

# OFFICE OF PLANNING STATE OF HAWAII

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DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS  
DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
Director, Office of Planning  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**  
Tuesday, March 2, 2021  
11:00 AM  
State Capitol

in consideration of  
**HB 331, HD 1**  
**RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN.**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House Committee:

The Office of Planning (OP) **strongly supports** HB 331, HD1. The Office of Planning supports the integration of green infrastructure and incorporating vegetation, trees, and sustainable green design in the Hawai'i State Planning Act, Chapter 226, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, and public infrastructure projects to increase overall green space and urban tree canopy throughout Hawai'i.

The Office of Planning finds this measure complimentary to the work of the newly-established Statewide Sustainability Program, as well as with the objectives and responsibilities of the State's Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force, which is administratively attached to the Office of Planning, pursuant to [HRS § 225P-4](#).

The Office of Planning also understand that the organization, Trees for Honolulu's Future, previously submitted testimony requesting an amendment to HB 331. The Office of Planning concurs with and supports this proposed amendment for the committee's consideration.

“(c) For the purpose of this section, "green infrastructure" means the range of measures that use plant or soil systems, including, but not limited to trees, permeable pavement or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspire water and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters. Capital Improvement Project funds may be used as a means of financing such measures when stationary and have life spans of over 15 years.”

The Office of Planning appreciates the opportunity to share its strong support of HB 331, HD 1 to increase Hawai'i's climate resiliency and implement sustainable design practices by improving the availability of green infrastructure, decreasing urban heat, and encouraging greenhouse gas sequestration throughout Hawai'i.



**HB331 HD1**  
**RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN**  
Ke Kōmike Hale o ka ‘Oihana ‘Imi Kālā  
House Committee on Finance

Malaki 2, 2021

11:00 a.m.

Lumi 308

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB331 HD1, which seeks to improve the quality of life for Hawai‘i residents by amending the State Planning Act to establish green infrastructure objectives and policies for state facilities. **OHA supports efforts to incorporate the use of green infrastructure for state facility systems, particularly with the potential inclusion and integration of Hawaiian plants<sup>1</sup> that reflect Hawai‘i’s unique cultural and ecological heritage.**

Native Hawaiian culture is intimately tied to the land and its resources. Historically, each island, moku, and ahupua‘a supported varied and diverse plant life. Such plants were and continue to be essential to perpetuating place-based Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, as well as Native Hawaiian traditional knowledge. The connection between Native Hawaiian culture and Hawai‘i’s plant life is also evident in other forms: from place names based on regional flora (e.g., ‘Aiea, Hau‘ula, Kapālama), to mo‘olelo (e.g., ‘Ōhi‘a and Lehua), chants (e.g., the Kumulipo), and hula relating to and inspired by Hawaiian plants. **Accordingly, the increased presence of Hawaiian plants in the development of “green infrastructure” projects can help ensure that our cultural heritage is reflected in our public spaces, educating both residents and visitors as to the value and significance of our islands’ flora while also providing the environmental and health benefits realized from such projects.**

In addition, the increased use of Hawaiian plants in green infrastructure projects will help to reverse the rapid decline of these ecologically important species, as well as other native life that may depend upon them. The displacement and decline of Hawaiian plants, which are integral to our islands’ ecological heritage, have contributed significantly to Hawai‘i’s reputation as the “endangered species capitol of the world.” More than 270 of Hawai‘i’s plant species are now considered threatened or endangered; native animal species have also declined due to the lack of food and habitat historically provided by such plants. As an advocate for our Native Hawaiian beneficiaries, OHA recognizes that

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<sup>1</sup> Per HRS § 103D-408, “‘Hawaiian plants’ means any endemic or indigenous plant species, including land, freshwater, and marine plant species, growing or living in Hawaii without having been brought to Hawaii by humans; or any plant species, including land, freshwater, and marine plant species, brought to Hawaii by Polynesians before European contact, such as kukui, kalo, wauke, niu, noni, and kamani.”

the extinction of Hawaiian plant and animal species can result in the extinction of associated traditional and customary practices and indigenous knowledge that have been passed down for millennia. Increasing the use of Hawaiian plants in public landscaping projects can help to reverse this trend, both directly, through the development of Hawaiian plant nurseries and maintenance practices, and through increased local knowledge of these plants' ecological importance.

