Testimony:

Dear Budget Committee,

I am writing in support for the funding of Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). This is the primary pool on Oahu

where swim meets are held, including the State Swim Meets where swimmers from all islands come 1-2 times a year. My daughter started swimming at age 8 and finished when she went to college. I spent at least 2 weekends a month at this pool for 10 years. It is a great facility for the swimmers, teams and parents and everyone does a great job maintaining an excellent facility. From the little kids to high school and even the UH swimmers, this is the only Olympic style pool, outside of UH, for swim meets and acquiring competitive times to qualify for Regional Meets on the continent.

Thank you,

Katey Mobley

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Wesley Kawakami	wesley.y.kawakami@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:37 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sharon Wong	sharon.w.2398@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:39 PM

Testimony:

The Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center is a staple venue for Hawaii swimming. It is the home of countless swim practices, meets, and championships for both high school and club swimming. Not only does it serve as a home base for swimming, but it also serves a huge purpose for both the sport of diving and water polo. In addition, it can also serve as a recreational space for the community. As a former swimmer, this facility has remained a core component of many of my fond memories. I am writing this testimony to advocate for continued funding towards this facilities, renovations, and any further improvements that will ensure that this space will continue to remain a safe and compliant facility for all those who use it. Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration in maintaining such a staple venue that symbolizes a sense of community for our local families!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Emi Tauanuu	tauanuudawn@yahoo.com	96701
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:42 PM

Testimony:

I’m 13 years old and a competitive swimmer. I’m at this pool 5 to 7 days a week, it’s my second home. Improvements to this pool will bless me, my brother, and many more. Swimming has already done so much for me by making me feel more confident, comfortable, and relaxed. And improvements to VMAC would not just improve my swims but also my well

being.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sawako Dolan	sawakodolan@hotmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 07:56 PM

Testimony:

My kids swim at the pool everyday. My kids time to time tell me that the dive board is broken and scratches their fingers all the time. There are other issues with it too. For our swimmers safety, I think having a safe pool is very important and having proposed budget to improve the pool is great idea.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ty Nishikawa	tyhnishikawa@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Pearl City Aquatics	I wish to comment	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:01 PM

Testimony:

Please provide funding for improvements to VMAC. This pool is a place where our club practices and competes. Our club not only provides practices where swimmers can improve their swim techniques and gain confidence in entering competitions, it provides a safe place where swimmers can make friends and learn life lessons.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jai Fetcher	Jaifetcher@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:03 PM

Testimony:

I support funding the VMAC $1 million because that pool is highly utilized by people of all ages in a time where many cannot swim in brown, polluted water in our ocean any more. I would use the pool a great deal more if it were open for lap swim more hours. Please don't let this facility fall apart like the rest of our parks and rec centers. It's embarrassing how bad our facilities are throughout the city and county. MAHALO.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Gillian Yamagata	dillydodad@gmail.com	96731
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:04 PM

Testimony:

The VMAC facility is a cornerstone of our Oahu community, offering invaluable opportunities for our student-athletes to grow and compete. I am writing to advocate for the continued funding of its improvements, which benefit not only the participants but also the parents and local residents who call this space home. Quality athletic facilities are crucial for the

physical and mental health of our citizens. Directing city funding toward the VMAC is a forward-thinking investment that strengthens our community fabric and supports the wellbeing of the next generation.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rainbow Ulii	rainbow@keyproject.org	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
KEY Project	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:15 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Pono Chung	pcacoachpono@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Pearl City Aquatics	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:16 PM

Testimony:

As a coach and active member of the swimming community, I see every day how much VMAC means to our athletes and families. It’s where our swimmers train, compete, and grow.

Right now, the starting blocks are broken and in need of replacement. This is a safety concern for our athletes and affects how they are able to train and perform. Starting blocks are a fundamental part of the sport, and having reliable, safe equipment is essential for both daily practices and competitions.

In addition, the scoreboard is outdated and difficult to rely on during meets. Being able to clearly see times and results is important for swimmers, coaches, and families, and it helps meets run smoothly.

Investing in new starting blocks and a new scoreboard would make a real difference in safety, performance, and the overall experience at VMAC. These upgrades would directly support our athletes and strengthen our swimming community.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Matt Baker	cakeybakey67@gmail.com	96813-6013
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:22 PM

Testimony:

I have been a swimmer for practically all my life, and the first pool I ever got to swim in when I moved to Hawaii was at Vmac. This bill is a huge opportunity for me and all my swimming teammates to get to experience a fully renovated pool at our collective favorite pool. It would mean the world to me and my friends if this bill was passed, and it would make many others who use the pool daily overjoyed as well. Overall, I strongly support the passing for this bill and hope that it does in fact go through!

Thank you!

-Matt

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kehau Akau	kehau925@hotmail.com	96768
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:42 PM

Testimony:

In Strong Support

Aloha Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

My name is Kehau Akau, and I am a resident of Upcountry Maui and an active member of our local aquatics community.

I am writing in strong support of Bill 23 (26) and the proposed funding for improvements to the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

This facility is not just a pool—it is a vital community resource that supports youth development, health, safety, and connection. Programs like swim team, lessons, and community recreation rely on this space daily. For many families, VMAC is where our keiki learn life-saving water skills, build discipline, and grow through sport.

The immediate need to address the bulkhead is critical. It has exceeded its life expectancy, and failure would significantly disrupt or even shut down pool operations. This would directly impact hundreds of families, athletes, and community members who depend on consistent access to the facility.

Investing in this initial phase not only ensures the safety and continuity of current programs, but also lays the groundwork for future improvements—such as starting blocks, updated scoreboards, seating, and locker rooms—that will further strengthen the value of this facility for our entire community.

I respectfully urge you to support Bill 23 (26) and prioritize funding for VMAC.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Mark Kunimune	markkuni@hawaii.edu	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:43 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I support appropriating money to make improvements on the Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center. Having a swimming facility in the community is an important part of keeping everyone healthy. Not everyone has the time and/or resources to go to the ocean to swim, especially in central O'ahu. Having a well-working and maintained pool provides everyone the chance to get in the water.

I directly attribute my time in the water swimming to helping me to maintain my health and youthful spirit. I swim at the pool at least once a week. Not only does it provide good exercise, it is also a venue to socialize with other health conscious people. It's very important that the pool has the resources necessary to keep the water quality at a high level. I realize that it takes funds to properly maintain a large pool on an ongoing basis. Please keep this lifeline maintained so the community can continue to use it as a valuable resource for their health.

Mahalo
Mark Kunimune

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Randall Jones	magumiho@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:45 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,
We are a family with a competitive swimmer. Our son has been a club swimmer for four years and now swims for club and high school as a freshman in public school. Swimming has been an incredible benefit for this young man that is not challenged in school. The focus and discipline required of the sport has developed him physically and focused him mentally. He is a top performing student academically and a HHSAA top swimmer as a freshman.
After years of watching innumerable competitions we know the value of a high quality swim facility. These kids are representing, or aspiring to represent Hawai'i at national competitions, at universities, across Oceania. We should support them with first class facilities. The swimmers benefit, the community benefits (by use, and by the fact that these young swimmers are outstanding community members!), and I believe the state of Hawaii benefits.
These outstanding young people are our future. This is not a choice between helping our disadvantaged and supporting our best. We can do both! Get the priorities correct!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
John Aaron Malone	aaronmalone78@hotmail.com	96789
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:47 PM

Testimony:

To whom it may concern,
My name is John Aaron Malone, I'm writing this in support of Project #1998040 for improvements needed at VMAC in

central Oahu. The diving boards are in need of replacement. They have been there for many years and are very deteriorated. I am the dive coach for Mililani High School, and myself and my 3 girls practice here during the seasonal rec diving program sessions. We are also on Coach Jeff Stabile's Tropic Lightning Dive Team. Diving is a wonderful sport and with VMAC being the only public facility on Oahu with a diving well it only makes sense to keep it maintained for the sport and public. Thank you for reading my testimony.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kei Nishikawa	keinnishikawa@gmail.com	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Pearl City Aquatics	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 08:47 PM

Testimony:

I have been a swimmer with Pearl City Aquatics for almost 11 years and I also serve as a coach when I come back for vacations from college.

When I started swimming with PCA, I was amazed when I got to practice at VMAC. The pool was nice and huge (for a little 8 year old girl). I thought the facility was nice and well kept. But as I got older, I noticed that things were not up to par. I would get fiberglass shards in my arm if I leaned on the bulkhead while getting instructions from my coach, I got a piece of the starting block stuck in the bottom of my foot while taking off for a race, and I got cut by the sharp edges of tile that line the pool.

There are also many outlets that surround the pool that do not work. The sprinklers that cool the water are not able to be run because the outlet that supplies power to it is broken. We had to swim in dangerously warm water in the summer of 2025 due to this issue. Timelines have to be changed to accommodate water temperatures, which causes inconvenience to teams traveling from the outer islands or even the mainland.

Our scoreboard is also deteriorating and sometimes does not work properly. VMAC is supposed to be the best facility in the state, but the ones in Kihei and Kona are for superior and are better maintained.

For this fast I hope that you will provide funding to make necessary improvements to VMAC.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Konoske Jones	ko.jones2020@gmail.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:10 PM

Testimony:

As a competitive swimmer, VMAC naturally means a lot to me and my team. It's the main venue of competition, and the center already has so much to offer, with two clean pools, proper blocks, and plenty of space for team seating. However, the proposed improvements would give a massive amount to our swimming community. The blocks, though sufficient, desperately need an upgrade. During one of my competitions, the step to the block completely broke off. We had to replace that starting block and currently have a spare in its place with a duck-taped number on it. Despite all of these needs, VMAC is still a very special place to hundreds of swimmers. It is one of a very small number of pools on Oahu with proper depth for dives, a permanent score board, and enough space to host championship meets. To my knowledge, it is

the only championship-caliber public pool that is not owned by a private school. This level of quality in a pool open to the general public is what makes VMAC so unique and special. With the upgrades that could be provided by this bill, VMAC could become one of the premier pools on Oahu. These improvements would give countless swimmers, both competitive and recreational, a chance to swim in a top-tier pool for free.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Bradley Takara	brad_takara@yahoo.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Splash Aquatics Honolulu	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:10 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ging Ging Fernandez	ribbityup@gmail.com	96795
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:11 PM

Testimony:

Aloha - please support the funding for K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center pool improvements. Oahu pool space is always in high demand and hard to come by. The VMAC pool supports keiki aquatic at all levels. My sons swim and play water polo. Key tournaments, training, and meets are held at VMAC. This is the pool where many kids train for Olympic Development and Junior Olympics, allowing our Hawaii keiki to be competitive at the national level. Few pools on Oahu can host these larger events which are always well attended, allowing the wider swimming and water polo community to gather together and support our athletes. The pool is in a great location, has plenty of parking, and is handicap accessible for our kupuna. Investment in and maintenance of the pool is of high value to Hawaii residents. Mahalo!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Nathan Sellner	sellnerathan@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:15 PM

Testimony:

Aloha, my name is Nathan Sellner, and I am one of the co-head coaches of Rainbow Aquatics. I am writing in favor/support of providing funding for much needed renovations to the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). I have been involved with the sport of swimming since I was 10 years old and I have been blessed with the opportunity to continue my involvement in the sport as a coach. I have swam in the VMAC facitility 100s of times throughout my career and I truly believe VMAC is essential to keeping the sport of swimming alive here in Hawaii. Over the years, I have seen the facility grow with age and I strongly support any possible funding to bring much needed renovations to the pool and the surrounding facility. As time goes on, with its consistent use by members of the swimming community, as well as other

pool patrons, I believe that it is a worthwhile expenditure to invest in this outstanding community resource so that it can be used, not only by current community members but by future swimmers and other patrons that rely on VMAC for their physical activity or mental health needs. With that being said, there are a number of things across the facility that could use refurbishment or renovations, which include the scoreboard, diving blocks, bathrooms, bulk head, etc. If the funding for these renovations are not secured, the sport of swimming would be in danger of collapsing. 80% of the swim teams on the island of Oahu rely on VMAC for swim meets ranging from simple beginner swim meets all the way up to state championship meets and I know of three active swim teams that currently rely on the pool (on a daily basis) to host their practices. If it were not for the VMAC, my swimming career would not have been the same. As we head into an uncertain future and I watch as the public facilities I have used my entire life continue to deteriorate, I am afraid of what will happen to the thousands of swimmers and families that need and rely on this facility in their daily lives. I must reiterate that without VMAC, the sport of swimming will die in Hawai'i. Thank you so much for your time and I hope that this written testimony conveys the essential need for improvements to the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. Mahalo.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Blayke Takara	blayke.takara@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:23 PM

Testimony:

Hi my name is Blayke Takara and I swim for Splash Aquatics. I strongly support VMAC and Bill 23(26)

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Hiroko Shinoda	hirokos0319@yahoo.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:24 PM

Testimony:

VMAC needs a new score board, shade for the spectator area, renovation for the shower and bathroom etc....

It will cost a lot for those upgrades.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rene Nakamura	momofsbb@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:25 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Terence Matsuoka	teemats@yahoo.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:29 PM

Testimony:

VMAC needs:

New scoreboard

New starting blocks

Shaded viewing area

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brandon Hadfield	bhad45@msn.com	78239
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:32 PM

Testimony:

Dear Hawaii Senate,

As a father of four swimmers, swimming is a central part of my family's life. I have spent many weekends at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) and have seen firsthand how the excitement of competing against athletes from across Oahu and the other islands motivates children to excel.

Through swimming, my children have learned the value of hard work while remaining healthy and active. I believe the State of Hawaii should continue to invest in our swimmers and the facilities that support them.

Please support Bill 23 (26) to fund the necessary improvements for the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Sincerely,

Brandon Hadfield

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Branson Nakamura	branson.nakamura09@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:37 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Diana Sellner	dmsellner@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:40 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

My name is Diana Sellner. I am writing this testimony in support of the $1 million in funding for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). I grew up swimming and whole-heartedly believe that our City & County pool facilities and their programs are a vital resource for not only the swimming community but our community as a whole. My first swim lesson was a parent and tots class at Kapalono Pool; I continued to take lessons at Kapalono, Palolo, and Manoa pools growing up; I swam with the Palolo City & County swim team at age 11, and then swam competitively for Rainbow Aquatics Swim Club from the age of 13 until I graduated from high school. I went on to swim competitively in college. I currently coach for Rainbow Aquatics, a youth swim team based out of Honolulu and Kaneohe. VMAC is a critical resource for the club swimming community, as VMAC hosted many of the swim meets when I was growing up and continues to host most of the club swimming meets today. VMAC could be a world class swimming facility but is in need of major updates and investments as the facility ages and shows signs of ware. Failure to care for this facility and allowing it fall into further disrepair could be catastrophic for the competitive swimming community which has already been struggling, especially for our swim teams who practice in City & County facilities who face their own issues with aging facilities, facility closures, and/or staffing issues at their practice pools. We do not have the luxury of swimming in private pools and rely on City & County facilities to practice in and for competition. Investing in VMAC can provide the keiki of Hawaii with a safe place for practice and competition, fostering a love of swimming for the next generation of Hawaii's swimmers.

Please support $1 million in funding for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

Thank you for your consideration,
Diana Sellner

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jung Ja Won	jinawonhm@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:45 PM

Testimony:
I strongly support Bill 23(26) and the proposed funding for VMAC.

My family uses VMAC for everything from lap swimming to aquarobics. It's truly a jewel of our community and deserves to be improved and maintained for future generations to come.

Thank you for approving this Bill!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Yvette Matsumoto	yvette.matsumoto@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:50 PM
Name: Kate Wiechmann	Email: ktzwiechmann@gmail.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Apr 30, 2026 @ 09:54 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to support continued and increased financial investment in the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. This facility plays a vital role in serving the health, safety, and community needs of O‘ahu.

There are important maintenance and safety concerns that need to be addressed. Public pools require consistent upkeep to maintain safe water quality and reliable equipment. Without proper funding, access becomes limited and safety can be compromised.

The Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center is one of the only facilities on O‘ahu able to accommodate large groups at once. It brings together keiki, families, schools, and athletes from across the island and serves as a true community hub.

My family has experienced this directly. My daughter is a competitive swimmer and regularly uses this pool to connect with swimmers from across the state. These gatherings are about more than competition. They help young people build friendships, develop discipline, and learn resilience. Swimming teaches teamwork, goal setting, and how to handle both success and disappointment.

Living on an island, water safety is essential. Teaching our keiki to swim is one of the most important ways we can protect them. Access to a safe, well maintained public pool ensures that all families have the opportunity to learn these life saving skills.

Swimming is also a lifelong activity that supports both physical and mental health and can open doors to future opportunities.

Investing in the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center is an investment in the well being and safety of our community. I respectfully ask that you prioritize the funding needed to maintain and improve this important resource.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Name: Hee Moon Park	Email: radtamc@gmail.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:06 PM

Testimony:

As a regular user of the VMAC pool, I am writing in strong support of Bill 23(26) CD1. I suffered from a heart attack a few years ago, and after triple bypass surgery, low impact exercise was recommended by my cardiologist and cardiothoracic surgeon. Lap swimming has been a vital part of my rehab program, and I'm so grateful to VMAC for making this available to the public for free. It's such an incredible resource for our community. I have noticed some wear and tear, though, so I sincerely appreciate the council's efforts to keep it in top shape. I also enjoy watching my grandson swim at VMAC, but seating can be challenging during busy meets, with limited space for teams and spectators, and no shade except by the equipment room.

