



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I

TESTIMONY

HB 1280, HD1, SD1
RELATING TO FLOOD CONTROL

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

April 6, 2005

By

Kenneth Kaneshiro
Director, Center for Conservation, Research & Training
University of Hawai'i

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Chair Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair Shan Tsutsui and Members of the Committee:

The purpose of House Bill 1280 is to appropriate funds to develop and coordinate the implementation of comprehensive watershed management strategies to control flooding in two of Hawaii's most severely flood-impacted watersheds as identified by the Center.

The University's Center for Conservation Research and Training (CCRT) has the capacity to address the flood issues outlined in the bill and will be able to establish a comprehensive watershed management plan that can serve a model system for a more controlled storm water runoff at levels that can be safely carried downstream by more effective drainage systems. In the second year, we will implement such a management plan in two of the most severely flood-impacted sites in the state to demonstrate the effectiveness of the watershed management design. We will also aggressively seek federal funding support to enable the state to implement similar flood mitigation plans within other flood prone watershed sites throughout the state.

The University recommends that in the **Description** of the bill, the phrase "appropriates unspecified EPA funds" be deleted since the state cannot "appropriate" EPA funds. It is also recommended that in Section 3 of the current language, the statement, "...to be matched dollar for dollar with federal environmental protection agency funds..." should be deleted for the same reason that the state is not able to commit federal funds from EPA. Also, EPA is not the only potential source of extramural funds (either federal or private) and CCRT fully intends to seek funds from several different sources. Finally, the University recommends that the dollar amounts proposed for this project in the original language of the bill, i.e. \$250,000 for fiscal year 2005-2006; and \$500,000 for fiscal year 2006-2007 be reinstated.

The University of Hawaii is in concurrence with the intent of the bill and strongly supports its passage on the condition that the funds requested for the project do not supplant any portion of the University's Biennium Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to present comments on this measure.