

RE: DLNR Shangri La Shoreline Safety Project
Date of meeting: Friday, May 26, 2023

Thank you, the Honorable DLNR Board Members, for taking interest in a project that will make a beautiful place safer. As an immediately adjacent neighbor to the Doris Duke Estate for 27 years, I used to go to the sea water pool almost everyday and enjoyed every moment of it. This place is serene and beautiful and I loved it! However, I would be extremely selfish if I allow my personal enjoyment and nostalgia supersede the risk that may destroy the life of an innocent kid or deprive anyone the enjoyment of life for the rest of their lives. The chance might be slim, but if she or he were your own kid, it is definitely not slim at all.

The situation has gotten worse in recent years, probably because of the unintended publicity and the smell of the word "danger". Kids are attracted to dangerous things. What concerns me the most, is not just that kids dive into the ocean full of rocks and coral reefs underneath, but, because this place can become very crowded sometimes, and some kids actually started doing horse plays on top of the breakwater. This is rare and I have not seen any kid being pushed onto the rocks yet, but it could happen. And the consequences can be dire.

I appreciate everything Shangri La has done over the years to discourage behavior that has led to permanent injury—signage, fencing, security— but I don't think putting guards 24 hours a day will help the situation. We ALL know that is not possible. Because this is an open ocean, I have seen kids swim from the adjacent Cromwell beach or even from the Diamond Head beach to play at the breakwater. Nothing could stop them from going there. Actually, putting guards on duty makes this attractive nuisance more attractive. And more dangerous.

The plan will remove the breakwater and with it the activity that has already resulted in paralysis for several kids. I have known staff members at Shangri La especially its deputy director Lea Major for many years, and I am confident that they will do everything possible to make this place more beautiful and keep the area open for safer swimming and other recreations. As an immediately adjacent neighbor, I believe this is the right choice for our futures and for our families.

Respectfully submitted

Wei-Chang Liauh
4119 Papu Circle
Honolulu, HI 96816