To facilitate the realization of the added benefits that the incorporation of Hawaiian plants will have in green infrastructure planning, OHA respectfully suggests the inclusion of explicit language regarding the use of Hawaiian plants:

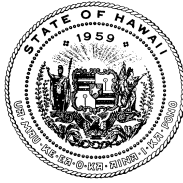
By amending the language on page 4, line 4, to read as follows:

"infrastructure, and green open space as possible, to include as much Hawaiian plants, as defined in section 103D-408(e), as possible; and"

And by adding a new paragraph (9) to page 5, after line 17, to read as follows:

"(9) Prioritize the use of Hawaiian plants, as defined in section 103D-408(e), to contribute to Hawai'i's historic and cultural heritage, sense of place, biodiversity, and resilience."

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HB331 HD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

WRITTEN  
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0331 HD1  
RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN**

**REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR  
REPRESENTATIVE TY J.K. CULLEN, VICE CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Hearing Date: 3/2/2021

Room Number: 308 Videoconference

1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure is unlikely to impact the priorities identified in the  
2 Governor's Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department)  
3 appropriations.

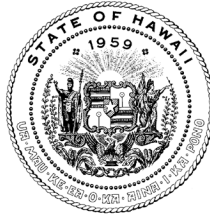
4 **Department Testimony:** HB0331 HD1 seeks to establish objectives and policies to increase  
5 Hawaii's green infrastructure. The Department supports this measure and has the following  
6 comments.

7 The Department recognizes that the changing climate is a worldwide environmental health  
8 problem that directly impacts the health and safety of Hawaii's people, communities, and natural  
9 environment. Potential human health effects resulting from climate change are broad reaching  
10 and include dangers from increased natural disasters and flooding, changing vector-borne  
11 infectious diseases and food related infections, as well as impacts on mental health and well-  
12 being. Our natural environment is also affected by climate change, with negative impacts on air  
13 and water quality, changing conditions at sites with chemical contamination and disruption of  
14 shorelines and beaches.

15 Increasing green infrastructure will have positive effects on the health of the people of Hawaii by  
16 helping to reduce the health impacts of climate change. In particular, implementation of the  
17 projects in this measure are likely to improve air quality, reduce heat related illness, and decrease

- 1 psycho-social stressors. Efforts to mitigate the health risks from climate change will help Hawaii
- 2 adapt to the effects of climate change and help keep our citizens safe and healthy.
- 3 **Offered Amendments:** None
- 4 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE**

**Tuesday, March 2, 2021  
11:00 AM**

**State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 331, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN**

House Bill 331, House Draft 1 proposes to establish green infrastructure objectives and policies for state facility systems in the Hawaii State Planning Act to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors and require the Office of Planning, in partnership with the Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force, to submit a report to the Legislature making recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines established by this measure. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this bill with comments.**

The State of Hawaii's commitment to uphold the Paris Climate Agreement as embodied in the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (est. Act 32, SLH 2017), and progressive move towards zero emissions clean economy by 2045 requires that we actively invest in reducing our emissions and mitigate greenhouse gases (CO<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub>). Green infrastructure provides a robust framework for resilience where the co-benefits of carbon sequestration, ecosystem benefits, and economic enhancement come together. Green infrastructure provides critical ecosystem services such as stormwater mitigation by collecting and slowing down and filtering water as it travels from land to sea. Investing in carbon positive actions such as green infrastructure will also help to create a healthier Hawaii as green spaces provide health benefits such as cooling landscapes and improving air quality.

The Department encourages the inclusion of landscape scale practices in the definition of green infrastructure as is identified by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - "Green infrastructure can include site-specific management practices as well as watershed-scale

**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

techniques such as land preservation and the restoration of wetlands and floodplains that naturally store water and reduce runoff.”