Thank you for your support of VMAC!!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Megan Fong	joeandmego@yahoo.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:11 PM

Testimony:

I am writing on behalf of myself and my 2 children who are both competitive swimmers to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center. We would all greatly appreciate having an investment made into the future of a sport that keeps so many of our keiki healthy and strong and keeping one of the island’s best aquatic facilities in working order. Thank you for considering!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rene Iwamura	reneiwamura@gmail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:12 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Council,

My name is Rene Iwamura, and I am testifying in strong support of— Bill 023 (2026), Item No. 1998040 — K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center, which proposes $1,000,000 for improvements to the Veteran’s Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

VMAC is a vital community asset serving swimmers, students, families, and athletic programs across our region. However, the facility is aging and requires strategic investment to remain safe, functional, and capable of supporting both daily use and community events.

As a volunteer swim official for more than ten years, I have witnessed firsthand the wear and deterioration caused by constant use—clear evidence of the facility’s high demand and importance to the community. VMAC is showing its age, and critical systems and infrastructure are in need of attention.

In the past, revenue generated by the facility helped offset maintenance costs. Unfortunately, that is no longer the case, making it increasingly difficult for management to sustain the level of upkeep necessary to ensure safety and usability for

all users.

These improvements are not aspirational—they are practical, necessary, and achievable with the City's partnership. The timing is especially important, as management now has a clear path forward through a nonprofit organization committed to restoring VMAC as a premier aquatic venue. This effort also honors the vision of Coach Ken Suenaga, who's vision lead to the development of this top-tier facility where collegiate athletes could compete and the community could gather with pride.

I respectfully urge the Council to include funding for VMAC improvements in the FY26-FY27 budget. With your support, we can address critical facility needs, expand community access, and preserve this important resource for future generations.

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

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Riki Watanabe	rikiwatanaber2022@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:17 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Budget Committee,

My name is Riki Watanabe, and I am a swim coach with 'Iolani Swim Club. I am writing in strong support of Bill 23 (2026), specifically funding allocated for improvements to the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC). Having trained and coached at VMAC for the past decade, I have experienced firsthand how vital this facility is to our swimming community. It serves as the primary venue for competitions and brings together athletes and families from across O'ahu and the neighbor islands.

Growing up in Hawai'i, we are surrounded by water, making swimming an essential life skill. As a coach, I see how the sport helps people develop discipline, resilience, and confidence. VMAC plays a key role in that growth, but the facility is aging. Outdated starting blocks, equipment issues, and limited spectator space make it difficult to fully support the athletes and community who rely on it.

VMAC is more than just a pool - it is a second home for many of our keiki and a central hub for Hawai'i's aquatic sports. Investing in its improvement will support not only competitive swimmers but also water polo players, families, and community members who depend on access to safe and quality facilities. I respectfully urge the Committee to support this funding and invest in the future of our youth and community.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Riki Watanabe

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Elizabeth Tracy	elitracy88@gmail.com	96740

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:20 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

my name is Elizabeth Tracy. I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

I am a swim coach and a swim parent in Kailua Kona, HI. This pool is a key location for our entire swim community across the state and it would mean so much to us to see this pool get the upgrades that it needs. My own children and the kids that I coach all have wonderful memories at this pool. This bill would be a huge step forward so that this facility can be used to its fullest potential.

Mahalo for your time.

Liz Tracy

Kona Dolphins Swim Club

Name:	Email:	Zip:
David Coleman	dcoleman2011@gmail.com	96822-1752

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaiian Swimming LSC, Inc.	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:30 PM

Testimony:

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:
Bryce Soriano	brsoriano0115@gmail.com	96706

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:34 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of allocating funds to improve the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

As a swimmer, coach, and current lifeguard at VMAC, I see firsthand that the facility is in poor condition and no longer meets the standard of other aquatic centers in Hawai'i, such as the Kihei Aquatic Center and the Kona Community Aquatic Center, or comparable outdoor facilities across the nation.

VMAC is a vital resource for our community. It offers aquatic programs, lap swimming, club training, and water polo, and it hosts college teams and competitive events at the statewide and international level. Despite this high level of use, the facility's infrastructure has not kept pace.

Several critical upgrades are needed. The starting blocks are outdated and deteriorating, creating both safety and performance concerns. Installing new Olympic-level starting blocks is essential. A new LED scoreboard and modern timing system are also needed. Currently, there are too many instances where a swimmer finishes a race and their time is not properly recorded. This is not fair to athletes who dedicate countless hours to training, as accurate timing can determine whether they achieve championship qualifying standards.

Additionally, restroom facilities must be improved. VMAC needs separate, updated bathroom and locker room areas—one designated for athletes and pool users, and another for spectators—to ensure cleanliness, functionality, and proper use.

With these upgrades, VMAC has the potential to become a premier aquatic center—not just on O'ahu, but one capable of hosting high-level competitions that bring pride and economic benefit to our island.

Investing in this facility is an investment in our athletes, our community, and the future of aquatics in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Brandon Loi	bzwloi@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:50 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Chloe Loi	chloekyloi@gmail.com	96816

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:52 PM

Testimony:

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

If the bulkhead breaks or gets stuck, there will be no swim meets.

My team members and fellow swimmers will not be able to compete.

Thank you for your attention.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kanekoa Crabbe	kanekoacrabbe@gmail.com	96822
Representing:	**Position:**	**Submitted:**
Manoa Aquatics	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 10:52 PM

Testimony:

To the members of the City Council,

I fully support Bill 23(26) in hopes that any and all funding available can be used to maintain and improve the Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Complex (VMAC). My son has been a member of the Manoa Aquatics swim club for over 3 years and I, like many others, have witnessed the slow and steady deterioration of this PUBLIC pool, the surrounding deck areas, the bathrooms and the overall infrastructure of the complex itself. I believe the reason for this problem is due to the over-usage of this specific facility because of the lack of eligible PUBLIC pools on Oahu to hold swim meets.

I also believe that if other PUBLIC pools on Oahu could hold swim meets, such as the Manoa Pool (currently under long-term renovations for the 2nd time in 2 years), the Palolo Pool (ineligible to hold sanctioned swim meets due to poor renovations causing incorrect pool measurements as required by USA swimming) or even the Kalihi pool (lack of public usage and without a community swim organization), the pool at VMAC would not suffer from frequent usage from water polo practices and games, OIA swim events, year-round swim club meets, diving, lifeguard training and designated public swim times.

Please provide funding to support VMAC to sustain and maintain its entire infrastructure. PUBLIC pools on Oahu provide children, families, adults and seniors with opportunities to grow, learn, heal, train, socialize and play. Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Kanekoa Crabbe

Former President, Manoa Aquatics

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ricky Rascon	skaheadcoach@gmail.com	96766
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Swim Kauai aquatics	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:38 PM

Testimony:

My name is Ricky Rascon, and I am writing on behalf of not only Swim Kauai Aquatics, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and the only competitive swim team on Kauai, but also in support of all swim coaches and programs across the island, including Waimea High School, Kauai High School, Island School, Kapaa High School, and HTLA.

Providing our swimmers with the opportunity to compete in a high quality facility is one of the main reasons we value traveling to Oahu. While it takes significant effort and financial sacrifice for our families to make these trips, the experience is incredibly meaningful. From my perspective, with nearly 15 years of professional coaching experience, I can confidently say that our athletes deeply appreciate the sense of community and the opportunity to compete in a fast, well run environment.

On behalf of our 100+ swimmers, their families, and fellow coaches, we strongly support any efforts to ensure access to such facilities and respectfully ask for your support in approving this motion.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Ricky Rascon
Head Coach, Swim Kauai Aquatics
Head Coach, Island School
Board Member, Kauai Lifeguard Association
Board Member, Hawaii Swimming LSC
Phone: (312) 978-5272

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Robert Sonny Lessary	sonnylessary@gmail.com	96797
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:40 PM

Testimony:

I have 3 boys that swim for a non profit swim club called aloha aquatics and VMAC is our home pool. I’m writing to strongly support this bill as we have a ton of things we could do to improve this location. I hear a new bulkhead is needed but we could also use new blocks and a shade structure above our bleachers (both Maui and Big Island have phenomenal pools with shade and we do not). Mahalo for the opportunity!

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Christine Diaz	lttlsrfrgrl@yahoo.com	96797
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:54 PM

Testimony:

Please approve this bill.

