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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS

Tuesday, March 1, 2016
1:40 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2773, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE ALOHA+ CHALLENGE

Senate Bill 2773, Senate Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds for the natural resource, clean energy, and green workforce goals of the Aloha+ Challenge. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure provided that this appropriation does not adversely impact appropriations for other priorities in the Executive Budget request or any existing Department appropriated funding.**

This proposal would expand on the Administration's budget request that increases funding for priority natural resource programs. Funds would be eligible for matching funds, typically between 1:1 and 3:1, leveraged from local, federal and private sources.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature's World Conservation Congress (Congress), held once every four years, highlights the hosting countries' excellence in conservation laws and practices. Hawaii's commitment to hosting this global Congress in September 2016, and its commitment to sustainability through the Aloha+ Challenge, could enhance important international collaboration, research and funding opportunities for Hawaii. This Congress will allow Hawaii to showcase the techniques used for natural resource management and the challenges we face, thus highlighting research, new technologies and funding needs.

The following examples of programs and projects that additional Aloha+ funding could enable and support are scalable depending on availability of funds:

Part II: Access, Easements, Trails, Outdoor Recreation Improvements, Environmental Education

The Department's access and environmental education programs connect residents and visitors to Hawaii's natural areas, iconic scenery, and access to important cultural and management areas. Increased funding for these programs would allow:

- Increase trail and road maintenance. The 2015 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identified hiking as the #1 land based activity in Hawaii. The Na Ala Hele Trails and Access Program manages 124 trails and roads (855 miles statewide), some of which are potentially hazardous due to overuse from hundreds of thousands of users per year.
- Expand activities to a broad array of stakeholders including: mountain bikers, horseback riders, four wheel drivers, motor cross, etc.
- Create new hunting areas statewide and expand access agreements. This will allow hunters to help keep feral ungulate populations in check, as well as help keep highly flammable vegetation down that reduces wildfire severity.
- Develop stronger educational programs in rural areas through internships, volunteer activities and educational curriculum development.

Part III: Watershed Protection

Protecting forested watersheds is one of the Department's top priorities. New climate change studies forecast a 10-45 percent decline in rainfall in the mid to late 21st century, making forest protection more urgent than ever.

- The availability and affordability of fresh water is so dependent on Hawaii's forests that economists estimate investments in forest protection have a 50:1 benefit to cost ratio.
- This funding would protect over 110,000 acres and plant over 22,000 trees.

Part IV: Conservation and Resources Enforcement Program

This funding would build on a successful pilot program on Maui that involves local communities protecting near-shore fishery resources. The lessons learned from this program could be used to expand these efforts statewide. Education and enforcement are essential to preserve Hawaii's threatened fisheries.

Part V: Invasive Species Control

The Department is the administrative host of the interagency Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC), which funds critical invasive species prevention, control, outreach, and research projects that fill gaps between existing agency programs or develop new tools and methodologies.

- In Fiscal Year 2016, the legislature provided \$4,750,000 to the HISC that supports important projects, including the work of the UH Invasive Species Committees, little fire ant control, Rapid Ohia Death monitoring, and an interagency response to the coconut rhinoceros beetle infestation.
- The HISC has worked with partners to develop FY17 pre-proposals illustrating what could be achieved depending on available funds. Pre-proposals totaled \$10,000,000 and can found on the HISC website: <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/hisc/projects/fy17/>

Part VI: Native Species Restoration

This request will provide capacity to manage endangered species initiatives for which Federal grants are available to match. The recovery of these incredibly unique plants and wildlife is dependent on increased and sustained funding.

- The Alala (Hawaiian crow) has been extinct in the wild since 2002. State funds are needed to leverage non-state funds to support the release of the Alala into the wild in September 2016.
- It is necessary to expand and refurbish aviaries for the Keauhou Bird Conservation Center and the Maui Bird Conservation Center to accommodate two additional forest bird species to the captive breeding program.
- Funds are needed to support a collaborative effort between the Department of Transportation and the Division of Forestry and Wildlife to mitigate bird aircraft strike hazards statewide.
- Due to an increase in size and frequency of wildfires, it is necessary to plan for emergencies by supporting the Wildfire Contingency Fund that is used during any emergency incident.

