



Young Progressives Demanding Action
P.O. Box 11105
Honolulu, HI 96828

March 16, 2020
1:15 PM

TO: Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment (AEN)
Senate Committee on Water & Land (WTL)
RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 43/SR 22

Aloha Chair(s) Mike Gabbard and Kaiali'i Kahele, Vice Chair(s) Russell Ruderman and Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment and Members of the Senate Committee on Water & Land,

Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA) advocates for public policies that reflect the values of young people throughout the State of Hawai'i. One of those values is that . YPDA is in **Support of SCR 43/SR 22**. This resolution would declare a climate emergency and request statewide collaboration toward an immediate just transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate.

It's important to think about what's next as we deal with the climate crisis and its impacts on our lives. Nationally, the Green New Deal is calling for a mobilization that we probably have not seen since Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal during the Great Depression. Demanding a transformation of American society and the economy to deal with both climate change and the need for social and economic equality.

Locally, as the State of Hawai'i's Climate Change Portal puts it, "About 550 cultural sites, 38 miles of major roads, and more than \$19 billion in assets will be vulnerable to chronic flooding resulting from a 3.2 ft increase in sea level. Such widespread flooding will change the character of the island by affecting cultural heritage and daily commerce/lifestyles." This is just one snippet of how our cultural and natural resources, our economy, our way of life will be negatively impacted by climate change. This is an emergency and needs to be treated as such.

We need action now and a mobilization of our own on a statewide level. It is poorer communities and future generations who will have to bear the brunt of the climate crises if we don't act. However it doesn't have to be this way. Article XI, Section 9 of the Hawai'i State

Constitution guarantees us the right to a clean and healthful environment. The State needs to fulfill this constitutional obligation. There are important solutions presented in this resolution such as public education, stakeholder outreach, investment in reforestation, prohibition of fossil fuel investments, climate friendly land use decisions, and so much more to restore a safe climate that needs to be implemented as speedily as possible.

Hawai‘i has made important goals such as making Hawai‘i 100% renewable energy by 2045, but those goals need actual people at work to implement it. A true just transition to a green economy requires not just more clean and renewable green jobs, but jobs that ensure that workers such as those currently in fossil fuel, plastics, and other harmful industries are able to take care of their families when the time comes, and not be left behind in this new and changing economy. We have a lot of work to do, it’s time to get started.

Young Progressives Demanding Action is in **Support** of **SCR 43/SR 22**. We respectfully ask for you to pass it through your respective committees.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin,
Environmental Justice Action Committee Chair
Young Progressives Demanding Action (YPDA)
Cell: 808-255-6663
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com
CC: action@ypdahawaii.org



SCR 43/SR 22, DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND REQUESTING STATEWIDE COLLABORATION TOWARD AN IMMEDIATE JUST TRANSITION AND EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION EFFORT TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE

MARCH 16, 2020 · SENATE WATER AND LAND COMMITTEE AND SENATE AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE · CHAIRS SEN. KAIALI'I KAHELE AND SEN. MIKE GABBARD

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: IMUAlliance supports SCR 43/SR 22, declaring a climate emergency and requesting statewide collaboration toward an immediate just transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate.

According to a report produced by the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, global sea levels could rise more than three feet by 2100, with more recent projections showing this occurring as early as 2060. In turn, over the next 30 to 70 years, approximately 6,500 structures and 19,800 people statewide will be exposed to chronic flooding.

Additionally, an estimated \$19 billion in economic loss would result from chronic flooding of land and structures located in exposure areas. Finally, approximately 38 miles of coastal roads and 550 cultural sites would be chronically flooded, on top of the 13 miles of beaches that have already been lost on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui to erosion fronting shoreline armoring, like seawalls.

Furthermore, according to research conducted by Michael B. Gerrard from Columbia Law School, modern-day slavery tends to increase after natural disasters or conflicts where large numbers of

people are displaced from their homes. In the decades to come, says Gerrard, **climate change will very likely lead to a significant increase in the number of people who are displaced and, thus vulnerable, to human trafficking.** While the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015 established objectives to limit global temperature increases and several international agreements are aimed at combating modern-day slavery, it is highly uncertain whether they will be adequate to cope with the scale of the problem that is likely to occur as a result of climate change.