Name: Robert Lessary	Email: presidenr@alohaaquatics.org	Zip: 96797
Representing: Aloha Aquatics Association	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Apr 30, 2026 @ 11:57 PM

Testimony:

I’m writing to strongly support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

Our non profit swim club is lucky enough to be one of three teams that get to call VMAC our home pool (we swim Monday - Friday from 515-7pm) and we’d love to see replacements of the bulkhead, starter blocks, and a shade structure (both Maui and Big Island pools have them).

Mahalo for the opportunity to voice our support!

Name: CHARMIAN LEWIS	Email: charmian.lewis@gmail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: May 1, 2026 @ 12:22 AM

Testimony:

VMAC an critical public works for competitive swimmers and water polo players on the island of O’ahu and neighbor islands. It is necessary for competitions that provides young athletes with opportunities for growth and development. These opportunities foster resilience, fitness, and potential college scholarships for student athletes. I support improvements to maintain and improve this invaluable resource.

Name: Sandy Drake	Email: sandydrakemaui@gmail.com	Zip: 96768
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: May 1, 2026 @ 03:52 AM

Testimony:

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Hawaiian Swimming has hosted numerous International events at this venue. The last was in 2023 for the Junior Pan

Pacific Championships. The NGBs of the Pan Pacific have said numerous times they'd like to come back to Hawaii (they have currently been going to Australia for the competition) but they have concerns of the condition of the pool.

The VMAC has such a great history and with that comes age. The pool needs numerous updates because it is deteriorating. The bulkhead has exceeded its life expectancy, and could fail at any time—potentially rendering the pool unusable. If the bulkhead breaks or gets stuck, everything shuts down—no swim meets, no club practices, no waterpolo games, no kūpuna aerobic classes, it all stops.

Please approve the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Elle Lim	syd2020@gmail.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 04:49 AM

Testimony:
I am a Honolulu resident and parent of a competitive swimmer. I am writing in strong support of Bill 23(26) and the proposed funding for improvements at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC).

The VMAC is the most important aquatic facility in the state for hosting large-scale, senior-level swim competitions. It is not merely an Oahu resource — swimmers and families from Maui, the Big Island, Kauai, and Molokai all depend on this facility. It currently serves as the home of Hawaii State Championship competitions, a testament to its central role in our aquatic community.

However, with meaningful upgrades and modernization, I believe the VMAC has the potential to attract national-level competitions, events such as USA Swimming Sectionals or Zone Championships. Bringing that caliber of meet to Hawaii would be transformative. Hundreds of elite athletes, coaches, and families from across the country would travel to Oahu, generating significant economic activity for our hotels, restaurants, and local businesses. It would put Hawaii on the national aquatics map and create inspiring opportunities for our local swimmers to compete on their home turf.

The $1 million allocation is a critical first step toward making that vision a reality. I urge the Budget Committee to support this funding and invest in the future of aquatics in Hawaii.

Mahalo for your time and service!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kelliann Shimote	kashimote@gmail.com	96789
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 05:25 AM

Testimony:

I swim.regularly at corp. It is heavily utilized and a service the community and state5 need for all ages.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jinghuan Dong	jdong30@punahou.edu	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 06:09 AM

Testimony:

I am writing to support the allocation of $1,000,000 to maintain the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center.

We need a new bulkhead. If the bulkhead breaks or gets stuck, everything shuts down.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Lexi Hatfield	fishatfd@yahoo.com	96753
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 06:28 AM

Testimony:

Aloha.

The VMAC is a critical component to the swimming community not just on Oahu but for the whole state and broader. It is imperative that needs be fixed so that the competitive swim community as well as the kupuna and other groups that use the pool can continue.

The bulkhead was being held in place by airplane support straps back in 2022 when Hawaiian swimming helped host Jr Pan Pacific games. Last summer there was water temp issues and it was way too hot because there are no aerators in place. These are the 2 huge concerns but the facility desperately needs an upgrade if the hosting of big meets can continue which draws in money to the areas.

Mahalo for your consideration for this bill. The VMaC is a critical element to the community on Oahu and broader for all of Hawaii.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Peter Andrew	peterandrew247@gmail.com	92024-3511
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 07:44 AM

Testimony:

We train a team of Olympic swimmers here at the VMac and improvements in the conditions would be amazing for the ultimate results for these Olympians representing Hawaii

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Eugene Drzymala	waokanaka1@twc.com	96822

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Oahu Swim League	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 09:01 AM

Testimony:

Please approve or, if possible, increase the funding for the VMAC pool facility. The swimming community promotes a healthy lifestyle with few drawbacks. Lifelong friendships are formed, competitive spirit is fostered, and all due to a wonderfully designed pool. However, like all facilities, it's showing its age. The bulkhead is deteriorating, bathrooms are too small and old, and the offices could use refreshing. $1 million is too small to refresh the pool. If Tommy Waters can push through an incredible raise for the City Council, SURELY he canHELP the public in return.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Rui Wang	ruiwanghawaii@gmail.com	96818
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 09:03 AM

Testimony:

As a formal University of Hawaii diver, over the past 20 years, I have watched many local families, adults, seniors, and children enjoying the sports of Diving. Many children became a national level diver with the diving facility at K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center. It is the only public facility that equipped with diving boards (both 1-meter and 3-meter diving board).

For many of local children, this pool is where their dreams start. Without a functional public diving board on the island, local students lose the chance to discover a passion for diving that could lead to college scholarships or competitive sports.

Moreover, we live on an island surrounded by water, and learning water confidence is a life skill. A modern, well-maintained diving board provides a structured environment for kids to learn how to enter deep water safely. By funding this replacement, we aren't just buying equipment; we are investing in a supervised, high-standard facility that keeps our community safe and active.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Boyd Ready	readyboyd@gmail.com	96712
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Haleiwa Waialua Historical Society	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 09:25 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sam Harquail	samharq15@gmail.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 09:27 AM

Testimony:

This Bill would greatly impact my life and the entire swimming community here in Hawaii. Swimming is a growing sport and VMAC is the main facility on the island to hold swim meets. Hawaii is filled with so much swimming potential. This

would be a start to help make an impact on the culture and community. We use the pool every day and have meets there every other weekend. It is used a lot and this bill would be put to a great cause impacting kids pursuing their dreams.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Eduard Ganancial	edganancial@gmail.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 09:32 AM

Testimony:

Aloha. My name is Ed, and I strongly support the $1 million in funding for the K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center. My boys are 10 and 13, and we have driven from Kapolei to VMAC for nearly every practice and weekend meet for the last three years. VMAC has become our second home, where my kids continue to build confidence, discipline, and friendships with kids who share the same passion and commitment. As a volunteer USA Swimming official, I not only get to be right there with them on the pool deck, but also give back to a community that has given my boys so much. None of this is possible without a facility that is safe and functional. Our keiki pour their hearts into this place every single day, and I respectfully urge the Budget Committee to approve this funding so that VMAC can continue to be that second home for families like mine. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Elijah Ganancial	kekoaganancial@icloud.com	96706
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 09:50 AM

Testimony:

Aloha, my name is Elijah, and I have practiced at VMAC almost every weekday over the past three years. I support the $1 million for VMAC.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Vaihere Temanaha	vaihere13@gmail.com	96821
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 10:03 AM

Testimony:

Support!!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Alexus Choe	junghyunk@hotmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	May 1, 2026 @ 10:22 AM

Testimony:

I am in support of the renovations of the V-MAC pool. I feel that the community would greatly appreciate an update to the

facility.

Aloha Chair and Members of the Budget Committee,

My name is Umida Stelovska, and I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Bill 23 (2nd Reading), which removes $30 million from the budget currently intended for landfill land acquisition.

I believe this amendment gives the City and County of Honolulu an important opportunity to reconsider whether taxpayer funds should continue expanding an outdated cost-based waste system, or instead be redirected toward modern solutions that can create long-term economic value for our community.

For decades, waste management has largely meant paying to collect, transport, process, and bury materials. That model creates ongoing expenses, consumes scarce land, and eventually forces the City to spend even more money when landfill capacity runs out. It is a repeating cycle of liability.

Spending $30 million to acquire more landfill land continues that cycle.

On Oahu, land is among our most limited and valuable resources. And land is sacred. Public funds used for landfill expansion are funds that cannot be used for housing, parks, infrastructure, public safety, environmental restoration, or economic development.

There is another path.

Modern waste conversion systems and Advanced Circular Manufacturing technologies now make it possible to recover value from landfill-bound materials instead of burying them. Materials currently treated as trash often contain recoverable metals, glass, carbon, water, and industrial inputs that can support vertical manufacturing, technology, semiconductor, and agricultural markets.

This means waste can become an economic asset instead of a permanent budget burden.

Instead of paying only disposal costs, cities can participate in models where waste streams generate recurring income, reduce long-term burial costs, and attract private investment into local infrastructure.

For Honolulu, this could potentially mean:

- Reducing or avoiding future landfill acquisition and expansion costs
- Lowering disposal and residual management expenses
- Creating skilled local jobs in operations, logistics, maintenance, and manufacturing
- **Generating revenue** through recovered materials and value-sharing agreements
- Keeping more dollars circulating within Hawaii’s economy
- Preserving scarce land for higher-value community needs
- Strengthening long-term fiscal resilience

A Simple Budget Perspective

Today, waste is primarily treated as a cost center. The City pays to manage it year after year.

A circular manufacturing facility changes that model by treating municipal solid waste as industrial feedstock that can be transformed into valuable outputs such as:

- Recovered metals
- Refined glass
- Carbon-based materials
- Industrial gases
- Hydrogen
- Ultrapure water

Even partial diversion of landfill-bound waste could create substantial benefits through:

- Lower annual waste management costs
- Reduced future capital spending on landfill land
- New recurring revenues or royalties
- Increased payroll and business activity from local jobs
- Greater economic self-reliance through local production

Bottom Line

The opportunity is to move from a **pay-to-bury model** to a **recover-and-earn model**.

Instead of assuming landfill expansion is the only option, Honolulu should evaluate solutions that may lower costs, generate revenue, preserve land, and better serve residents over the long term.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage the Budget Committee to support Bill 23 and remove the $30 million earmarked for landfill land acquisition, while allowing time to fully review innovative alternatives.

For more information on one potential how much the city and county can earn from trash: https://oahu.carbotura.com/

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Umida Stelovska
Entrepreneur and Resident of Oahu
M: 808-673-0034
Umida@carbotura.com

Other educational resources:

- https://epa.carbotura.com/
- https://smart.carbotura.com/
- https://comp.carbotura.com/compare/waste-management

Testimony in support of Proposed Amendment to Bill 23 (2026), CD1
Executive Capital Budget

Council Member: Matt Weyer
Project Title: Waialua Historic Preservation
Project Description Amendments: Provision of funds for the acquisition of land and buildings in Waialua for historic preservation, including but not limited to the Waialua Hongwanji Mission (TMK: 6-7-001:060)
Amount: $800,000

My name is George Tanabe. I was born, raised and still live in Waialua. I have MA and PhD degrees in East Asian Languages and Cultures from Columbia University and I taught as a professor of Japanese religion at UH Manoa for 30 years. I am here to support Council Member Matt Weyer's proposed amendment to Bill 23 for the Waialua Historic Preservation project for acquisition of the Waialua Hongwanji Mission.

Founded in 1902, the Waialua Hongwanji Mission served generations of Japanese families and the general community on the North Shore of Oahu, but due to the loss of congregation members, the temple has decided to cease operations in November, 2026. Instead of selling the property with the likelihood that the temple will be demolished by a new owner, the Honpa Hongwanji headquarters, which owns the property, supports a proposal submitted by the Haleiwa Waialua Historical Society to preserve the property as a Heritage and Community Center.

The sanctuary is a beautiful example of a plantation Buddhist temple in Hawaii. The inner altar area contains authentic furnishings brought over from Japan, but instead of rice straw tatami mats for people to sit on in the outer congregation area, there are rows of pews, clearly an adaptation from Christian churches and a concession to local people who are not used to sitting on the floor. Many plantation Buddhist temples have already been closed in places such as Hana Maui, Kahuku and Waianae, but there is widespread agreement that Waialua Hongwanji should be preserved to continue serving the present community and to tell the many stories about our past of corporate agriculture, small diversified farmers, dozens of stores and shops, plantation housing and health care, community clubs and organizations such as the Waialua Body Building Club and the Waialua Juvenile Delinquency Committee, and people of diverse ethnicities living, working, intermarrying and communicating with each other in our own lingua franca called pidgin English.

There are so many rich stories about who we were and how we came to be what we are today, but this history will be lost unless we manage to preserve them. We cannot do this alone, and we need your help. Please approve the funding for the Waialua Historic Preservation project.

Legislative Testimony in Support 0f Proposed Amendment to Bill 23 (2026), CD1,

Executive Capital Budget

Council Member: Mat Weyer

Project Title : Waialua Historic Preservation

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am Dr. Willa Tanabe. I received my doctorate in Asian art history from Columbia University and I taught Japanese and Korean art history at UH Manoa for 30 years. I also served as Dean of the School of Hawaiian, Asian and Pacific Studies. Throughout those years I lived in Waialua and in retirement co authored with my husband a book on the Japanese Temples of Hawaii and also became active in the Haleiwa-Waialua Historical Society as a volunteer archivist.

The Waialua Hongwanji Temple has played a vital role in Waialua history for over 120 years. While its religious role is now ending, the temple always also played a social, educational, and even recreational role in the community. They sponsored boy scout troops, organized baseball teams and even had an orchestra made up of students, and of course held many community activities like bon dances.

The Haleiwa Waialua Historical Society wants to continue those roles.by adapting the site into a heritage and community center. While preserving the exterior of the parsonage, its interior will be adapted into use as exhibition space about the wider history of Waialua and Haleiwa with exhibits covering such themes as the arrangements of ethnic camps under the sugar plantation or the development and influence of plantation medicine or traditional Hawaiian land management, or in more recent history, the transformation of surfing from a royal sport to a multi -million dollar business. Much of these exhibition materials will be drawn from the Society's archives.

Finally the social hall will be used as a gathering place for community organizations and meetings, for talks on history of the area, for musical and other performances, and by the community for joyful occasions such as bon dance, and New Year Ringing of the temple bell. In short, we provide a focal point for community involvement and activities and we preserve the site as it was intended for education, recreational and social gatherings. We humbly ask for your support regarding the Waialua Historic Preservation project.

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Aaron Saito, and I have been involved in swimming for 20 years. I grew up training and competing at the Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC), and today I coach young swimmers who rely on this facility every day. VMAC has always been a special place to me, and now I see it doing the same for the next generation.

However, it has been difficult to watch the facility decline over time. Many of the starting blocks used for competition are old and damaged, some even held together with tape. The scoreboard is outdated and no longer performs the way it should. As a coach, it's tough to ask young athletes to train and compete in an environment that does not reflect the level of effort and pride they bring every day. I want these kids to have what I never had, an upgraded facility that matches other competitive venues.

I have visited and competed at facilities on the mainland and on neighboring islands, and I've seen the upgrades that have been made elsewhere. Meanwhile, VMAC has remained largely unchanged. Our athletes deserve better. They deserve a facility that matches their dedication and allows them to perform at their highest level.

Improving VMAC is not just about equipment, it's about the experience for the entire community. Expanding spectator seating to both sides of the pool and adding shaded areas would make a huge difference for families, athletes, and visitors, especially during large events where the heat can be intense.

For many of the kids I coach, VMAC is more than just a pool, it's a second home, where they build confidence, discipline, and lifelong habits. When the facility is falling apart, it sends the wrong message about how much we value those opportunities.

I strongly support the proposed funding for VMAC. Investing in this facility is an investment in our youth, our community, and the future of aquatics in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Aaron Saito

Pearl City Aquatics, Inc.
PO Box 2193 • Pearl City, Hawaii 96782

April 30, 2026

Honolulu City Council
City and County of Honolulu
Budget Committee
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: Letter of Support for Bill 23 (2026) Relating to the Executive Capital Budget and Program For The Fiscal Year July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027

Dear Chair Okimoto, Vice-Chair Scott Nishimoto and Budget Committee Members:

I am writing this letter in strong support of Bill 23 (2026) and more specifically as related to the budget for Design and Construction proposed for Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center. This facility represents far more than a recreational space for the public. It serves as a vital community hub promoting health, wellness and connection amongst residents in Central Oahu, as well as a premier aquatic facility for competitions in the State. It also provides so many immeasurable opportunities for our young athletes.

My two daughters grew up as athletes for Pearl City Aquatics, a USA Swimming club that trains daily at the facility. They both excelled in club swimming and were fortunate enough to be recruited to swim in college, earn NCAA Division 1 athletic and academic scholarships, and successfully competing for their schools. K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center provided them with numerous opportunities for training, high level competitions and allowed them to succeed in athletics, school and in life. As both their swim parent and swim coach, I stand firmly that there is by far no better venue for training and competition in our State for our youth athletes than this premier facility.