The bill aligns with the mission of the Department’s Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry program to help Hawaii’s communities to cultivate wellbeing and resilience through planting, caring for, and growing relationships with the trees and forests that we live with and that are crucial to the ecosystems on which we rely. The Kaulunani program builds capacity in our communities to plan for, establish, manage and protect all manner of green infrastructure including street-trees, urban forests, green spaces, bioswales and related natural areas where we live, work, and play. The urban tree canopy is declining, and with it, the benefits provided by urban green infrastructure. This measure would help reverse that trend. The Department looks forward to collaboration with the Office of Planning and other agencies such as DOT, DOA, DHHL, OHA and counties, through the state’s Climate Change Commission and the Commission’s Climate Ready Hawaii Initiative on this topic. The Department notes that while native trees and vegetation are preferred, it is not always possible to use native species. Where native species are not practical or are unavailable, non-invasive species, as identified by the weed risk assessment (<http://www.botany.hawaii.edu/faculty/daehler/wra/default2.htm>), should be used.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Painting Industry of Hawaii Labor Management Cooperation Trust Fund

Hawaii Tapers Market Recovery Trust Fund

Hawaii Glaziers, Architectural Metal Glassworkers Local Union 1889  
AFL-CIO Stabilization Trust Fund

Carpet, Linoleum and Soft Tile Local Union 1926 Market Recovery Trust Fund

Re: The House Committee on Finance  
Hearing on House Bill 331, HD1 (Relating To The State Plan)  
Date: March 2, 2021  
Time: 11:00 a.m.  
Location: Room 308

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Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Painting Industry of Hawaii Labor Management Cooperation Trust Fund, Hawaii Tapers Market Recovery Trust Fund, Hawaii Glaziers, Architectural Metal Glassworkers Local Union 1889 AFL-CIO Stabilization Trust Fund, and Carpet, Linoleum and Soft Tile Local Union 1926 Market Recovery Trust Fund **in support** of House Bill 331, HD1. The aforesaid organizations are labor management cooperation funds between the Painters Union, Tapers Union, Glaziers Union, and Carpet and Soft Tile Layers Union and their signatory contractors.

This measure will promote the employment of green strategies and technologies including, among other things, painting concrete and other infrastructure to blend in with Hawaii's natural environment.

We are particularly excited about the opportunity to contribute our knowledge and expertise toward the preservation and enhancement of Hawaii's scenic beauty through the visual improvements envisioned by the bill. Aesthetic treatment of our streets and highways can only improve the quality of life in Honolulu, improve its attractiveness as a tourist destination, and benefit our local economy.

Thank you again for this opportunity to voice our **support** for this measure.





# Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

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Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 11:00 am

House Committee on Finance

HOUSE BILL 331 – RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN : Green Infrastructure

Position: Strong Support

Me ke Aloha, Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice-Chair Ty Cullen, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

The Energy and Climate Action Committee of the Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party joins several State departments and the broad spectrum of environmental organizations in offering strong support for your efforts to amend the State Plan Act and to empower the Office of Planning to gear up a stronger effort to focus on Green Infrastructure – using plant or soil systems, permeable surfaces or substrates to promote storm water harvest and reuse, and to promote landscaping to store, infiltrate rain water and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters.

This broad support reflects the general view as expressed in the Democratic Party platform, supporting a 21<sup>st</sup> Century infrastructure to help mitigate and adapt the islands to accelerating climate change and its storms and droughts, by (1) minimizing stormwater runoff and replenishing the water table; (2) reducing the urban heat-island effect; (3) encouraging the removal of pollutants from the air; and (4) encouraging the removal, sequestration, and storage of greenhouse gas emissions

Testimony on this bill from the Department of Land and Natural Resources noted that the urban forest is in decline. We are also experiencing more intensive storms and tides that are already preventing adequate storm flow and flooding. The timing of this measure is appropriate.

The Caucus has also signed onto a nationwide NGO petition for the President of the United States to declare a National Climate Emergency, and it is apparent that the massive support for this exigency has become a priority for this administration. Hawaii wants to prepare to be partners in this effort, and HB 331 provides a vehicle for thinking as well as funding to forge forward as we emerge from the pandemic. The urgency flows from our unique position in the Pacific, not only as a vibrant constellation of islands that is a gathering place for the Pacific Basin but also as a hub for the U.S. diplomatic and military “pivot to Asia”. The military, in fact, has assessed climate change as the greatest disrupter of peaceful relations among nations, and Hawaii as the home of ho'oponopono bears the kuleana of leading where others may follow.

