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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
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Written Comments

HCR90

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP AND EXAMINE WAYS TO STREAMLINE THE PROCESS FOR NAMING PUBLIC LANDS AND FACILITIES

Comments by the Legislative Reference Bureau
Charlotte A. Carter-Yamauchi, Acting Director

Presented to the House Committee on Water and Land

Monday, March 24, 2014, 10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 325

Chair Evans and Members of the Committee:

Good morning Chair Evans and members of the Committee, thank you for providing the opportunity to submit written comments on H.C.R. No. 90, Requesting the Legislative Reference Bureau to Convene a Working Group and Examine Ways to Streamline the Process for Naming Public Lands and Facilities.

The purpose of this measure is to, among other things:

- (1) Have the Legislative Reference Bureau convene a working group, to include:
 - (A) One member of the House of Representatives designated by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
 - (B) One member of the Senate designated by the President of the Senate;
 - (C) One Native Hawaiian expert designated by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; and
 - (D) Representatives from any state agency that names public lands and facilities;

for the purpose of investigating and reporting on current state processes for naming public lands and facilities;

- (2) Request the working group to prepare a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, regarding the potential for streamlining and unifying the process for naming public lands and facilities; and
- (3) Request that the working group submit the report to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2015.

While the Legislative Reference Bureau takes no position on this measure, we submit the following comments for your consideration.

The Bureau, as a matter of legislative custom and practice, is not normally charged with the responsibility to **convene** working groups, task forces, or other temporary entities established by the Legislature, particularly when Legislators have been requested to serve on such entities. This responsibility has historically been reserved to being within the province of either the Executive Branch, or legislative committee chairpersons or the leadership of the respective houses of the Legislature. We suspect that, to a certain extent, this custom and practice has evolved from the acknowledgement that the Bureau:

- (1) As a legislative staff agency, could be perceived as being placed in a position of authority over Legislators; and
- (2) Lacks the appropriate access to facilities and administrative resources (e.g., meeting rooms and handling of ministerial matters relating to travel arrangements and reimbursement of working group/task force participants).

A more appropriate role for the Bureau would probably be to serve as a research and/or drafting resource to the Legislators serving on the working group as opposed to the working group's convener.

If the measure is amended to limit the scope of the Bureau's role as noted in our comments above, the Bureau believes that the services requested under this measure would be manageable and that the Bureau would be able to provide the services in the time allotted; provided that the Bureau's interim workload is not adversely impacted by too many other studies or additional responsibilities, such as conducting, writing, or finalizing other reports, drafting legislation, or both, for other state agencies, task forces, or working groups that may be requested or required under other legislative measures.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide written comments.