Our family was present at the ceremonial opening of this aquatic facility over 20 years ago, and the facility is currently in dire need of repair and maintenance in many aspects including the pool deck, pool equipment, administration building, locker rooms and restrooms, to name a few. I strongly support Bill 23 (2026) and respectfully urge the council to approve the funding and investment into this facility. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ron E. Iwamoto
Senior Group Coach
Pearl City Aquatics

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. 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, wellmaintained, 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

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 Kisan, and I am the parent of a young swimmer who has spent countless hours training and competing at the Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC). As a parent, I have watched my daughter grow not only as an athlete, but as a person, because of the opportunities this facility has provided.

Through swimming, she has learned resilience, discipline, and how to push through challenges—whether it's waking up before sunrise for practice, staying focused during difficult sets, or competing under pressure. These lessons have shaped her character and confidence, and VMAC has been a central part of that journey.

What I have seen in my own child, I have also seen reflected in so many others who use this pool. VMAC is a true community hub. It brings together swimmers, water polo players, keiki learning water safety, seniors staying active through aerobics, and families who rely on this space for health, connection, and growth. It is a place where people of all ages and backgrounds come together, and it has long been a source of pride for our community.

However, the facility is showing its age. Essential equipment—such as bulkheads, starter blocks, and the scoreboard—needs repair or replacement. Spectator seating is limited and outdated, making it difficult to safely and comfortably host meets and community events. The community's love for this pool is strong, but the condition of the facility limits its ability to fully serve the people who depend on it.

This pool holds countless memories for my daughter—moments with coaches, teammates, and friends that have shaped who she is becoming. As a parent, I want other children and families to have those same opportunities in a facility that reflects the value it brings to our community.

I respectfully ask for your support in funding the renovation of VMAC, a well-loved and essential community resource. Thank you for your time and for considering this important project.

Sincerely,

Kisan

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 Jin and I am the parent of a student-athlete who trains and competes at the Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC). Over the years, I have watched my child and so many others grow up around this pool. It has been a place where they've learned responsibility, teamwork, and how to push through challenges both in and out of the water.

As a parent, I've seen firsthand how much this facility means to our families. Early morning practices, long weekends at meets, cheering from the stands — VMAC has been a second home for many of us. It's where friendships are built, confidence is developed, and young people discover what they're capable of when they commit to something bigger than themselves.

VMAC serves far more than competitive swimmers. It is a gathering place for water polo teams, seniors who rely on water aerobics to stay active, keiki learning water safety, and community members who simply want a healthy, positive environment. It is one of the few places on the island where all of these groups can come together.

But the facility is aging, and the wear is becoming harder to overlook. Equipment such as bulkheads, starting blocks, and the scoreboard are outdated or in need of repair. Spectator seating is limited and no longer meets the needs of the families and teams who rely on this space. While the community continues to show up with enthusiasm, the condition of the facility makes it difficult for VMAC to fully support the programs and people it serves.

This pool has given my child — and so many others — experiences that will stay with them for life. It has taught them resilience, discipline, and the value of community. As a parent, I want future generations to have the same opportunities in a safe, well-maintained, and inspiring environment.

I respectfully ask for your support in funding the renovation of VMAC. This is a well-loved and essential community resource, and investing in it is an investment in our children, our families, and the health of our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jin Oh

LEILEHUA

WATERPOLO

1515 California Ave. Wahiawa, HI 96786

Support for Funding the Central Oahu Regional Park K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center

Dear Decision Makers,

I'm writing to strongly support continued funding for the Central Oahu Regional Park K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC). As someone involved with Leilehua High School athletics, this facility has become an essential part of our program and our community.

Since it opened, Leilehua High School has used VMAC regularly for both swimming and water polo practices. We're there multiple times each week during the season, and having a reliable, high-quality facility right here in Central Oahu has made a huge difference for our athletes. It allows us to run consistent practices, properly prepare for competition, and gives our students access to a space that meets the standards they deserve.

VMAC matters to me because I see firsthand what it provides for our students. It's not just about practice time—it's about giving kids a place to grow. Our athletes build confidence, learn accountability, and develop strong team connections in that pool. For some of them, it's also a safe, structured environment they can count on every day.

Beyond Leilehua, the facility is a major asset to the broader community. It creates opportunities for youth programs, competitive sports, and recreational use for people of all ages. It's one of those places that really brings people together while also promoting health, fitness, and water safety—something that's especially important here in Hawaii. In addition, Central Oahu Regional Park has been the home of the OIA Water Polo Championships for the past 15 years, which speaks to the quality of the facility and its importance to high-level competition across the island.

At the same time, with how often the facility is used, it's clear that continued funding is important to maintain and improve it. Keeping VMAC in top condition ensures that it can continue to safely serve students, athletes, and the community for years to come.

I've seen the positive impact this facility has every single week, and I strongly encourage you to continue supporting it. It's an investment in our students and in the Central Oahu community as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nathan Higa
Leilehua High School - Head Coach Swimming and Water Polo
808-305-3090

April 30, 2026

Aloha Mai Kākou Chair Okimoto and Council Members,

My name is Ken Williams and I am the General Manager of the Ko Olina Community Association, Inc. We strongly support **BILL023(26), CD1**, which removes the proposed $30 million appropriation to acquire the Makaiwa Hills property for landfill expansion, and we oppose the City's proposal to open a "new" landfill/dump in Makaiwa Hills.

For decades, the association has stood with the leeward community and intervened in proceedings to oppose the expansion of the Waimanalo Gulch Landfill/Dump. The landfill has harmed the Leeward community and the surrounding environment. Sitting high atop the hillside, the landfill has released odors, noise, and waste into the community, resulting in multiple notices of violation from government authorities. Millions of dollars in fines have been assessed against the landfill over the years.

In December 2010, the Department of Health documented the unauthorized pumping of leachate from a landfill cell into state waters. The City consequently received a notice of violation from the Environmental Protection Agency.

And… we can never forget January 13, 2011. The City was illegally filling a landfill cell with garbage before completing the necessary drainage systems. They rolled the dice and the community suffered. When heavy rains came, the landfill released unknown quantities of municipal solid waste, sewage sludge, leachate, and medical solid waste into the ocean. The medical solid waste, including sharps and blood bags, washed up in Ko Olina's lagoons and along Leeward coast beaches. This was the direct result of the City's mismanagement. The cleanup of this waste was very costly and very dangerous for the community. We never want to see something like this happen again. Never.

Had the City kept to its multiple promises to close the landfill, the massive breach in 2011 would have never happened. The landfill was supposed to be closed long before then.

When the landfill was first permitted in 1987, it was proposed that the 60.5-acre landfill would have a project life of 8 years. The landfill opened in 1989 and the same year expanded by 26 acres.

The landfill did not close when it reached its original capacity. Instead, as it approached capacity, the City sought to expand the site by 60 acres and operate it for another 15 years.

The community objected vehemently based on health and safety concerns, as well as a promise by Mayor Fasi to close the landfill when it reached capacity.

In a compromise, the City represented to the community that it would close the landfill by 2008 if it were allowed to expand the landfill by 21 acres. During the proceedings before the Land Use Commission in 2003, the City stated its commitment to close the landfill in 2008. Similarly, in

92-1047 Olani Street, Unit 1206, Kapolei, Hawaii, 96707 Tel: (808) 671-2512 Fax: (808) 671-3640
www.KoOlina.com

2004, while running for Mayor, Mufi Hanneman promised that he would close the landfill if elected.

The landfill did not close in 2008. Instead, in December of that year, the City filed an application to expand the landfill by 92.5 acres. In those proceedings, Ko Olina Community Association intervened to oppose the City's expansion efforts. The proceedings spanned a decade, with two rounds of contested case proceedings in which Ko Olina expended substantial money and resources to oppose the City's efforts to expand the landfill. The final decision was entered in November 2019 by the State Land Use Commission, which ordered the City to site a new landfill by December 31, 2022, and close the landfill by March 2, 2028.

The City did not meet the December 31, 2022 deadline to site a new landfill. Instead, it filed an application to modify the siting condition. The City asked for a two-year extension to December 31, 2024. During the proceedings before the Honolulu Planning Commission, the City promised to site a new landfill as soon as possible and within the extension period.

The City now seeks to extend the landfill into the adjacent Makaiwa Hills parcels. The City says that the new landfill area will be approximately 150 acres, which will about double the size of the current landfill. Note the Makaiwa Hills parcels have a total of more than 1,600 acres. It is not hard to see where this is going. This expansion would keep the landfill open forever.

The City had more than ample time to close the landfill and find an alternative for the last three decades. The "can" has been kicked down the road by one administration to the next.

Enough is enough. Mayor Blangiardi and the City Administration should stick to their many promises. The Ko Olina Community Association opposes the proposed expansion of the landfill. The landfill should close as scheduled in 2028.

This boils down to environmental racism. All the ills of land use are located in our west side community. Landfills, oil refineries, power plants, incinerators and heavy industry of all kinds. This landfill has served its purpose and it needs to be relocated to another community. Stop dumping on the west side.

If the City does not change its mind, the community needs to continue to speak its mind. The City will need to obtain many regulatory approvals before it can expand the landfill. At each stage, there will be opportunities for public participation.

First, the City needs to amend the public infrastructure map. Once DPP makes its recommendation to the City Council, there will be a 30-day public comment period and hearings before the Council.

Second, the City needs to amend the Ewa Development Plan. There will be public meetings on the proposed amendment and hearings before the Honolulu Planning Commission and the City Council.

Third, the City needs to obtain a special use permit or district boundary amendment. This will require many hearings before the Honolulu Planning Commission and the State Land Use

Commission. Members of the public can submit public testimony and intervene as parties in the proceedings.

At every stage, members of the community should make their voices heard. Ko Olina Community Association vigorously supports **BILL023(26), CD1** and stands with the community in opposing the expansion of the landfill. We will continue our decades long opposition effort until this landfill is closed.

Mahalo nui,
Ko Olina Community Association, Inc.

Ken Williams
General Manager

April 30, 2026

Aloha Mai Kākou Chair Okimoto and Council Members,

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

My name is Sweetie Nelson, Director of Destination Marketing for the Ko Olina Resort Operators Association (KORA). I am here on behalf of the Ko Olina ʻohana: our resorts, community partners and nearly 10,000 employees—approximately 90% of whom live on the west side. We strongly support **BILL 23(26), CD1**, which removes the proposed $30 million appropriation to acquire the Makaiwa Hills property for landfill expansion, and we oppose the City's proposal to establish a "new" landfill at Makaiwa Hills.

Ko Olina was envisioned as a master-planned resort community designed to generate long-term economic opportunity and stability for West Oʻahu. That vision has been realized through world-class assets that enjoy high occupancies year round, including a globally leading Disney resort, Marriott Vacation Club's top-performing property, Oʻahu's first Four Seasons Resort, a championship golf course, a full-service marina and six residential communities—with significant development still ahead.

As a cornerstone of the Kapolei City Master Plan, Ko Olina has remained deeply committed to uplifting West Oʻahu and ʻEwa communities. In 2020 alone, Ko Olina generated $2.5 billion annually in economic impact for the City and State and supported more than 5,300 permanent jobs. With future development, that annual impact is projected to reach $9.5 billion. These revenues—including property taxes, GET and TAT—directly support public education, healthcare, social services, public safety, infrastructure and community programs across Oʻahu.

KORA strongly opposes the expansion of the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill into the adjacent Makaiwa Hills properties. In short, the landfill threatens the substantial economic benefits generated by Ko Olina, currently and into the future, and diminishes the appeal Oʻahu's most successful travel destination offers potential investors, hospitality brands, owners and visitors.

Makaiwa Hills lies within the historic ahupuaʻa of Honouliuli, long recognized as a place of rest, healing, sustenance and navigational and cultural significance for Native Hawaiians. To consider this location, 500 acres of the most pristine land on Oʻahu, as the only viable alternative to house the island's municipal solid waste, C&D waste and ash and residue products, reflects a troubling lack of vision. Honolulu should be pursuing more innovative, sustainable, and equitable solutions—particularly when the long-term economic health of our "Second City" is at stake. Continuing to concentrate the island's most burdensome infrastructure on the west side is neither equitable nor responsible.

For nearly four decades, the city has placed a disproportionate share of the island's undesirable ills on westside communities—this pattern cannot continue. We respectfully urge the City to pursue alternatives that protect both our communities and our shared future.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Sweetie Nelson
Director, Destination Marketing, Ko Olina Resort Operators Association, Inc.

92-1047 Olani Street, Unit 1206, Kapolei, Hawaii, 96707 Tel: (808) 671-2512 Fax: (808) 671-3640
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HAWAIIAN COUNCIL

Honolulu City Council Committee on Budget
Bill 23 (2026), CD1 – Executive Capitol Budget for FY 2027

RE: Comments on the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget May 1, 2026

Aloha Chair Okimoto, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the Budget Committee,

On behalf of Hawaiian Council, I am writing in **strong opposition to the Waimanalo Gulch Landfill expansion budget items**, including both the $1,500,000 planning and design of the landfill expansion currently in CD1 as well as the proposed $30,000,000 from the Department of Budget and Fiscal Services for the Oʻahu Sanitary Landfill.

While we recognize the need for responsible waste management on Oʻahu, the proposed project in its current state seems rushed and continues a longstanding and inequitable pattern of concentrating the island's waste infrastructure on the Leeward Coast. We respectfully ask this committee to refrain from funding the project until more community conversations have occurred.

Environmental and Cultural Inequity
The Leeward Coast is home to one of the largest populations of Native Hawaiians in the state, yet for decades it has been asked to shoulder a disproportionate share of Oʻahu's environmental and social burdens. The continued siting of landfill infrastructure in this region reflects a pattern of decision-making that places the impacts of island-wide systems on the same communities, time and time again. This proposal is a continuation of that inequity.

From a Native Hawaiian perspective, the placement of infrastructure is not a neutral decision—it carries real consequences for identity, health, and the long-term well-being of communities. The proposed use of this land for waste disposal undermines the cultural and environmental integrity of the region and sends a clear and unacceptable message about how government values its Native Hawaiian communities.

The proposal to use Makaīwa Hills as a landfill goes beyond land use. We cannot ignore the issues at the core of this discussion—fairness, accountability, and who bears the burden of our collective decisions.

The Leeward Coast has been treated as a place where infrastructure is imposed, rather than a place where opportunity is invested. This proposal reinforces that narrative instead of correcting it.

What the Leeward Coast needs is not another landfill. It needs:
- Meaningful economic development and job creation
- Investment in infrastructure and transportation systems
- Expanded broadband connectivity and access to technology

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HAWAIIAN COUNCIL

- Enhanced educational facilities and workforce pathways
- Development that strengthens a sense of place and community pride

Communities on the Leeward Coast deserve the same level of investment, protection, and opportunity as other regions of Oʻahu, including Hawaiʻi Kai, Kailua, and urban Honolulu. Anything less is a failure to uphold basic principles of equity.

If we are serious about fairness, we must move away from concentrating environmental burdens in one region and instead adopt a balanced, island-wide approach to infrastructure planning. Continuing to rely on the Leeward Coast as the default location for the island's waste is both and unjust and unsustainable solution.

We must be honest about what this decision represents: not just a landfill, but a continuation of a system that disproportionately impacts Native Hawaiian communities. The question before us is whether we will continue that pattern or choose a different path.

Hawaiian Council stands firmly opposed to the Makaīwa Hills Landfill proposal as it is currently envisioned.

We respectfully urge the Honolulu City Council to defer funding until the current proposal is reconsidered and implements alternative solutions that:

- Distribute infrastructure impacts more equitably across the island,
- Protect culturally significant lands and communities, and
- Prioritize investments that uplift the Leeward Coast rather than burden it.

Absent meaningful changes, Hawaiian Council intends to **vehemently oppose this proposal**. We are prepared to engage fully in this process and will utilize the capacity of our organization—including our network of over 2,000 members and member organizations—to ensure that this issue receives the balanced, transparent, and community-centered discussion it deserves.

The decisions we make today will shape the future of our communities for generations to come. We have both the opportunity and the responsibility to choose a more just and equitable path forward.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Me ka haʻahaʻa,

Kūhiō Lewis
Chief Executive Officer, Hawaiian Council

Aloha to whom it may concern,

I strongly support the proposed funding to improve VMAC. I've been part of Hawai'i's swimming community my entire life, first as a young athlete and now as a coach, and in that time, I have never seen this facility receive meaningful upgrades.

VMAC is a central hub for our competitive swimming community as well as our recreational community. Many of us rely on this pool regularly, often every weekend, for training and islandwide competitions. Its current condition limits our ability to grow the sport and properly support our athletes.

As a Native Hawaiian, this investment is about more than competition. Living in Hawai'i, water safety and comfort in the ocean are essential life skills. Improving VMAC would help expand access, strengthen our competitive programs, and better serve our keiki and future generations.

I highly urge you to support this funding.

Mahalo,
Nohea Lileikis

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 Kai Jo, and I am a 5th grader who swims for my school and a local swim club. I spend a lot of time practicing and competing at the Patsy T. Mink Central Oahu Regional Park – K. Mark Takai Veterans Memorial Aquatics Center (VMAC). It is one of the places where I have learned the most and grown as a swimmer.