HB 331 calls on the Office of Planning Sustainability Program to incorporate “green” infrastructure guidelines into our State plans, to provide temperature reduction, greater water retention and storm water management, permeable pavements and urban forestation, and to accelerate the implementation of regenerative land management practices to sequester atmospheric carbon. Alongside urban and rural microgrid electrification to wean us off of fossil fuels, and particularly with reference to State facility

projects, transit projects and impending Transit-Oriented Development, the human environment becomes, under this bill, a learning center for mitigation and adaptation.

HB 331 specifically calls for protection and enhancement of historic properties, cultural amenities, view planes and vistas, to foster urban green spaces, follow underlying landscape to bring a sense of place, enhancing natural amenities. This goes beyond mitigating the heat island effect of urban zones to creating visual and sound barriers to quiet and calm human environments, improving the quality of life.

The Energy and Climate Action Committee of the Environmental Caucus fully supports these improvements, and urges strong support for HB 331. We appreciate the opportunity to address this issue.

/s/ Charley Ice, Co-Chair, Energy & Climate Action Committee, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

**HB-331-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/28/2021 3:16:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair,

The Honorable Ty Cullen, Vice Chair, and Members of the

House Committee on Finance

From: Climate Protectors Hawaii (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing **HB331 HD1– RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN**

Tuesday March 2, 2021, 11:00 a.m., CR 308 and by videoconference

**Position: STRONG SUPPORT of HB331 HD1 RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN!**

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Finance Committee:

The Climate Protectors Coalition strongly supports HB331 HD1. The Climate Protectors Coalition is a group focused on reversing the climate crisis. As a tropical island State, Hawaii will be among the first places harmed by the global climate crisis, with more intense storms, loss of protective coral reefs, food insecurity, and rising sea levels destroying our shorelines. We must do all we can to reduce our carbon footprint and become carbon negative as soon as possible. The planet faces an existential climate crisis and we must act now! Scientists have made clear that we are part of the last generation that can stop or at least mitigate the devastating impacts of climate change. If we are to solve the climate crisis, it will require all of us working together. Hawaii can and should be a leader in showing the world the way forward towards a safe and sustainable climate and future. The sooner we inspire others to take action and lead by example, the better off the future will be for our children.

The purpose of this bill is to establish objectives, policies, and priority guidelines in the Hawaii State Planning Act to promote the use of green infrastructure, vegetation, and trees in state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects; and to require the Office of Planning, in partnership with the Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force,

to report to the Legislature with recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines.

Amending the State Planning Act to to achieve the use of green infrastructure, vegetation, and trees in State facility systems, infrastructure and transit projects would improve the quality of life in Hawaii and help mitigate the climate crisis.

Please pass this bill! Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawaii (by Ted Bohlen)



# Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

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To: House Committee on Finance  
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ty. J. K. Cullen, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Committee on Finance

Re: HB 331, HD1 – RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN

Meeting: Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 11:00 a.m., Room 308 via videoconference

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii stands in strong support of HB 331, HD1 as it is designed to improve the quality of life in the State by: (1) establishing objectives and policies for state facility systems in the Hawaii State Planning Act to achieve the use of green infrastructure, vegetation, and trees in state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects; and (2) requiring the office of planning, in partnership with the greenhouse gas sequestration task force, to make recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines established under the Act.

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i (Party) has adopted at its State Convention in 2018, clear safeguards for our community against the climate crisis found in pages 5-6 of the Party Platform:

## **“BUILDING A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE**

We will protect communities from the impact of climate change and help to mitigate its effects in investing in green and resilient infrastructure.”

As an island State, Hawaii is among the first places harmed by the climate crisis, with more intense storms, loss of protective coral reefs, food insecurity, and rising sea levels destroying our shorelines.

Evidence of the climate crisis was felt in the Hawaiian Islands through the loss of East Island a little over two years ago. A piece of the United States has been dramatically wiped off the map after an island in [Hawaii](#) was washed away by a powerful hurricane. East Island, a remote spit of gravel and sand that sat atop a coral reef, has vanished after having this misfortune to come into contact with Hurricane Walaka, an intense storm that surged past Hawaii in October 2018.

Chair Sylvia Luke  
Vice Chair Ty J.K. Cullen  
Committee on Finance  
March 2, 2021  
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East Island played an important role for wildlife, including the critically endangered Hawaiian monk seal, a species that numbers just 1,400 individuals, with many of the seals raising their young on East Island. Green sea turtles, which are also threatened, and seabirds such as albatrosses, which often had their young preyed upon by circling tiger sharks, also depended on the island.

