



Written Testimony before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Monday, March 22, 2021 (3:15 pm)

**RE: SCR160/SR125 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CREATE A LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN WITH GOALS TO INCREASE TREE CANOPIES ON PUBLIC SCHOOL GROUNDS, DOCUMENT EXISTING INVENTORY AND TALENT, AND IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL RESOURCES REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT AND SUSTAIN THE PLAN.**

Chair Kidani, Vice Chair Kim, Members of the Committee on Education:

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 the above-referenced resolutions, which request the state Department of Education (DOE) to create a landscape management plan and more. We do suggest a minor amendment, namely, that the 2 degree in temperature rise in the first Whereas clause be noted as either Celsius scale or, as we suspect it is, Fahrenheit. Additionally, either in the resolution itself or the Committee Report, this Committee could note the value of outdoor education in terms of natural airflow considering the pandemic. A class under the trees can be a delight, and safer than being indoors. Covid-19 won't be the last pandemic we will see so having outdoor space to safely congregate is an important future resilience measure.

Thank you to the sponsors of this resolution for acknowledging the multiple benefits of trees that are well documented by research and noted in the resolution. Sadly though, Honolulu has been losing urban tree canopy over the past years and increasing the tree canopy at our public schools can help reverse this concerning trend.

TFHF stands ready to work with the DOE on implementation. In fact, in 2020, we had proposed a Grant-in-Aid to do much of what is described in these resolutions as TFHF could bring outside expert resources to the DOE to update its 1981 Landscape Practices and Procedures manual and its 1996 Tree Selection manual. We have the utmost respect for the DOE arborist, but she has a lot on her plate. This type of approach would likely be more efficient and faster than the DOE tackling this necessary task internally.

At the end of the day, it's all about the Right Tree, in the Right Place, getting the Right Care. By passing this resolution, with minor amendments, to the floor for adoption, you are taking a critical step to ensure this simple 3-step mantra occurs, and we create a better future for our keiki, schools, and island home.

Thank you.

Daniel Dinell, President

**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