Swimming has taught me a lot of things like how to work hard, stay focused, and not give up when things get difficult, making it a crucial part of my life . VMAC has a deep place in my heart because is where I learned these lessons. It is also where I made friends, got to know my coaches, and built confidence in myself.

VMAC is important to many people, not just swimmers. I see kids learning how to swim, water polo teams practicing, and seniors doing water aerobics. It is a place where our whole community comes together.

But the pool is getting old. Some equipment, like the bulkheads, starting blocks, and scoreboard, needs to be fixed or replaced. The seating for families is also small and uncomfortable, which makes it hard for people to watch meets. Even though everyone loves this pool, it needs improvements so it can continue to serve the community safely.

I hope future kids can have the same good experiences I have had at VMAC. I respectfully ask for your support in funding the renovation of this special community pool.

Thank you for your time.

Kai Jo

May 1, 2026

To: Budget Committee
From: Erik Takai
grandmatakai@gmail.com
96797

As a professional engineer with a focus on municipal infrastructure and life-cycle asset management, I am writing to provide my formal support for the proposed funding of the modernization project at the K. Mark Takai Veteran's Memorial Aquatic Center (KMTVMAC). While the facility has served as a cornerstone for Hawaii's athletic community for decades, a technical assessment of its current state indicates that comprehensive modernization is now a matter of structural and operational necessity.

From an engineering perspective, aquatic facilities are among the most demanding environments to maintain. The corrosive nature of chlorinated environments, combined with Hawaii's high humidity and salt air, accelerates the degradation of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) systems. At KMTVMAC, parking and seating capacities have been exceeded. Modernizing these systems and the facility's capacity will not only ensure compliance with current health and safety codes but will significantly reduce long-term operational expenditures (OPEX).

Delaying this investment will inevitably lead to compounding costs. In public infrastructure, the cost of "emergency repair" is often significantly higher than the cost of "planned modernization." Furthermore, the loss of utility during an unplanned closure would deprive our veterans, youth athletes, and local residents of a vital resource that cannot be easily replicated elsewhere.

Investing in the KMTVMAC modernization project is a sound fiscal decision that prioritizes safety, sustainability, and the preservation of a high-value public asset. I urge the City Council to approve the funding requested to ensure this facility continues to meet the highest standards of engineering excellence and community service.

Sincerely,

Erik Takai

Kualoa-He'eia Ecumenical Youth
(KEY) Project

April 30, 2026

KEY Project
47-200 Waihe'e Rd.
Kāne'ohe HI 96744

Subject: Support for CIP Budget Amendment

Aloha Chair Okimoto and Members of the Budget Committee,

Board Officers

President
Apu Jacobsen

Vice President
Sharon Lau

Secretary
Umi Jensen

Treasurer
Deacon Hanson

Board Members

Ryan Catalani

Reyn Akamine

Kanoe Vares

Kehaunani Meyer

Fran Palama

Kala'i Miller

On behalf of KEY Project, I am writing to express strong support for the proposed amendments to Bill 23 relating to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget. These investments are critical to strengthening infrastructure, improving disaster preparedness, and protecting the communities we serve. KEY Project is a community-based organization rooted in the Ko'olau region, providing essential services to youth, families, and kūpuna. These CIP investments will directly enhance community resilience and safety.

We support the $2,030,000 allocation to the Department of Budget and Fiscal Services (BFS) for emergency equipment for the Department of Facilities Maintenance (DFM). This equipment is essential for effective disaster response and recovery.

We support the $800,000 allocation to the Department of Housing and Land Management (DHLM) to acquire and preserve historic properties in Waialua, including the Waialua Hongwanji Mission. Preserving these sites strengthens community identity and heritage.

We strongly support the combined investments in flood control and watershed management, including $10,000,000 for Kaiaka Bay, $5,000,000 for Ko'olaupoko, and $40,000,000 for Wailele Stream in Lā'ie, along with $3,000,000 total for the City's cost-share of Army Corps of Engineers studies. These coordinated efforts are essential to reduce flooding risks, protect homes and infrastructure, and improve long-term community resilience across multiple regions.

Finally, we support the $500,000 for improvements to Wahiawā District Park to ensure safe, accessible, and well-maintained public spaces for residents.

These amendments represent a strong investment in resilient and thriving communities. On behalf of KEY Project, we respectfully urge you to adopt these provisions in the final budget.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Rainbow K. Uli

With aloha,
Rainbow Uli'i-Akina
KEY Project

Aloha,

My name is Yvette Matsumoto and my son Ryan is a competitive swimmer and is 15 years old and participates in swim meets at Mark Takai veterans Memorial Aquatic Center (VMAC) at least 10 times a year as this is the premier venue for the island of Oahu. A typical swim meet will draw at least 400 swimmers to this venue with most weekends booked for swim meets or water polo matches. Meets in the summer will draw swimmers from the neighbor islands and about 50 to 100 swimmers from the mainland. Built in 2003, the facility is showing its age and is in desperate need of repairs. The proposed $1M is not enough but the swimming community will accept any dollar the State is willing to allocate to this facility.

The plumbing system is highly inadequate. At each swim meet the faint smell of sewage is present with swimmers exposed to the odors. About 6 months ago at a swim meet that drew over 400 swimmers, all bathrooms were closed off to prevent flushing and the sewage system from overflowing and entering the swimming pool. All swimmers had to walk about 300 yards to the bathrooms at the tennis courts and a plumbing company had to pump the sewage during the swim meet causing an incredibly foul odor that swimmers were exposed to as they waited at the starting blocks.

There are only 5 stalls available for swimmers in the girls bathroom and I imagine this is the same for boys. The lack of stalls poses a health concern and its known that some swimmers will urinate in the pool as the bathroom lines are long with 400 swimmers at swim meets.

The blocks where swimmers take off from are wobbly and at least two swim meets a year, one block is taped off due the block being unstable.

The timing system is woefully inadequate with the touchpads frequently malfunctioning and long set up times as each touch pad requires long wires to hook up to computer console timing system. Start times for swim meets are usually delayed by 20 minutes and sometimes up to 45 minutes due to timing set up issues. Wireless timing systems would eliminate all of this.

If we are serious about improving VMAC, we should consider funding at least $2M or $3M. This will elevate facility to a world class aquatics complex where high level national and international meets can take place which will draw hundreds of out of state swimmers and their families. Over 4 to five years, the revenues generated from TAT and GET revenue from hotel stays would pay for the improvements. This could pay for nice to haves like a covered spectator area with solar panels to make the facility more energy efficient as the pumps draw a lot of electrical power.

In 2022, the Pan Pacific games were held at VMAC which was a USA Swimming event. It drew about 250 swimmers from the US, Australia, Canada, Singapore, New Zealand and Samoa. Bringing VMAC up to elite status in accordance with USA Swimming standards would be a large revenue draw for the State not just in tax revenue as mentioned previously but through ancillary spending on food and the local tourism economy.

Swimming is part of the cultural fabric of Hawaii with all of our beautiful beaches. Our state also produced the likes of Duke Kahanamoku and Bill Smith who proudly represented Hawaii and the US in winning gold medals at the Olympics. Improving VMAC, our premier swimming facility is a must for our island youth to inspire and draw top talent from across the US and the world. Please approve the $1M that is slated for the run down facility and consider a business case for additional funds to make it a world class facility.

Mahalo,

Yvette

Testimony
City Capital Budget Amendments
Waialua Hongwanji Acquisition
Boyd Ready, Local Historian
Haleiwa Waialua Historical Society

Chair Okimoto, and Committee:

As a long serving volunteer local historian for Waialua and Haleiwa, I speak in favor of the City's acquiring the 1.6 acre historic site of the 1902 Waialua Hongwanji, its second, 1932 temple, and the 1910 parsonage, for adaptive reuse to serve the community.

The Hongwanji served the thousands of young single Japanese men who accomplished herculean tasks of clearing, dam building, grading, planting, care and harvesting at Waialua's new sugar plantation. Living in dorms in the early years, and struggling for respect and a fair wage, many of the young men were rowdy and undisciplined when off duty. The popular Buddhist 'Heavenly Land' sect. or Hongwanji, provided guidance and spiritual direction as the young men adapted to the harsh laborers' life and began bringing in 'picture brides.' Its congregation persevered through the years, but its last popular, Bon Dance was some years ago.

It is right in the center of a planned nonprofit 'Mill Camp housing redevelopment. As a culturally significant site for Waialua, a site of keen interest to Japanese visitors, and an existing community hall, it is a viable preservation acquisition for responsible use of public funds.

So, I urge the Budget Committee members to approve the funds allocated for its preservation.

Mahalo,
Boyd Ready, Treasurer, and Lead Docent
Haleiwa Waialua Historical Society
readyboyd@gmail.com, telephone 808-463-2936