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STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 3109 SD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC SAFETY

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

March 13, 2026

Aloha Chair Belatti, Vice Chair Iwamoto, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 3109 SD1. This bill proposes to establish the Administrator of HIEMA as the Deputy Director of Emergency Management within the Department of Defense, under the direction of the Adjutant General.

This change will:

- Clarify the leadership structure and chain of command within the Department of Defense.
- Strengthen operational authority and coordination during emergencies.
- Enhance the state's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from both natural and human-caused disasters.

By aligning HIEMA's leadership model with proven organizational frameworks used in other state departments, this measure supports improved efficiency and clearer accountability.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 3109 SD1.

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