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GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE
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BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the House Committees on
WATER & LAND
and
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Thursday, March 18, 2021
10:30 AM

State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 430 & 325

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, and expanding the 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. Management plans 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 and support working 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 Forest Stewardship Program stimulates investment in forestry as an economically viable land-use alternative that provides jobs to Hawaii's rural communities, revenue diversification, locally grown products, and environmental benefits such as clean water and habitat for Hawaii's native wildlife.

This bill will improve forest management on private lands, expand 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: 3/17/2021 10:09:09 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/18/2021 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

To: The Honorable Representative David Tarnas, Chair, the Honorable Representative Patrick Pihana Branco, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Water and Land, and

The Honorable Nicole Lowen, Chair, the Honorable Lisa Marten, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

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

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

Hearing: Thursday, March 18, 2021, 10:30 a.m., by videoconference

Aloha Chairs Tarnas and Lowen, Vice Chairs Branco and Marten, and Members of the House Committees on Water and Land and Energy and Environmental Protection:

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 **SUPPORT** this bill, which should help increase forest carbon sequestration in Hawai'i. Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



WADE C. LEE

MEMBER MANAGER

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FEIN 27-1944008

Date: 3/17/2021

FROM: Haloa Aina L.L.C.

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support for Senate Bill 1162 SD2 Relating to Forest Stewardship

Dear Hawai'i Legislators,

On behalf Haloa Aina L.L.C., this testimony is in support of Senate Bill 1162 SD2 relating to Forest Stewardship.

The Forest Stewardship Program financially assists landowners in managing, protecting, and restoring important natural resources in Hawaii's forested and formerly forested lands. It assists landowners of privately managed forest lands to manage, protect, and restore important watersheds, native vegetation, forest resources, forest products, fish and wildlife habitats, isolated populations of rare and endangered plants, and other lands that are not recognized as potential natural area reserves.

The Bill will::

- 1) Open the program up to be able to support more different types of forestry projects; and
- 2) Provide for streamlining of the program (allowing the program to be nimbler through budgetary challenges).

Mahalo,

Wade C. Lee, Managing Member



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March 17, 2021

Rep. David Tarnas, Chair

House Committee on Water and Land

Rep. Nicole Lowen, Chair

House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

Re: Testimony in support of Senate bill 1162 SD2 Relating to Forest Stewardship

Aloha Representatives Lowen and Tarnas,

On behalf of Forest Solutions Inc, I am writing in support of SB 1162 SD2 relating to Forest Stewardship. Forest Solutions is a forestry services and consulting company with over 35 employees and a 20-year history of managing Hawai'i's forests and open lands. The forests of Hawai'i are our livelihood.

This measure clarifies certain vital aspects of the Forest Stewardship program, broadens the lands eligible for landowner assistance, and keeps this valuable program current with modern forestry practices.

Many of our clients have benefitted from this program, which has allowed them to choose native reforestation for their land. The Forest Stewardship Program was created for just this purpose, helping landowners start with a forest management plan that sets them on a path to a successful forestry project.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nicholas Koch".

Nicholas Koch,

President

SB-1162-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2021 3:27:42 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/18/2021 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

Please support SB1162.

Thank you,

Andrea Quinn