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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
WATER & LAND

Friday, March 13, 2020
1:15 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2033, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill 2033, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate unspecified funds to be expended for the Forest Resource Management and Development Program (LNR 172) by the Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to purchase firefighting equipment. **The Department supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

DOFAW is the primary responder for wildland fires across 1,368,002 acres of the State's forested watersheds (or 25% of the land area in Hawai'i) and supports federal and county responders on the remaining area of the State. Due to climate change and associated droughts, the annual area burnt in Hawai'i has grown in past decades. In fact, the percentage of land area burned annually in Hawai'i exceeds the national average, and some years it surpasses the 12 most fire-prone western states.

DOFAW's fire and emergency response mandates require specialized equipment. Resources are needed to modernize DOFAW's fleet of response vehicles and equipment to ensure timely response to wildfires. State crews currently rely on outdated vehicles, some of which are on loan from federal agencies. These surplus vehicles can be unreliable and have broken down while crews were en route to fires, and are costly and difficult to repair. The Department also assists counties during natural disasters, such as hurricanes and lava flows. Much of DOFAW's equipment used for fire response is also used in such disasters.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

HB-2033-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 6:34:49 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/13/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2033-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 9:53:44 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/13/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Don Aweau	Individual	Support	No

Comments: