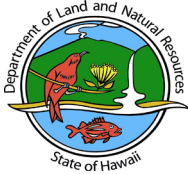


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

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**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senator Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS**

**Wednesday, February 17, 2021
10:00 AM**

State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 211

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1179, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO FUNDING FOR THE DIVISION OF CONSERVATION AND
RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT**

Senate Bill 1179, Senate Draft 1 proposes to allocate a portion of the Conveyance Tax to the Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to partially cover operational costs related to upholding the laws that serve to protect, conserve, and manage Hawaii's unique and limited natural, cultural, and historic resources. **The Department strongly supports this Administration measure.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had major impacts across the globe, both human and economic. Hawaii, while spared from the worst of the human impacts, has suffered immense economic damage as a result of the widespread coronavirus. With travel restrictions, stay at home orders, and distancing guidelines, many businesses have suffered and the current state of Hawaii's economy is a stark reflection of this. In attempt to mitigate the economic effects of the pandemic, the State is reducing general fund support for many important programs. Amongst other cuts, the Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) stands to lose twelve positions which are key to the efficient management of Hawaii's natural, cultural, and historic resources. Included in these positions are supervisory and clerical positions, and that of the Deputy Chief. Senate Bill 1179, Senate Draft 1 seeks to allocate a portion of the Conveyance Tax to fund these vital positions.

Tourism, the main economic driver of the State, is fueled by Hawaii's natural beauty. Prior to the pandemic, millions of tourists would come each year to enjoy Hawaii's natural, cultural, and historic resources. If the beauty of Hawaii were to fade, so would the tourism economy. DLNR and DOCARE manage all the State's land and natural resources, from coral reefs and beaches, to

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

ROBERT K. MASUDA
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DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
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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 parks and forest reserves, acting as a shield not only for their cultural and recreational worth, but also their economic value. However, current budget restrictions are making it exceedingly difficult for DOCARE to carry out its mission efficiently and effectively. Investing in DOCARE is investing the long-term longevity of the state.

The development, sale, and improvement of real property in Hawaii attracts many visitors and their money. However, this also creates great pressures on the State's natural resources. Development often comes with environmental impacts including pollution and sedimentation, and increased human presence can cause erosion and over-harvesting. It is for these reasons that portions of the Conveyance Tax have been used to fund conservation programs such as Forestry Stewardship and the Natural Area Partnership. DOCARE needs to be included in the programs supported by the Conveyance Tax so that it can continue to fulfil its mission to effectively manage the natural, cultural, and historic resources of the State. The same resources that the people of Hawaii and its economy rely upon.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 17, 2021, 10:00 a.m., VIA Videoconference

SB1179 SD1 RELATING TO FUNDING FOR THE DIVISION OF CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT

TESTIMONY

Nancy Davlantes, Legislative Committee Member, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chairs Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith Agaran, committee members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports SB1179 SD1 that would allocate a portion of the Conveyance Tax to the Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement of the Department of Land and Natural Resources to partially cover operational costs related to upholding the laws that serve to protect, conserve, and manage Hawaii's unique and limited natural, cultural, and historic resources.

It's no secret, as the bill states, that Hawaii has short-changed funding for preserving and protecting its priceless natural resources for years, and we agree with the legislature determined that the conveyance tax is an appropriate means to fund the conservation of natural resources by dedicating a portion of the current assessment to the natural area partnership program and forest stewardship program, which assists private landowners in managing important natural resources.

The bill limits the portion of the that can be used for this purpose.

So while overdue, this bill indicates that Hawaii may finally be getting its act together.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.