As we work to reduce carbon emissions and stave off the worst consequences of climate change, we must begin preparing for the adverse impact of sea level rise on our shores. We are now quantifying the speed at which we must act. We cannot continue to develop the 25,800-acre statewide sea level rise exposure area—one-third of which is designated for urban use—without risking massive structural damage and, potentially, great loss of life.

Therefore, our state should take steps to protect Hawai'i's coastal areas, including by declaring a climate emergency and demanding that government and nongovernmental agencies collaborate on solutions to the problems of sea level rise and global warming. For the sake of our keiki, we cannot afford to wait to solidify strategies to preserve our island home for generations to come.



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai‘i

Monday, March 16, 2020

Senate Resolution 22
Testifying in Strong Support

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Kahele; Vice Chairs Ruderman and Keith-Agaran; and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment, and Committee on Water and Land:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii stands in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SR 22. This Resolution declares a climate emergency and requests statewide collaboration toward an immediate just transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate.

This measure acknowledges that an existential climate emergency threatens humanity and the natural world and requests statewide collaboration toward an immediate just transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate by (1) providing a statewide commitment to a just transition toward a decarbonized economy that invests in and ensures clean energy, quality jobs, and a statewide commitment to a climate emergency mobilization effort to reverse the climate crisis; (2) a prohibition against any further public or private investment or subsidies in project that will make the climate emergency worse, such as coal, oil, gas, and tree-burning projects, and redirecting and channeling subsidies toward low climate impact energy projects and workforce retraining; (3) facilitation of investments in beneficial projects and infrastructure such as zero emissions energy and electric vehicles, among others; and (4) organization and tracking of a time-phased implementation plan on greenhouse gas reduction efforts.

2019 was Honolulu’s hottest year on record, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It was the second hottest year on record for the planet Earth, and a year of record temperatures globally and locally. Mayor Kirk Caldwell called the data evidence of a “climate crisis” during a news conference on Wednesday, February 19, 2020, at Magic Island, and said it was time for action. He noted the wildfires in Australia, and the record-high temperature of 64.9 degrees Fahrenheit recently set in Antarctica, as evidence. In Hawaii last year, the daily record high was set or tied 273 times, according to the National Weather Service. Of that total, 135 were new daily records. The maximum heat index – a measure of what it feels like when relative humidity and air temperature are combined – was 107.3 degrees at the Waimalu Plaza Shopping Center in Aiea, as well as on the windward side, near the 7-11 store on Kalanianaʻole Highway in Waimanalo.

Plant trees, according to Caldwell, noting his current initiative to plant 100,000 trees across Oahu by 2025. The city is also considering legislation to mandate greener buildings or adjusting setbacks from the seas. Trees, he said, should also be valued as infrastructure.

Josh Stanbro, chief resilience officer, said the heat mapping serves as “a post card for the future of what the heat on this island is going to look like.” It will help the city anticipate how to defend residents from the emerging impacts of climate change. “We just broke all the records last year,” he said. “By all indications, we’re looking at that as the new normal. That’s why we have to take action immediately to try to reverse that trend. We have to completely slam on the brakes in terms of burning carbon fuels for our energy source.”

- 2019 was the hottest year ever recorded in Honolulu.
- 2019 was the second hottest year on record for the planet.
- 2019 was a year of record temperatures globally and locally.
- In 2019, the National Weather Service logged 273 record high temperatures and ties.
- August 31, 2019 was the hottest day of the year for Honolulu at 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

Last year Iki became the first place in Japan to declare a climate emergency. On September 25, 2019, Iki joined more than 1,250 sites in 25 countries in the emergency declaration. The goal is to mobilize resources “at sufficient scale and speed to protect civilization, economy, people, species and ecosystems,” according to the Climate Emergency Declaration website. Many of its residential areas are concentrated around the coast, so the island is vulnerable to rising sea levels, and its dependence on the fishing and farming industries makes the effects of climate change an increasing concern.

Iki Mayor Hirokazu Shirakawa agrees that Iki is facing immediate problems, but he focuses instead on the innovations that the island hopes to test and implement as a government-selected SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Future City. Its goals include replacing fossil fuels with renewables by 2050, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and inspiring other parts of the county to take action.