Part VII: Forest Reserve Management

Forests are increasingly threatened by invasive species and wildfire. Reducing heavy fuel loads through forest biomass thinning and removal is a cost effective way to lower the risk of catastrophic fires.

- The average annual number of fires that burn over 100 acres in Hawaii has increased five-fold in the past 40 years. These burned areas can be harvested to provide wood for bioenergy and lumber, and replanted to create productive forests.
- Funds are needed to launch a pilot volunteer carbon market project on Hawaii Island. If successful, this project could not only finance reforestation of a degraded forest area but also provide a long-term revenue source for other natural resource needs.
- Private landowners make up 66% of the forest owners in Hawaii. On average the Department's landowner assistance programs receive 2:1 in match from non-state dollars. Providing modest incentive programs for private forest landowners is important for the overall health and productivity of Hawaii's forest. Any increase in private landowner assistance program funding will produce three times the forest protection, conservation and productivity of the state dollars invested.

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CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
630 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HI 96843



March 1, 2016

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Deputy Manager and Chief Engineer

The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
and Members
Committee on Ways and Means
State Senate
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Tokuda and Members:

Subject: Senate Bill 2773, SD 1: Relating to The Aloha+ Challenge

We support Senate Bill 2773, SD 1, which provides appropriations to support the natural resources, clean energy, and green workforce goals of the Aloha+ Challenge. We support the protection of watersheds that provides and replenishes freshwater supplies. The protection of our forested watersheds will ensure our groundwater supplies will be sustainable for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony on Senate Bill 2773, SD 1.

Very truly yours,


ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.
Manager and Chief Engineer



Water has no substitute.....Conserve it

Testimony of Department of Water, County of Kaua'i
Supporting SB 2773 Relating to the Aloha+ Challenge
Senate Committee On Ways And Means
Tuesday, March 1, 2016, 1:40PM, Room 211

The Kaua'i Watershed Alliance strongly supports SB 2773 which if passed will appropriate funds for natural resources, clean energy and green work force goals of the Aloha Challenge.

The Kaua'i Watershed Alliance (KWA) has been actively managing portions of the mauka watershed on Kaua'i since 2003. Its members which include DLNR (DOFAW and Land Management Div.) make up a diverse group of public and private entities who own land within the mountainous watershed and understand the importance of protecting and preserving the forests that capture the water - our most precious resource. The Alliance also understands the importance of supporting local jobs and contractors.

In the past several years the Alliance has worked on fences, ungulate removal and invasive weed control in Priority One watershed areas in the mauka forests and watersheds over thousands of acres.

The watershed protection and invasive species programs supported with state funds are leveraged with matching funds from county, federal and private sources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony.

Mahalo

Edward Dini
for Kirk Saiki, P.E.
Manager and Chief Engineer



**Conservation Council
for Hawai'i**

Hawai'i's voice for wildlife

Kō Hawai'i leo no nā holoholona lōhiu



Testimony Submitted to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Hearing: Tuesday, March 1, 2016 1:40 pm
Conference Room 211

In Support of SB 2773 SD 1 Relating to the Aloha+ Challenge

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dele Cruz, and Members of the Committee.

Aloha. Conservation Council for Hawai'i supports SB 2773 SD 1, which appropriates funds for the natural resource, clean energy, and green workforce goals of the Aloha+ Challenge.

We support adequate funding for outdoor recreation trails, the Natural Area Reserves and watersheds, and a permanent Community Fisheries Enforcement Unit. Outdoor recreation, the reserves, watershed protection, and fisheries management are among the most important, yet underfunded programs of the Department of Land and Natural Resources. Furthermore, these programs are focused on protecting ceded land (mauka and makai) and public trust resources.

Environmental protection, including watershed management and invasive species control, are of cultural and economic concern; they are not only "environmental issues." As such, these programs should receive the highest level of support.

With all due respect, the State is not doing enough to protect and properly manage ceded land (mauka and submerged) and public trust resources. And the legislature is not providing enough money to protect these resources. We are concerned about the condition of ceded and other lands held in trust by the State for the people of Hawai'i, including future generations.

Please support SB 2773 SD 1 and increase the appropriation.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Ziegler

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The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means
March 1, 2016
1:40 p.m., Conference Room 211
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of SB 2773 SD1

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) **is in support of SB 2773 SD1, *Relating to the Aloha + Challenge***, which appropriates funds to support the natural resource, clean energy, and green workforce goals of the Aloha + Challenge.

The influx of invasive species and spread of existing pests, ever-increasing pressures on natural resources, and the urgent need to shift our society from carbon-based energy resources are all linked, as is the need to educate the next generation and engage them in local jobs that protect our islands. CGAPS participates in Hawai'i Green Growth, and we are a strong supporter of cross-cutting initiatives such as the Aloha + Challenge, where many different agencies, businesses, and individuals come together to identify common desires for our islands.

We respectfully ask your support SB 2773 SD1. Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,
Christy Martin
CGAPS

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

SHAN TSUTSUI
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

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TESTIMONY OF THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

1:40 PM, Tuesday, March 1, 2016
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

SENATE BILL 2773 SD1 RELATING TO THE ALOHA+ CHALLENGE

Senate Bill 2773 SD1 would appropriate funds to support the natural resource management goals of the Aloha+ Challenge. **The Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities in the Executive Budget request.**

The Aloha+ Challenge is a series of sustainability goals supported by the Hawaii State Legislature, the Governor of Hawaii, the mayors of each of the counties, and the CEO of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. The Aloha+ Challenge goal relating to natural resource management aims to reverse the trend of resource loss by, among other actions, mitigating invasive species introduction and establishment.

The HISC asked partners in the field of invasive species prevention and control to develop pre-proposals for Fiscal Year 2017 to illustrate projects that could be achieved, depending on available funds. These pre-proposals, which include research support for Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death mitigation, new biocontrol research, and expanded detection and response projects, are described in detail at <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/hisc/projects/fy17/>.

The HISC notes that a separate bill this session, Senate Bill 2799, would restructure the HISC as an attached agency known as the Hawaii Invasive Species Authority, and would appropriate \$10,000,000 for an interagency grants program. Should that measure be adopted, the HISC appropriations described in Senate Bill 2773 SD1 could be removed to avoid double appropriations.



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March 1, 2016

Testimony of the Kauai Invasive Species Committee

Supporting SB 2773 SD1 Relating to the Aloha+ Challenge Senate Committee on Ways and Means

House Committee on Ways and Means – Chair Tokuda and Vice Chair Dela Cruz

Tuesday, March 1, 2016, 1:40PM, Room 211

The Kauai Invasive Species Committee **supports** S.B. 2773 which would provide funding for invasive species, watershed protection, community fisheries management, recreation, native species restoration and fire protection. All these goals are part of the Aloha+ Challenge and Hawai'i's commitment to natural resource protection.

Natural resource management and watershed protection are vital to the state's economy, ecology and its residents' quality of life. Strong progressive management in this arena can insure a healthy future for the islands. KISC base operations are dependent on this funding and our eleven employees bring significant expertise to bear on invasive species management on the island of Kauai. Our continued efforts enhance agencies such as the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, DLNR and the Watershed Partnerships, as well as a collection of interested citizens, private businesses and private non-profits.

We would also like to thank the committee for their many years of support.

Sincerely,

Bill Lucey
Project Manager
Kauai Invasive Species Committee
University of Hawaii



Testimony of the O'ahu Invasive Species Committee
Supporting SB 2773 S.D. 1 Relating to the Aloha+ Challenge
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday March, 1 2016 1:40PM Room 211

The O'ahu Invasive Species Committee supports S.B. 2773 which would support funding for invasive species, watershed protection, community fisheries management, recreation, native species restoration and fire protection. All these goals are part of the Aloha+ Challenge and Hawai'i's commitment to natural resource protection.

