



Testimony of Tim Johns in Support of HB 2037 HD1 SD1
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, March 31, 2016, 9:05PM HCR 211

The Honorable Jill Tokuda, Chair, and Committee Members,

My name is Tim Johns, Chair, World Conservation Congress, National Host Committee/Hawaii 2016, testifying in strong support of HB 2037 HD1 SD1, Relating to the World Conservation Congress.

First, I am extremely proud and honored that Hawaii was chosen over many other countries to be the first host of the World Conservation Congress in America.

It is truly an honor, that out of the 8 qualified countries, Hawaii was chosen to showcase and be the leader on issues such as global climate change, biodiversity, native species, water management and of course, conservation/environmental leadership in an important cultural setting. Hawaii sets the stage for policies and discussions regarding conservation using Hawaiian cultural practices and practices by other indigenous cultures for generations to come.

We are very thankful of Hawaii's legislative body to assist and take the leadership with the efforts of the World Conservation Congress. The appropriations set aside from this body will help in our efforts of making this World Congress very meaningful and impactful.

The World Conservation Congress is important to Hawaii now and for its future. First, as an island community, global policies that are discussed and passed have a direct impact on Hawaii. Policies and discussions on fisheries, garbage drift, invasive species, land and water use, all have direct impact in our communities, the way that we are able to live, and our host culture. The focus of the conference here in Hawaii allows Hawaii to teach the world that conservation and growth can seamlessly blend together.

The economic benefits to the State will be about \$65M based on the attendance of approximately 8000 delegates. The significant social and media exposure will also

expand the economic benefits to the State, as the event will show case Hawaii in a manner that tourism dollars could not reach or match.

The intellectual benefits to the State are untold. The conference will provide opportunities for our youth, policy-makers and citizens to share and learn from the congress delegates more about conservation issues and initiatives, and to participate in the discussions on a global scale.

Hawaii has the benefit of showcasing its programs over any other state in the union. Hawaii always has been a leader in this regard, but this conference puts the spotlight on the many projects that Hawaii puts forth. From programs such as the amazing Malama Honua worldwide voyages of the Hokule'a or the discussion about science versus host culture concerns such as Mauna Kea and Haleakala. This conference will provide opportunities for the State that is unimagined.

To date, the Hawaii host committee has been able to secure over \$1.2M from private fundraising. We are diligently working hard to raise additional funds to meet the expectations of over \$3M of Hawaii's budget share. This appropriate will help us reach our anticipated goal of \$13.2M. This appropriate is necessary in helping us secure more funds from private endowments, foundations and corporations.

The World Conservation Congress will be held September 1 – 10, 2016. Your insight and assistance, will provide a lifetime opportunity for Hawaii and its' people to teach the world how we all malama our islands, and that the practices that we employ here can provide the seed for other nations to follow.

We urge this Committee to pass and support HB 2037 HD1 SD1. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.