

# KA LĀHUI HAWAI‘I KŌMIKE KALAI‘ĀINA

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

August 26, 2021

BILL 34

Relating to Commercial Activities at Public Parks

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

Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i Kōmike Kalai‘āina submits the following written testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Bill 34 which prohibits commercial activity, including recreational stops by commercial tour companies, on city owned or operated beach areas from Sunset Point to Kaiaka Point.

Significant parts of this stretch of North Shore beach shoreline are used by Hawaiian Green Sea Turtles (Honu) to rest and nest. Honu are ectothermic relying on the environment to regulate their body temperatures. Basking on the shoreline is a way they raise their body temperature and it also gives them an escape from potential predators. Both male and female Honu bask year round on Hawai‘i’s shores.

Hawaiian Green Sea Turtles are a "Threatened Species," under the Federal Endangered Species Act. Furthermore, they are an umbrella species (i.e. they indirectly protect other species) because they play an important role in many ecosystems they travel through. Honu deserve protection and it is our duty to speak up for them.

The areas where the Honu lay eggs and rest on the North Shore is part of a larger sacred cultural landscape. The ancient places of worship (heiau) nearby include 'Ili'ilikea which is located just ma uka of Laniākea Beach. Down the road is the Kahōkūwelowelo heiau complex which was a school for Kahuna (Priests). In ancient Hawai‘i, the commoner never approached this site and had the utmost fear and respect for the place that held so much spiritual power.

Honu themselves are significant in Hawaiian culture and religion as they are the 'aumakua or guardian spirits of many 'ohana and are a part of our cosmogonic genealogies. According to tradition all living things were born from the ocean including the Honu and the Kanaka Maoli people.

The continued harrasment of the Honu by hundreds of visitors daily along the stretch of shoreline from Sunset to Kaiaka Point is well documented and is of great concern to environmentalist, residents, and most especially Kanaka Maoli. The harm done to the wellbeing of the Honu affects the native people of this land most especially.

Therefore, we urge this committee to pass Bill 34.

Me ka 'oiai'o,

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Public Affairs Officer, Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i Kōmike Kalai‘āina