



Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND HOUSING

February 3, 2011, 1:15 P.M.
(Testimony is 1 page long)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 734

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawaii Chapter, with 8,000 dues paying members and supporters statewide, *supports* SB 734. This measure would allow state income taxpayers to designate a portion of their returns to the natural area reserve fund, the land conservation fund, or the rental housing trust fund.

Hawai'i has always placed a high premium on protecting our natural areas. For example, Article XI of the Hawai'i State Constitution directs that "For the benefit of present and future generations, the State and its political subdivisions shall conserve and protect Hawai'i's natural beauty and all natural resources, including land, water, air, minerals and energy sources, and shall promote the development and utilization of these resources in a manner consistent with their conservation and in furtherance of the self-sufficiency of the State"

This measure would take a step forward in ensuring citizens could elect to protect our natural areas. This measure gives folks a simple way to protect Hawai'i's fragile and unique environment.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

From: [Windward Ahupua`a Alliance](#)
To: [WLH Testimony](#)
Subject: SB 734 Testimony
Date: Thursday, February 03, 2011 11:33:08 AM

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND AND HOUSING
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Malama Solomon, Vice Chair

1:15 pm
Thursday, February 3, 2011
Conference Room 225

SB 734 - RELATING TO TAXATION

Permits state income tax payers to designate a portion of their state income tax returns to the natural area reserve fund, the land conservation fund, or the rental housing trust fund. Applies to taxable years beginning after 12/31/10.

On behalf of the ***Windward Ahupua`a Alliance***, I am speaking in support of **SB 734** which would allow Hawai`i taxpayers who will be getting a refund from the ***State of Hawai`i*** for income tax over-payments to designate a set amount to three already-established funds: the ***Natural Area Reserve Fund***, the ***Land Conservation Fund***, and the ***Rental Housing Trust Fund***.

There are four other check-off options already in existence - see below for the most recent reports on the funds generated by this donations.

Although most people know of our involvement in a wide range of environmental & renewable energy issues, about a year ago we expanded our work to include housing, health, and human services issues & concerns.

All three of these funds address our issues; but, more importantly, it doesn't cost the ***State of Hawai`i*** any additional money to support them. The **Tax Department** would have to refund the entire over-payment.

In speaking with individuals whose agencies have benefited from receiving these small donations, it seems that many folks actually wind up donating even more money because they feel that the particular cause is worth supporting.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of **SB 734**.

Shannon Wood, ***President & Co-Founder***
Windward Ahupua`a Alliance

PLANT A NATIVE TREE CAMPAIGN/Plug In & Power UP!/RECYCLING FOR CHANGE/BUST-A-DUMPER Campaign

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School Maintenance & Repair Fund - \$2 check-off

FY2008	\$114,000
FY2009	\$111,000

Public Library Fund - \$2 check-off

FY2009	\$ 98,000
FY2009	\$ 96,000

Domestic Violence/Child Abuse Fund - \$5 check-off

FY2008	\$209,000
FY2009	\$191,000

Election Campaign Fund - \$2/\$3 check-off

FY2008	\$107,000
FY2009	\$205,000