Natural resource and watershed protection are vital to the state's economy and its residents' quality of life. Without adequate supplies of fresh water, the state will not be able to support the sustainability goals for the Aloha+ Challenge nor will the chief economic activity in the state, tourism, be able to survive. And without healthy forests, the state's fresh water supply will be at risk. A multi-layered and textured forest is better at directing rain and fog drip into the islands' aquifers than bare earth or single-species stands of invasive trees that have eliminated the understory.

OISC is a beneficiary of grants from the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council and we are very grateful for the HISC and the Legislature for being so forward-thinking. OISC aims to eradicate incipient species island-wide before they ever have a chance to move upslope and become a chronic problem for other land managers. Our work is supported and complemented by that of the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, the Watershed Partnerships, and other natural resource management activities that would be supported by the funds from this bill.

We hope this bill are part of a long-term commitment on the part of the state to fully support the agencies entrusted with the protection of our natural resources. Although it would seem that nature should be able to take care of itself, we, the citizens that depend on the ecosystem services natural resources provide, put too much pressure on our state's natural systems for them to be able to function without help. Therefore, we urge this bill to pass not only to provide funds for the coming fiscal year, but as part of a long-term commitment to protect the natural resources on which all life in this state depends.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i Program
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Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting S.B. 2773 SD1 Relating to the Aloha+ Challenge
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, March 1, 2016, 1:40PM, Room 211

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which life depends. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i. We manage 40,000 acres in 14 preserves and work in 19 coastal communities to help protect the near-shore reefs and waters of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnerships with government, private parties and communities to protect Hawai'i's important watershed forests and coral reefs.

The Nature Conservancy supports S.B. 2773 SD1 which would provide core funding support for the Department of Land and Natural Resources' (DLNR) critical forest, invasive species, and marine resources enforcement programs.

Healthy Hawaiian forests that are not overrun by invasive species act like a sponge, collecting rain and moisture, slowly delivering fresh water into streams and aquifers, absorbing greenhouse gases, and reducing runoff and siltation into near shore waters. These forests are also an important storehouse for Hawai'i's globally unique cultural and ecological heritage. However, UH's 2011 Rainfall Atlas catalogues a century of declining rainfall that is worse in recent decades. Last summer, temperature records were broken across the state and a record number of storms took aim at Hawai'i. In 2014, tropical storm Iselle hit Hawai'i island hard. Fallen albizia trees left Puna a quagmire of damaged houses, blocked roads and downed power lines. At the same time, native 'ōhi'a and koa forests in the area were virtually undamaged. These same native forests are also showing that they are better at capturing rain water and recharging aquifers than invasive species. Protecting and enhancing the health and function of Hawai'i's forests from the threats of invasive species and severe weather is one of the most important and effective things we can do to ensure a stable and productive environment for our future.

Invasive weeds, insects, diseases, snakes, and other pests are one of the greatest threats to Hawaii's economy, agriculture, natural environment, and the health and lifestyle of its people. With favorable conditions and limited competition, non-native species arrive in the Hawaiian Islands to find an easy environment in which to thrive. The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) provides a comprehensive, statewide approach to invasive species policy and funding including prevention, early detection, control, research and education programs. This effort necessarily results in important coordination, collaboration, and prioritization amongst government agencies and partners based on a variety of issues including human health, safety and well-being, economic and agricultural harm, and the threat to the health and function of the natural environment.

There is widespread agreement amongst a variety of stakeholders that Hawaii's fragile environment is in need of improved compliance, enforcement and prosecution of violations of our State natural resource laws. A 2006 State Auditor's report concludes that DLNR Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) officers are spread too thin and lack the equipment they need to do their jobs. This situation has not substantially improved in the ensuing ten years. Against this backdrop, a number of communities across the state have been organizing themselves to become more directly involved in the care and management of their natural resources, particularly in coastal and near shore areas. Some communities have partnered with DOCARE to raise awareness of natural resource laws and to improve compliance with those laws. This bill offers necessary funds for DOCARE to expand the successful Community Fisheries Enforcement Unit (CFEU) program statewide.

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