If conditions align, atolls would always be at risk of being erased by a powerful hurricane. But climate change is causing the ocean and atmosphere to warm, making storms fiercer, while there's evidence that hurricanes are moving further north into the latitudes where East Island once lay.

Rising sea levels are also eroding away low-lying islands, with several fragments of land in the [Pacific vanishing in recent years](#). *See*, [Hawaiian island erased by powerful hurricane: 'The loss is a huge blow' | Hawaii | The Guardian](#)

Scientists have made it very clear that we are part of the last generation that can stop or at least mitigate the devastating impacts of climate change. Hawaii can and should be a leader in showing the world the way forward towards a safe and sustainable climate and future.

The Party Platform on page 19 describes a way forward and this measure is another step forward for the State, the Pacific, and the World toward our sustainable climate and future:

## **“CONFRONT GLOBAL THREATS AND GLOBAL CLIMATE LEADERSHIP**

Climate change poses an urgent and severe threat to our National Security, and the Party believes it would be a grave mistake for the United States to wait for another nation to take the lead in combating the global climate emergency. According to the U.S. military, climate change is a threat multiplier that is already contributing to new conflicts over resources, catastrophic natural disasters, and the degradation of vital ecosystems across the globe. The Party recognizes the catastrophic consequences facing our State, our country, our planet, and civilization.

We believe that Hawai‘i must lead in forging a robust global solution to the climate crisis. We are committed to a national mobilization, and to leading a global effort to mobilize nations to address this threat. Our generation must lead the fight against climate change and we applaud Hawai‘i’s leadership in joining the historic Paris Climate Accord. We will not only meet the goals set in Paris, we will seek to exceed them and push other countries to do the same by slashing carbon pollution and rapidly driving down emissions of potent greenhouse gases like hydrofluorocarbons. We will support other States and developing countries in their efforts to mitigate carbon pollution and other greenhouse gases, deploy more clean energy, and invest in climate resilience and adaptation.”

This measure encourages building green infrastructure by following these sustainability design objectives: (1) minimizing stormwater runoff and replenishing the water table; (2) reducing the urban heat-island effect; (3) encouraging the removal of pollutants from the air; and (4) encouraging the removal, sequestration, and storage of greenhouse gas emissions.

Chair Sylvia Luke  
Vice Chair Ty J.K. Cullen  
Committee on Finance  
March 2, 2021  
Page 3

For these reasons, we urge you to pass this bill as it (1) establishes objectives and policies for state facility systems in the Hawaii State Planning Act to achieve the use of green infrastructure, vegetation, and trees in state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects; and (2) requires the office of planning, in partnership with the greenhouse gas sequestration task force, to make recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines established under the Act.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Melodie Aduja, and  
Alan Burdick  
Co-Chairs, Environmental Caucus  
Democratic Party of Hawai`i



To: The House Committee on Finance  
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 11am

**In strong support of HB331 HD1**

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the Finance committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org strongly supports **HB331 HD1**.

This bill would amend the State Plan to include green infrastructure in state facilities and increase the urban tree canopy. Urban trees improve air quality, cool local air temperatures, filter and retain storm water, sequester carbon, and contribute to healthier and more beautiful communities. Efforts to reduce our environmental footprint and improve quality of life are a win:win for everyone and need to be supported. Trees are the carbon sink for the planet and we need to plant more of them in our urban environment.

HB331 HD1 will set the stage for all public projects in Hawaii to plan for green infrastructure from the start, thus maximizing benefits and minimizing costs.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this important legislation.

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org





Testimony before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Tuesday, March 2, 2021 (11:00 am)

**RE: HB331 HD1 RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN.**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, Members of the Committee on Finance:

Trees for Honolulu's Future (TFHF) is a nonprofit organization with a vision for a tree-filled island that preserves and enhances our quality of life, especially in the face of climate change.

We strongly support, contingent on inclusion of a critically important amendment articulated below, the above-referenced Bill, which establishes green infrastructure objectives and policies for state facility systems within the State Plan.

