

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



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

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

Wednesday, March 31, 2021  
1:30 PM

State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 308

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 1162, SENATE DRAFT 2  
RELATING TO FOREST STEWARDSHIP

Senate Bill 1162, Senate Draft 2 proposes to amend Chapter 195F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to clarify conditions that must be met by applicants to participate in the Forest Stewardship Program. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this Administration measure.**

Sixty-six percent of Hawaii's forested areas are privately owned and managed. The Forest Stewardship Program provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners in protecting, restoring, and managing Hawaii's forested lands. Senate Bill 1162, Senate Draft 1 proposes minor changes to the Forest Stewardship Program, modifying qualification requirements to increase program eligibility for private forest managers, thereby expanding the forest products and ecosystem services provided by private forests.

The proposed changes will accomplish the following:

- allow long-term leaseholders to participate in the program (currently only landowners are eligible);
- increase cost-share support from 50% to 75% for the development of forest stewardship management plans (developing plans is frequently a barrier to entry for many landowner/managers);
- allow non-timber forest products to qualify under the program (currently only timber products qualify); and
- modernize eligibility criteria language related to native forest protection and management.

The Forest Stewardship Program helps landowners develop forest stewardship management plans which help program participants responsibly and sustainably manage forest resources. Increased cost-share support for writing management plans will improve forest management and allow smaller and/or underserved landowners to participate in the program by reducing financial barriers. There will be no increase in costs to the Department related to an increase in cost-share percentage – we will simply restructure existing funds.

This measure increases land eligible for participation in the program by removing language that only allows management of forest products if the land was cleared of native vegetation prior to January 1, 1991, a date-certain that is difficult to determine. The change will protect native forests including those found on agricultural lands. This will support forest management and promote agricultural diversification through integrated forest and pasture management, agroforestry, and active forest management.

Public-private partnerships are essential to the health of Hawaii's forests. The goal of the Forest Stewardship Program stimulates investment in forestry as an economically viable land-use alternative that provides jobs to Hawaii's rural communities, revenue diversification to landowners/managers, locally grown products, and environmental benefits such as clean water and habitat for Hawaii's native wildlife.

This bill will increase the number of acres eligible for assistance for forest management on private lands, which will support conservation of native forests, increase reforestation of degraded lands, and stimulate investment in forestry as an economically viable, sustainable land-use practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**SB-1162-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 10:35:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

The Honorable Ty Cullen, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing **SB1162 SD2 RELATING TO FOREST STEWARDSHIP**

Hearing: March 31, 2021 1:30 pm, by videoconference

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

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i is a group focused on reversing the climate crisis.  
**The CLIMATE PROTECTORS HAWAII SUPPORTS SB1162 SD2.**

As a tropical island State, Hawai'i will be among the first places harmed by the global climate crisis, with more intense storms, loss of protective and precious coral reefs, food insecurity, and rising sea levels destroying our shorelines. Hawai'i can and should be a leader in showing the world the way forward towards a safe and sustainable climate and future. 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. We must do all we can to reduce our carbon footprint and become at least carbon neutral as soon as possible. The sooner we inspire others to take action and lead by example, the better off the future will be for our children.

The purpose and intent of this measure is to clarify conditions that must be met by applicants in order to receive funds under the forest stewardship program administered by the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

More specifically, this measure modifies program qualification requirements to:

- (1) Increase program eligibility for private forest managers;
- (2) Increase the funds available for management of private forests; and

(3) Provide protections for native vegetation.

This measure authorizes increased support for writing forest management plans that will increase program participation among smaller or underserved landowners and ultimately help to improve forest management in the State. It provides additional flexibility to the Board of Land and Natural Resources to enter into program implementation agreements for all or selected portions of approved forest management plans.

To mitigate the climate crisis, we need to not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also must sequester atmospheric carbon. Forests provide an important means of sequestering carbon. Hawai'i needs to lead on forest carbon sequestration. Preserving existing forests, especially native forests, and managing forests to maximize sequestration would help mitigate the climate crisis. BLNR should manage our forests to maximize sequestration.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i **SUPPORTS** this bill, which should help increase forest carbon sequestration in Hawai'i. Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

**LATE**

**SB-1162-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/31/2021 1:30:00 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Janet Pappas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Finance Committee members,

Hawaii and the world are facing a climate emergency with way too much carbon in our atmosphere. Trees have the ability to heal our planet. They help sequester greenhouse gases, they improve our air quality, they help rebuild soil to grow healthier plants and they preserve water. In the past Hawaii protected trees, but our forests and facilities have fallen into disrepair.

I am in strong support of SB1162 to establish a program to financially assist landowners to manage, protect, and restore important natural resources in Hawaii's forested and formerly forested lands. These forests must remain healthy in order to perform the work of removing carbon from the air. The public-private partnerships encouraged by this bill can bring about a healthier Hawaii and a climate-friendly world.

Please consider the cost of this bill as part of a down payment on a livable planet for our children. Please pass SB1162.

Thank you for listening and for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jan Pappas - Aiea, Hawaii