

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

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**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**Thursday, February 8, 2018
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2219
RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

House Bill 2219 proposes to make eligible for membership on a county arborist advisory committee, certified arborists, horticulturists with specialization in trees, and persons who have received a master's degree in botany. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources supports this measure.**

The intent of this measure is to expand the qualifications for eligible members on the county arborist advisory committees. The current restriction of membership to landscape architects has made it difficult for some counties to have an active committee. In particular, the proposed addition of certified arborists and horticulturists will provide the county committees with other important skill sets and expertise essential for managing our urban forests.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

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

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

HB-2219

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 10:48:31 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rene Siracusa	Malama O Puna	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha -

I am president of Malama O Puna, a 501(c)(3) environmental nonprofit in Puna District, Island of Hawai'i. Since 2008 our county has been in violation of the Exceptional Tree Ordinance because we could not convince one of our (only) 3 landscape architects to chair the Arborist Advisory Committee, as is required by law. The negative impacts of this lack of a committee are:

1. there was no venue whereby the public could file complaints or suggestions about tree-related violations or other issues, so several trees within a protected grove were cut down to allow residential driveways;
2. there was no venue whereby the public could nominate exceptional trees for protection, which is the major mandate of the committee and the ordinance, and as a result some potentially valid candidates for preservation were lost to development;
3. there was no venue whereby the maintenance staff of the County Dept. of Parks and Recreation or the Dept. of Public Works could approach for information and guidance regarding trees within their purvue.

When the Exceptional Tree Ordinance was created, it was based on the Honolulu experience of having a large pool of landscape architects to choose from to chair the Arborist Advisory Committee. Apparently no one gave consideration to how this lack might affect the neighbor islands. Now we know. The reason to require that the chair be a landscape architect actively engaged in the field was to ensure that the chair would have the necessary knowledge and interest in preserving exceptional trees. However, there are other related professions with the same or similar knowledge and interest, and there is no reason why they could not do well as chairs. So this amendment is basically a "housekeeping" one, to expand the eligible pool of chair candidates to ensure that the committee and the ordinance will never languish for lack of a qualified person to chair the committee.

Hawaii Island has been without an Arborist Advisory Committee for nine years. Please help us address this problem by passing House Bill 2219.

Mahalo,

Rene Siracusa, President

Malama O Puna, Pahoā, HI

HB-2219

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 8:48:19 PM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erica Scott	Cuddle Party	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2219

Submitted on: 2/6/2018 10:12:42 AM

Testimony for EEP on 2/8/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez		Support	No

Comments: