



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 AND LAND

Monday, February 4, 2019
1:15 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1255
RELATING TO FOREST STEWARDSHIP

Senate Bill 1255 proposes to amend Chapter 195F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to clarify conditions that must be met by applicants to participate and receive funds under the Forest Stewardship Program. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this Administration measure.**

This bill makes minor changes to the existing statute to clarify Forest Stewardship Program requirements that will increase the effectiveness of the program. This bill will improve forest management on private lands, expand conservation of native forest, increase reforestation of degraded lands, and stimulate investment in forestry as an economically viable, sustainable land-use alternative.

The Forest Stewardship Program provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners in managing, protecting, and restoring Hawaii's forested lands. This measure will increase effective forest management by: (1) clarifying that long-term leaseholders can participate in the program; (2) increasing cost-share support for the development of forest stewardship management plans; (3) clarifying that production of non-timber forest products is allowed; and (4) increasing eligible types of land for forest management under the program.

The Forest Stewardship Program helps landowners develop forest stewardship management plans by supporting their access to technical experts. The bill requests increased cost-share support for the development of a management plan to a 75% cost-share; plans typically cost between \$5,000 to \$15,000, depending on size and complexity of the project. Increased cost-share support will reduce financial barriers faced by new or smaller landowners in seeking

technical guidance on how to manage forest land, while ensuring the public benefits provided by those forest lands are maintained or enhanced.

This measure increases eligible land for forest management by removing outdated language that does not allow the program to provide assistance to certain lands unless the land was cleared of native vegetation prior to January 1, 1991. The classification of land prior to January 1, 1991 provides technical challenges to program implementation due to changes in land use over the past 25 years. The measure will allow the Department to provide management guidance for lands that were never cleared of native forest, including those lands zoned in the agricultural district that contain native forests. This change will enable the program to provide technical assistance to encourage landowners to manage lands for sustainable production of forest products and agroforestry while maintaining their native forest resources.

Sixty-six percent of Hawaii's forested areas are privately owned or managed, and public-private partnerships are essential to the present and future health of these forests. The Forest Stewardship Program stimulates investment in forestry as an economically viable land-use alternative that supplies Hawaii's rural communities with a source of revenue, provides locally grown products and energy to reduce Hawaii's dependence on imported goods, and contributes environmental benefits, such as clean water and habitat for Hawaii's native wildlife.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

SB-1255

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 1:32:55 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/4/2019 1:15:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Stephanie A Whalen | Testifying for HARC | Support | No |

Comments:

SB-1255

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 5:02:16 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/4/2019 1:15:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Richard Pezzulo | Testifying for Hi'ipaka, LLC | Support | No |

Comments:

Richard Pezzulo

Executive Director

Hi'ipaka, LLC

59-864 Kamehameha Hwy.

Haleiwa HI 96712

Subject: In support of SB 1255

Date: February 1, 2019

This testimony is in support of the changes to the State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resource's Forest Stewardship Program as detailed in Hawaii State Senate Bill SB1255. Hi'ipaka, LLC has been a participating land owner in the program since 2016. The program has supported the native forest restoration of Waimea valley on the island of Oahu by providing resources in the form of technical support, planning and record keeping, and through cost sharing for forest restoration practices.

The proposed changes in this bill will further incentivize and support land owners in the stewardship and enhancement of conservation and agricultural lands in the State of Hawaii. Healthy forests support healthy watersheds and healthy human and wildlife populations. The dual challenges in Hawaii of invasive species pressures and declining

native flora and fauna validate the public investment in private land management in Hawaii.

Thank you for your continued support and improvement of the Forest Stewardship Program and of the land owners that seek to make a positive change in the environment of Hawaii through proven practices and ecological investment.

Sincerely,

Richard Pezzulo

Executive Director

Hi'ipaka, LLC dba Waimea Valley

SB-1255

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 10:10:59 AM

Testimony for WTL on 2/4/2019 1:15:00 PM



| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|-----------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Heather Simmons | Testifying for Hawaii Forest Industry Association | Support | No |

Comments:

Dear Hawai'i Legislators,

On behalf of the Directors of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), this testimony is in support of Senate Bill 1255 "*Relating to Forest Stewardship*"

The Bill will::

- 1) Increase the cost-share support for development of forest stewardship management plans from 50% to 75% (to reduce financial barriers for landowners to participate in the program)
- 2) Allows the program to provide support for development of agroforestry, non-timber forest products, and timber production projects on agricultural lands with existing native forest.
- 3) Clear up language and terminology so that it is easier to understand how to participate and who is eligible.

Established in 1989, HFIA is a nonprofit corporation founded by people committed to sustainable forest management. The mission of the HFIA is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through forest management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy.

Mahalo,

Heather Simmons, Executive Director

Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

SB-1255

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 8:05:02 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/4/2019 1:15:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Erica Scott | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

SB-1255

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 5:42:13 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/4/2019 1:15:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Harald Ebeling | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair, dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support of SB1255. The protection, restoration, and conservation of the watersheds and forests of our islands must be a top priority for all branches of government, and expanding and improving the services provided to landowners through the Forestry Stewardship Program is an excellent way to encourage and support responsible use of the 'Ä• ina for future generations.

Mahalo for your support of SB1255.

Aloha,

Harald Ebeling