This Bill has an important accountability aspect by requiring the Office of Planning, in partnership with the greenhouse gas sequestration task force, to submit a report to the legislature making recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines established by this measure. That's important because a plan is only a plan, execution is where the "rubber meets the road". We are confident that if all government agencies act in support of mitigating climate change this Bill will cause positive change.

That said, it is critical for the Legislature to make clear that trees are vital infrastructure and qualify for CIP funding. Trees for Honolulu's Future has run into situations in the past when civil servants have refused to recognize that trees are infrastructure, having long life and being fixed in place, just as are roads and buildings; thus, the need for clarification in the law.

Following is language we suggest in Section 2 of the Bill §226-\_\_\_ :

(c) For the purpose of this section, "green infrastructure" means the range of measures that use plant or soil systems, including, but not limited to trees, permeable pavement or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspire water and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters. Capital Improvement Project funds may be used as a means of financing such measures when stationary and have life spans of over 15 years.

**HONOLULU is HOT TREES are COOL**

Visit us: [www.TreesForHonolulu.org](http://www.TreesForHonolulu.org) Contact us: [info@TreesForHonolulu.org](mailto:info@TreesForHonolulu.org) Voice/Fax/Text: 808-707-6353  
P.O. Box 12051, Honolulu, Hawaii 96828

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

By making this change personnel in all state departments and political subdivisions that deal with infrastructure will understand that trees and other form of “green infrastructure” are just as much infrastructure as roads, storm water drainage systems. People, and the environment, will benefit in the process. The Legislature will arm the executive branch/counties to treat trees the same as any other kind of infrastructure. You, as legislators, will create not only policy, but a mind shift.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENT CONSISTENT WITH REGULATORY BODIES

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards define “Infrastructure” as assets that have *“long lives and are usually stationary. Examples are roads, bridges, tunnels, sewer systems, and lighting systems.”*<sup>1</sup> Trees meet this test -- they are stationary and, when installed correctly, have long lives.

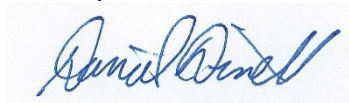
Internally, B&F guidelines state capital projects usually have a lifespan of over 15 years. So again, green infrastructure/trees that are designed to be permanent, qualify for CIP as a MOF. TFHF simply wants the Legislature to be explicit because current operating practice, at least at the City & County of Honolulu, is to not accept CIP as an acceptable means of funding tree installations.

In closing, we want to stress that trees create multiple benefits well documented by research and noted in this Bill’s preamble. Trees create shade and use evapotranspiration to lower temperature. Trees also recharge groundwater and decrease surface runoff protecting our reefs. Trees trap pollutants and store CO2. Trees calm traffic. Sadly though, Honolulu has been losing urban tree canopy over the past years.

We stand ready to work with the Committee on the amendment. We will make all efforts to be online when the bill is taken up, however, if we are not, please note our contact information on the bottom of the first page of our testimony should there be any questions or need for elaboration. Thank you for your good work in ensuring a better future for Hawai’i.

The time for action putting green infrastructure on the same level as “traditional” infrastructure is now. We urge this Committee to make a strong stand by amending this Bill as outlined and sending it to the floor for action.

Thank you.



Daniel Dinell, President  
Trees for Honolulu’s Future

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<sup>1</sup> See: [https://www.sage.com/na/~media/site/Sage%20Fixed%20Assets/docs/GASB\\_Accounting.pdf](https://www.sage.com/na/~media/site/Sage%20Fixed%20Assets/docs/GASB_Accounting.pdf)

**HB-331-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/27/2021 10:08:38 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Vital to have a green infrastructure, not just for our well-being but as *one* more piece of our effort to deal with the climate crisis.

**HB-331-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 7:28:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kamuela Werner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB331 HD1 which if enacted would establish green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines for state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects in the Hawaii State Planning Act to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

Me ke aloha,

Kamuela Werner

**HB-331-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 8:07:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sandee Moniz Pa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Just do it!

**LATE**

**HB-331-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/1/2021 8:00:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lourdes millan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill

**LATE**

**HB-331-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/2/2021 7:13:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2021 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support - this bill is more important than ever as evidenced by DAGS cutting down an enormous, healthy, valuable tree on the capitol grounds this week. We need a coordinated approach to green infrastructure. Thank you.