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GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE
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BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
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LAND
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

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

Monday, February 11, 2019
2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 490
RELATING TO COMMUNITY FOOD FORESTS

Senate Bill 490 proposes to establish a community food forest program in the Department of Land and Natural Resources to work collaboratively with local government and community organizations to provide sources of healthy food statewide. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget request and offers comments.**

Community and urban forests provide many benefits to the public, including increased urban tree canopy, global warming and climate change mitigation through urban cooling and carbon sequestration, watershed health, and healthy, local food sources for communities. In particular, community/urban forests contribute to healthy communities through low cost and nutritious foods, physical activity by planting and caring for trees, and psychosocial support through exposure to and engagement with green spaces and trees. These attributes of urban forests affords stress reduction and can support a sense of place in built environments. The Department has multiple programs that support community engagement in stewardship of Hawaii's forests, and the mission of the Urban and Community Forestry Program (UCF), is particularly well-aligned with this community forest initiative.

Hawaii's cities are seeing a dramatic decline in their urban tree canopies, with O'ahu, our most populous island, seeing a 5% decline in less than four years (equal to over 76,000 removed trees). Providing and connecting people and communities with trees that provide valuable

resources, such as food, is a proven way to bring communities together while encouraging tree plantings and improving their care. A program of this type could also contribute to Hawaii's food sustainability goals, at least in part, by empowering communities to develop local, shared resources. The Department does note that although food bearing trees are often the most requested trees from plant sales or arbor day events, there are often numerous requests for medicinal and culturally important trees and plants as well (such as for la'au lapa'ua, hule, or lei material). Thus, the Department would recommend expanding the scope of the program to include community-important or valuable trees.

The Department is supportive of this measure, but implementation would require additional capacity in the form of positions and/or operating funds. Currently, the USDA Forest Service supports UCF with approximately \$200,000 annually for administering the state Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry program. If funds were appropriated for a Community Food Forest Program, they could be matched or leveraged by the federal funding support via a community grant program. While the Department envisions most funds would go directly to community projects, a coordinator would be necessary to identify, engage and support community groups interested in such a program. The Department would work with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, the Agribusiness Development Corporation, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, and others, as appropriate, to identify locations with potential to be developed as community supported forests.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Acting Chairperson
Board of Agriculture

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TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER & LAND AND AGRICULTURE &
ENVIRONMENT

FEBRUARY 11, 2019
2:45 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

SENATE BILL NO. 490
RELATING TO COMMUNITY FOOD FORESTS

Chairpersons Kahele and Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 490 that establishes a community food forest program in the Department of Land and Natural Resources to work collaboratively with local government and community organizations to provide sources of healthy food statewide. One of the primary outcomes of the program is the implementation of community food forests in suitable locations, including developing the land, planting plants, and maintaining existing gardens. The Department of Agriculture is identified as an interested stakeholder concerned with the development of community food forests. The Department defers to DLNR and offers comments.

The Department of Agriculture fully supports increasing local food production. That being said, we ask that any resources allocated towards the efforts described in this bill should reflect its likely contribution to Hawaii's overall food self-sufficiency. Otherwise, we defer to the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



SB-490

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 7:56:37 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/11/2019 2:45:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-490

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 6:34:07 AM

Testimony for WTL on 2/11/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brian Miyamoto	Testifying for Hawaii Farm Bureau	Support	Yes

Comments:

SB-490

Submitted on: 2/8/2019 2:32:56 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/11/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Regina Gregory	Testifying for EcoTipping Points Project	Support	No

Comments:

SB-490

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 6:36:28 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/11/2019 2:45:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Augusto Decastro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-490

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 6:52:21 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/11/2019 2:45:00 PM

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

Comments:

SB-490

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 8:50:55 AM

Testimony for WTL on 2/11/2019 2:45:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Drew Wilkinson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I Support HB490. I believe there is a great opportunity to bolster food resiliency in Hawaii through the implementation of this bill. Creating food forests can foster a variety of healthy benefits to the population. An education program can be established that would help build cultural connection to traditional canoe plants. It can also serve as a resource to help others establish their own backyard forest gardens. Allocating funds to create food forests on city and county lands can bring long lasting positive impact towards future generations and their ability to grow their own food.

LATE

SB-490

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 2:01:48 PM

Testimony for WTL on 2/11/2019 2:45:00 PM

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

Comments: