

LATE



HAWAIIAN ISLANDS LAND TRUST

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February 24, 2011

Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
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Hawaii House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS LAND TRUST TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 808 RELATING TO THE CONVEYANCE TAX House Committee on Finance Friday, March 4, 2011, 11:00 a.m., Room 302

My name is Dale Bonar and I am the Executive Director of the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust. In addition for the past 5 years, I have served as the Chairperson of the State Natural Areas Reserve System and the Legacy Land Conservation Fund Commission. In these positions I have worked closely with most divisions of DLNR and have seen firsthand the overwhelming task they have on their plate in protecting state lands and the increasing struggles they have had to endure as staff positions and operational funding has been cut due to chronic underfunding of programs.

The Natural Areas Reserve System Fund (NARS) and the Legacy Land Conservation Fund (LLCF) have already suffered 60% reduction in funding.

Given the enormous importance of a healthy, inviting environment to the quality of life in Hawaii and it's inseparable linkage to making Hawaii one of the most attractive tourist destinations on earth, it is critical that DLNR's activities be supported and not curtailed further.

The resources provided by the LCF has allowed eligible state and county agencies and land conservation nonprofits to leverage every LCF dollar with at least three dollars in matching funds from federal, county and private entities. Loss of the LCF funds will effectively block most of the land protection efforts that have been so successful in four years of the Legacy Lands program.

The Natural Areas Reserve Fund supports a wide variety of on-the-ground activities protecting our increasingly threatened native environmental and cultural resources in both terrestrial and marine environments. It has been progressively harder to carry out these functions as resources have declined, and our expanding problem with invasive species is only one solid example of the result of the cutbacks. We are losing native species and habitats. There is

no simple low-cost "fix" to environmental and cultural protections provided by these programs.

Please do not decimate these incredibly successful programs. Hawaii's economy, sense of place and quality of life all depend on a healthy environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dale B. Bonar".

Dale B. Bonar, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Linda Burnham Larish
Survey Entomologist and Plant Propagation and Restoration Specialist with Pacific
Cooperative Studies Unit, Hilo Hawaii
Hearing for HB808
February 25, 2011 at 11 a.m.

Testimony on HB808

LATE TESTIMONY

- I oppose HB 808 Relating to the Conveyance Tax.
- I support the the Natural Area Reserve Fund, Land Conservation Fund, and Rental Housing Trust Fund against funding cuts and raids.
- These three funds are supported by the conveyance tax and promote wildlife conservation; watershed protection; invasive species control; land acquisition for open space agriculture, recreation, and other public values; and affordable rental housing.
- Hundreds of Hawai'i citizens fought hard to increase the conveyance tax to support these worthy public programs.
- It is not in the public interest to raid these funds to help balance the budget when these funds leverage millions of dollars from the private sector and federal government.
- The Natural Area Reserve Fund and Land Conservation Fund have already experienced 60% cuts in State funding when the Legislature redirected 20% of the revenue from the NAR Fund to the State General Fund in 2009, and the conveyance tax source of funding was drastically reduced with the down real estate market.

Thank you,

Linda Burnham Larish

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2011 7:49 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: dduffy@hawaii.edu
Subject: Testimony for HB808 on 2/25/2011 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 2/25/2011 11:00:00 AM HB808

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: David Duffy
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: dduffy@hawaii.edu
Submitted on: 2/24/2011

LATE TESTIMONY

Comments:

I realize times are tight but some things are like changing the oil in your car, the damage done can't be undone later. The programs that will be cut by this measure have already been cut. They have been working on containing coqui frogs on Maui and keeping them off of Kauai and Oahu. I expect if this passes, we will be hearing a lot more coqui in a lot more places.

Same with little fire ants. Funding from this fund helped exterminate them on Maui, but they will be back and they will get to other islands. We know how to get rid of them, we just need the skilled people to do it.

Our watersheds aren't going to get better on their own, they need a continuous, but modest investment to keep them providing water for us. The watershed partnerships are a bargain, but they aren't free.

Finally, our Natural Area Reserves are Hawaii's amazing collection of biodiversity. They receive almost no funding so each dollar is precious. Take away that money and the children of our grandchildren will wonder why, when times got tough, we cared so little about the land that they wish they could still see as we do today.

Please, in this time of hard choices, remember the land, and fund those who work to protect it.

Mahalo,

David Duffy

LATE

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2011 8:09 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: margaretwille@mac.com
Subject: Testimony for HB808 on 2/25/2011 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 2/25/2011 11:00:00 AM HB808

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Margaret Wille
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: margaretwille@mac.com
Submitted on: 2/25/2011

Comments:

I am very opposed to this legislation to remove funds to this conservation fund and rental housing programs. Very Very short sighted. MANY OTHER WAYS TO RAISE FUNDS WITHOUT UNDERMINING KEY SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS. Margaret Wille
Attorney at Law Waimea Hawaii

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2011 8:16 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: info@waa-hawaii.org
Subject: Testimony for HB808 on 2/25/2011 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 2/25/2011 11:00:00 AM HB808

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Shannon Wood
Organization: Windward Ahupua`a Alliance
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: info@waa-hawaii.org
Submitted on: 2/25/2011

Comments:

The Windwad Ahupua`a Alliance opposes HB 808 because it targets three very important special state funds which provide the necessary dollars to to support their separate missions.

WAA urges the Finance Committee to defer further action on HB 808.

Mahalo for the opportunity to present our position on this bill.

FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2011 11:07 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: varanusmoss@msn.com
Subject: Testimony for HB808 on 2/25/2011 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for FIN 2/25/2011 11:00:00 AM HB808

Conference room: 308
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jesse Eiben
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: varanusmoss@msn.com
Submitted on: 2/25/2011

LATE TESTIMONY

Comments:

I oppose HB808 because it will AGAIN severely limit the ability of natural resource programs to protect and preserve the sustainability of the Hawaiian islands in the short and long term.

It is an easily verified fact that the most inexpensive way to save money is in the prevention of damage rather than through allowing damage then paying for fixing the repercussions.

In this case, damage to the ecosystem and agriculture due to not providing funding for the prevention and control of invasive species effects or funding managing the environmental problems already present in natural and agricultural ecosystems. Also, by merely having a properly financially supported group of organizations that can help inform, directly protect, and react when environmental problems arise, the probability of great economic and environmental harm is reduced.
Reactionary measures for agricultural and environmental harm is always slower and more costly than having the support for teams and programs already funded properly.
This bill is not only short-sighted, but inherently wrong for saving money.
NARS and Watershed partnerships should not have budgets reduced.

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony of Samuel N.R. Aruch
Opposing H.B. 808 Relating to the Conveyance Tax
House Committee on Finance
Friday, February 25, 2011, 11:00AM, Rm. 308

I strongly Oppose H.B. 808

Funding and supporting conservation efforts is critical to our economic, social, and cultural well being and identity in Hawai'i. The jobs created by funding conservation activities are sustainable, skilled, and beneficial to our sensitive environment.

Effective and efficient management of our natural resources requires dedicated and skilled personnel. Reducing funding to these programs will cause further reductions in jobs, decrease the effective management of important watersheds and reduce the protection of native species found nowhere else in the world. Once these species are gone they are gone forever.

The conveyance tax provides funding to programs such as the Hawai'i Youth Conservation Corps. Programs such as these provide necessary hands on work experience for our youth and expose them to sustainable occupations. As a conservation biologist that has worked for Federal, State, non-profit and private conservation entities I have witnessed participants in these programs become inspired by the work they do and go on to professional careers as conservation practitioners in Hawai'i.

Our resources are unique. Our watersheds are threatened and sensitive. Regardless of state of our economy we need fresh clean water. We need skilled and dedicated people to maintain these areas. Our youth need to be exposed to positive and exciting careers so they will stay on the islands. Funding watershed protection protects our water supply in perpetuity, creates sustainable jobs, and enhances our economy. In a time of economic trouble we need to look for ways to enhance the viability of these programs because they improve the quality of life for all of us in Hawai'i.

Sincerely,
Samuel N.R. Aruch