

## **Testimony in Support of Agenda Item J-4: Issuance of Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. for Storage of a Container and a Vehicle in the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor**

Aloha members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Jonah Kogen, and I am submitting a testimony in strong support of the Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation's request to approve the issuance of a Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. for the storage containers and vehicle at the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor.

AccesSurf has been a transformative force in our community, providing individuals with disabilities the opportunity to experience the healing power of the ocean through adaptive surfing. This critical program fosters empowerment, physical well-being, and social inclusion for people of all abilities. In order to continue these life-changing services, AccesSurf requires storage for essential equipment, including surfboards, adaptive devices, and vehicles, which are necessary to facilitate their programs. Having a centralized space that is also close to beach access will have a tremendous impact on AccesSurf sustainability and operations.

The approval of this permit will ensure that AccesSurf can maintain and access the equipment required to provide its year-round services to people with disabilities, allowing for greater outreach and program expansion. Furthermore, AccesSurf plays an important role in promoting a positive image of Hawai'i as a place where inclusion and accessibility are prioritized, and it contributes significantly to the local community by fostering diversity and unity.

I respectfully urge the Board to approve the issuance of the Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. so they can continue their important work in our community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jonah Kogen

[JonahKogen@gmail.com](mailto:JonahKogen@gmail.com)

808 861-5925

**From:** [Jenn](#)  
**To:** [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimony in Support of Agenda Item J-4: Issuance of Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc.  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 10:14:07 PM

---

## **Testimony in Support of Agenda Item J-4: Issuance of Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. for Storage of a Container and a Vehicle in the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor**

Aloha members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Jennifer Lynch, and I am submitting a testimony in strong support of the Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation's request to approve the issuance of a Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. for the storage containers and vehicle at the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor.

I have been participant in AccesSurf Hawaii (ASH) programs for over 7 years, and it truly has been life-changing experience for me. As someone with a rare genetic disease, that's recently been learning to adapt to life with spinal cord injuries, I live for those magic moments on ASH days where it's possible to feel whole again. It's not just the invincible rush from surfing, it's also all the smiles, joy, and healing energy from the incredible ASH circle of people ready to pick you up after getting knocked down by a big wave too. Without ASH, I absolutely would not have had a way to experience the ocean safely on my own.

The expertise, adaptive equipment, and pure Aloha provided by the ASH organization is world-class bar none. My health has greatly improved since I first became an ASH participant and I attribute much of this positive change directly to the therapeutic experiences offered by ASH, and also to the strong ASH community that serve as a uniquely supportive resource for otherwise isolated disabled people like myself. To go from spending months trapped in a hospital bed and wheelchair, to having the opportunity and ability to regularly go surfing (with ASH support) is a miracle beyond my wildest dreams.

AccesSurf has been a transformative force not only in my life, but also in our community, providing individuals with disabilities, the opportunity to experience the healing power of the ocean through adaptive surfing. This critical program fosters empowerment, physical well-being, and social inclusion for people of all abilities. In order to continue these life-changing services, AccesSurf requires storage for essential equipment, including surfboards, adaptive devices, and vehicles, which are necessary to facilitate their programs. Having a centralized space that is also close to beach access will have a tremendous impact on AccesSurf sustainability and operations.

The approval of this permit will ensure that AccesSurf can maintain and access the equipment required to provide its year-round services to people with disabilities, allowing for greater outreach and program expansion. Furthermore, AccesSurf plays an important role in promoting a positive image of Hawai'i as a place where inclusion and accessibility are prioritized, and it contributes significantly to the local community by fostering diversity and unity. I respectfully urge the Board to approve the issuance of the Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. so they can continue their important work in our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lynch

PO Box 11651  
Honolulu, HI 97828

[J3NgLyn@gmail.com](mailto:J3NgLyn@gmail.com)

**From:** [Gabe Ruiz](#)  
**To:** [DLNR.BLNR.Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimony in Support of Agenda Item J-4: Issuance of Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. for Storage of a Container and a Vehicle in the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 3:47:18 PM

---

Aloha members of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,

My name is Gabriel Ruiz, and I am submitting a testimony in strong support of the Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation's request to approve the issuance of a Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. for the storage containers and vehicle at the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor.

I am currently the program Coordinator for AccesSurf. I am also a Hawai'i State Certified EMT and a licensed ship captain. I had volunteered with AccesSurf since 2014, and chose to work for AccesSurf in 2024 due to the tremendous passion that volunteers and staff have for the mission of this organization. Not only does this organization directly impact participants with disabilities and their families, but the effect it has on those of us who have volunteered can only be described as pure aloha. The joy that is felt from being part of something much bigger than oneself spreads into our everyday lives and into every corner of our community.

I know first-hand what the struggles are that keep this organization from reaching even more people, participants and volunteers alike. Storage at this location would allow us to be able to maintain our current equipment in a timely manner, allocate money being used to store our van towards programs, provide access to adaptive equipment to those that need it in town, and opens the possibility for us to partner with surf schools and other community partners.

I respectfully urge the Board to approve the issuance of the Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. so we can continue our important work in the community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

--

Gabriel Ruiz  
Program Coordinator  
(808) 236-4200

**AccesSurf Hawaii**

[www.accessurf.org](http://www.accessurf.org)



February 10, 2025

**Testimony in Support of Agenda Item J-4: Issuance of Revocable Permit to AccesSurf Hawaii, Inc. for Storage of a Container and a Vehicle in the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor**

Aloha Chair and Members of the Board,

My name is Cara Short, and I am the Executive Director of AccesSurf Hawaii. I am submitting a testimony in full support for Agenda Item J-4, which pertains to the issuance of a revocable permit for the storage of a container and a vehicle at the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor.

As an organization committed to providing adaptive surfing and other water-based activities for individuals with disabilities, we depend on specialized equipment to serve our participants. This includes modified surfboards, canoe paddling equipment, beach mats, beach wheelchairs, and other adaptive tools. Our programs would not be possible without this accessibility equipment. For years, we have been managing our gear across remote storage locations and personal homes, which has led to significant inefficiencies, as well as challenges with maintenance and inventory tracking.

The Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor is an ideal location for this storage, as it allows us to efficiently access our equipment and transport our gear to and from programs at various locations including the ocean access points close to Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor. This centralized location also allows us to be responsive in meeting the needs of our growing participant base, without the logistical challenges that come with distant storage solutions.

Furthermore, as AccesSurf's programs continue to expand, the need for reliable and accessible storage has become more urgent. This revocable permit would allow us to maintain the equipment in a convenient location while being able to reach our program sites quickly and efficiently.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of this request and your support for our efforts to provide life-changing experiences to individuals with disabilities. The ability to store our equipment at the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor is crucial to the continued success and growth of our programs, and we are grateful for the opportunity to make this request.

Mahalo for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cara Short".

Cara Short  
Executive Director AccesSurf Hawaii. [cara@accessurf.org](mailto:cara@accessurf.org)



AccesSurf Hawai'i  
PO Box 15152  
Honolulu, HI, 96830



808-236-4200



[info@accessurf.org](mailto:info@accessurf.org)



Tax ID: 20-4420646