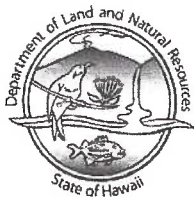


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committees on
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT, AND TECHNOLOGY
and
TRANSPORTATION AND ENERGY

Tuesday, February 16, 2016
2:50 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2999
RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Senate Bill 2999 proposes to require state agencies to participate in a carbon offset program to offset carbon emissions caused by their employees' air travel and would require the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to establish and administer this program. **The Department supports this measure and provides the following comments.**

Native forest ecosystems, as well as plantations aimed at revenue generation are an integral part of Hawaiian cultural practices; benefit recreational activities, such as hiking and hunting; provide open space and aesthetic beauty; provide invaluable lessons for environmental education; and can provide sustainable income from various forest resources.

The Department recognizes that state employees' air travel produces significant carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions that lead to adverse global climate effects. Afforestation and reforestation projects involving tree planting endemic, native or non-native trees can sequester substantial amounts of carbon dioxide, as well as provide a variety of ecological, cultural, recreational, educational, and economic functions.

The Department notes that establishing and administering a carbon offset program, as described in this bill, would require a considerable amount of personnel time and initial costs. However, over time fees paid to the Department from respective state employee cost offsets should cover the costs to maintain the program (staffing), and serve as a potential revenue stream to accelerate the amount of trees planted and cared for by afforestation or reforestation projects led by the Department. The Department suggests integrating the compensation of these costs when determining the cost of the offset.

SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

KEKOA KALUHIWA
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
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BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
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