The main challenge facing Iki’s fishing industry is the steady decline in local seaweed beds. Seaweed is essential to biodiversity, as it provides oxygen and absorbs carbon dioxide. The decline is primarily due to rapidly rising sea temperatures, according to a 2018 study published by the Journal of Coastal Research. Over the past century, sea temperatures around Iki have increased by an average of 34.2 degrees. Seaweed beds were particularly affected in 2013, when sea temperatures rose above 86 degrees, loosening the seaweed from the ocean floor and leaving it vulnerable to a typhoon that washed beds onto breaches. Without seaweed, there is little to draw fish to Iki’s shores.

Climate change has also influenced Hawaii’s fishing industry. Honolulu is the top port in the United States, with landings of fish valued at roughly \$104 million in 2017. However, man-made emissions of carbon dioxide have caused climate change, made the ocean warmer and more

acidic and starved it of oxygen. Last year, the ocean was the hottest it has ever been, wreaking havoc for fish stocks and marine wildlife, including Hawaii's iconic humpback whales.

We are experiencing hot acidic waters, bleaching and killing the coral reefs around Hawaii which provide commercial, recreational and subsistence fishing, create world-famous surfing and diving locations are home to many of our fish and wildlife. Scientists have also concluded that climate change will lead to fewer and smaller bigeye tuna in the ocean. These and other fish stocks that are available could shift their traditional migrations, forcing fishermen to travel farther to catch them, all of which will seriously affect our strong fishing industry, native Hawaiian culture, and way of life.

While President Trump has called climate change a hoax and worked to reverse the Obama administrations climate initiatives, senior U.S. military officers have long been aware of warming's detrimental effects. "Climate change is an urgent and growing threat to our national security, contributing to increased natural disasters, refugee flows, and conflicts over basic resources," the Defense Department told Congress in a 2015 report. "These impacts are already occurring, and the scope, scale, and intensity of these impacts are projected to increase over time." The Defense Department is investing in renewable energy, including solar power and biofuels. By the end of 2020, the armed forces expect to generate 18% of on-base electricity from renewables, up from 9.6% in 2010. They plan to increase that share substantially in the years to come." Like the Defense Department's goal to increase the use of renewable energy, the State of Hawai'i has also taken steps to reach 30% renewable energy by 2020 as the risks to Hawai'i of the effects of climate change are well documented to include sea level rise, stronger and more frequent natural disasters, and loss of our natural resources and habitats. A climate emergency declaration that requests statewide collaboration toward an immediate just transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate is necessary and its adoption is imminent.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote favorably on this Resolution which declares a climate emergency and requests statewide collaboration toward an immediate just transition and emergency mobilization effort to restore a safe climate.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja
Co-Chair, Green New Deal Committee
Environmental Caucus
Democratic Party of Hawai'i
Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/03/05/news/iki-island-seeks-to-lead-the-countrys-fight-against-the-global-climate-crisis/>

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/02/20/hawaii-news/mayor-says-2019-was-oahus-hottest-year-ever-and-shares-heat-index-mapping-results/>

https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/02/a-military-perspective-on-climate-change/?utm_source=Civil%20Beat%20Master%20List&utm_campaign=1c4fd235ff-

https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/02/keeping-sustainable-seafood-on-hawaiis-tables/?utm_source=Civil%20Beat%20Master%20List&utm_campaign=1c4fd235ff-

SR-22

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 7:32:57 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/16/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support SR22. Climate change is already occurring, and Hawaii will be one of the places most negatively impacted due to sea level rise, coral bleaching from warming seas, droughts and consequently more frequent and intense wildfires.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to present my testimony.

Sincerely,

Andrea Quinn

Kihei, HI

SR-22

Submitted on: 3/13/2020 10:49:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/16/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Angela Huntmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

There is no greater threat than climate disruption facing the world right now. Covid 19 pales in comparison. We need to mobilize like we are for this virus. I will not elaborate on the ins and outs of the disastrous results of unmitigated climate change here. Suffice to say even if you don't care about the collapse of the exquisite biodiversity we are witness to on this planet, perhaps you care about the collapse of civilization. With a breakdown in the natural systems that produce food, oxygen and fresh water comes the breakdown in any vestige of financial, social, or political network. On a more personal note: I have been following climate disruption issues for over 10 years as a teacher. Even as a child, almost 50 years ago, pollution, deforestation and over population added up to an obvious potential breakdown in the earth's capacity to "bounce back". This is not rocket science. It is time for drastic action. The worldwide response to Covid 19 gives hope for our ability to mobilize collectively for the greater good and a better world. Do it. Yes on SR 22. Thank you.