

## Testimony In Support of HB 2036 HD1- Relating to Conservation Districts

I would like to offer testimony in support of HB 2036, which would mandate a 90-day extension of a conservation district use permit decision deadline beyond the time necessary to complete an environmental impact statement or contested case hearing.

The bill introduces a minor but common sense modification of Section 183C-6 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes on Conservation Districts. The current statute law nominally does mandate a "decision on a completed application for permit" within 180 days "of its acceptance. However, when either an environmental impact statement or contested case hearing is required, the current law is murkier, stating only that an extension "may" be extended for 90 days in these two cases "at the request of the applicant". The bill thus streamlines and provides clarity for this statute law where it is currently lacking.

As a resident of Hawai'i, I am deeply concerned about the state's poor reputation for being receptive to business investment and its ability to provide future generations with brighter employment prospects. No doubt a major contributor to Hawaii's seemingly hostile business climate is the highly inefficient and protracted legal process that any innovator faces. To many investors, Hawai'i is just not worth the effort.

Residents of Hawai'i, regardless of whether they are for or against a particular project, deserve a fair permitting process with clear expectations for when a decision will be handed down IN ALL CASES. Absent this bill, some permit decisions could in principle take years to reach.

As HB 2036 sets a clear timeline for permit decisions when an environmental impact statement or contested case hearing is required, I strongly support it. Furthermore, as this is a pressing issue for Hawaii \*now\* I strongly suggest that it should be made effective immediately.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

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