

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
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

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committees on
WATER AND LAND
and
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Wednesday March 27, 2019
1:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 129/SENATE RESOLUTION 98
ENGAGING, ENDORSING, ACCEPTING, AND ADOPTING THE NEW YORK
DECLARATION ON FORESTS TO ACHIEVE THE UNITED NATIONS PARIS
AGREEMENT AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT;
SPECIFICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 15, LIFE ON LAND**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 129/Senate Resolution 98 proposes to adopt the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF) to protect and restore forests and set targets for said restoration and protection for 2030. The ten NYDF Goals (SDG) are a commitment to reducing loss of forest and increasing carbon sequestration through the restoration of forests. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports these measures as they complement a number of the Department's ongoing initiatives.**

The Department understands that protecting and increasing the footprint of our native forests is as crucial in mitigating the effects of climate change as reducing our carbon emissions. To address the NYDF, the Department must increase capacity. By reforesting alien grasslands under the jurisdiction of the Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife alone the State could sequester four million tons of carbon from the atmosphere. Native forests also mitigate climate change by keeping the islands cooler, protecting our reefs from being smothered by runoff, protecting communities from the impacts from storm events and natural disasters through storm-water mitigation and absorption, and efficiently collecting rainwater for our aquifers.

The Division of Forestry and Wildlife is actively carrying out management actions to work toward this goal to protect 30% (253,000 acres) of priority watersheds by 2030, as are 10 Watershed Partnerships representing a multitude of public and private landowners across five islands. With increased resources these efforts can be expanded to include protection of all forests as identified by the NYDF. The Department currently receives less than 1% of the state budget to manage 1.3 million acres of state lands mauka to makai. The Department has been working to identify alternative means of funding conservation actions, including building public-private partnerships to help manage and steward Hawaii's natural resources. In 2017, the Department partnered with Coca-Cola to fund a project for watershed protection in the headwaters of Coca-Cola's bottling facility. The Department has launched two voluntary carbon offset pilot projects that would provide additional funds for the reforestation of alien grassland areas in Pu'u Mali, Hawaii Island, and Kahikinui and Nakula reserves on Maui.

The Department notes that urban forest areas and tree-lined streets have been shown to lead to reduced crime and reduced vehicle speeds which increases safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Further, placing trees next to freeways and roads, and having roads pass through and by green areas, reduces driver stress, as measured by blood pressure, heart rate, and sympathetic nervous system changes.

The work of the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission in collaboration with the Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force continues to work with the State Office of Planning's Sustainability Coordinator, the City and County of Honolulu's Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency office, and with the other County Sustainability officers, as well as on a national level with the U.S. Climate Alliance on the Commission's focus on resilience and clean energy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these measures.

SR-98

Submitted on: 3/27/2019 12:52:39 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/27/2019 1:30:00 PM

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Democrats Committee on Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

SR-98

Submitted on: 3/21/2019 2:46:26 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/27/2019 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
ChristopherMcCullough	Individual	Support	No

Comments: