

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
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**Testimony of  
LAURA H. THIELEN  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE**

**Friday, February 27, 2009  
2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 979  
RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

House Bill 979 proposes to direct funds from the "Special Land and Development Fund" (SLDF) and the Land Conservation Fund (LCF) to invasive species control and mitigation, reforestation, and sediment run-off mitigation. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) opposes this bill.

The SLDF currently provides funding for projects that have an immediate and significant impact on public safety, such as rock fall mitigation and hazardous materials remediation and staffing for the Department's Land Division, all management, maintenance and operational needs for state lease lands, beach restoration, geothermal program management and monitoring, dam safety, and emergency response on state lands. If funds are available in the SLDF, projects related to invasive species control and mitigation, reforestation, and sediment run-off mitigation could be funded under the current provisions of Section 171-19(a)(2), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), for lands owned and managed by the Department.

The portion of this bill amending Section 173A-5, HRS, proposes to expand the uses of the LCF to include invasive species control and reforestation. The LCF currently funds the Legacy Land Conservation Program, which acquires important conservation, cultural and recreation and open space lands and is facing a significant decrease in its revenues. Last year, this Program secured matching federal or state funds on a 3:1 basis, including \$6.8 million in federal funding for acquisition projects. The Department is opposed to diverting these funds from the current purpose of protection and acquisition of important resources value lands.

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LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i  
Commenting on H.B. 979 Relating to the Environment  
House Committee on Finance  
February 27, 2009, 2:00PM, Room 308

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*The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawaii's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for native species in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 32,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on O'ahu, Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.*

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The Nature Conservancy very much appreciates the intent of H.B. 979 to find additional sources of funding to support invasive species control and forest conservation.

As you know, watershed and invasive species programs that are supported by the DLNR's Natural Area Reserve (NAR) Fund are anticipating 50-60% cuts in State funding because the conveyance tax source of funding is drastically reduced with the down real estate market.

However, we are also aware that the DLNR's Special Land and Development Fund and the Land Conservation Fund are short of revenue and have their own very important priorities and missions to support. We don't think that statutorily authorizing new expenditures from the SLDF or LCF will provide significant benefit to any one program, but may only serve to dilute or shift limited funds around between needy programs.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment

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## **FINTestimony**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009 7:53 PM  
**To:** FINTestimony  
**Cc:** pennysfh@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB979 on 2/27/2009 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for FIN 2/27/2009 2:00:00 PM HB979

Conference room: 308  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Penny Levin  
Organization: E kupaku ka 'aina  
Address: Maui  
Phone:  
E-mail: pennysfh@hawaii.rr.com  
Submitted on: 2/24/2009

**Comments:**

E kupaku ka 'aina supports HB979. The need to keep invasive species control and conservation efforts funded is important to maintaining the health of our islands. Invasive species do not stop spreading just because we are in an economic recession. Without control efforts we can lose hard won ground in reducing impact and eradication. Please, continue to fund this work.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Penny Levin  
Executive Director  
E kupaku ka 'aina  
Maui