



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 SB0167
RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN**

**SENATOR DONAVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATOR GILBERT S.C. KEITH-AGARAN, VICE CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

Hearing Date: 2/26/2021

Room Number: 211 Videoconference

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

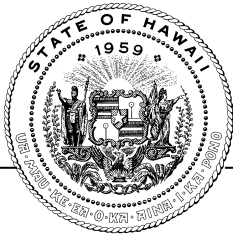
3 **Department Testimony:** SB0167 seeks to establish objectives and policies to increase Hawaii's
4 green infrastructure. The Department supports this measure and has the following comments.

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

12 Increasing green infrastructure will have positive effects on the health of the people of Hawaii by
13 helping to reduce the health impacts of climate change. In particular, implementation of the projects
14 in this measure are likely to improve air quality, reduce heat related illness, and decrease psycho-
15 social stressors. Efforts to mitigate the health risks from climate change will help Hawaii adapt to the
16 effects of climate change and help keep our citizens safe and healthy.

17 **Offered Amendments:** None

18 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



OFFICE OF PLANNING STATE OF HAWAII

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: <http://planning.hawaii.gov/>

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Friday, February 26, 2021
9:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

in consideration of
SB 167
RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee:

The Office of Planning (OP) **strongly supports** SB 167. 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 is actively working on the sustainable development and climate adaptation of the state to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations of Hawai'i to meet their own needs.

The Office of Planning finds these proposed amendments complimentary to 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](#).

Among other objectives, the Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force is tasked to: “(5) *Identify practices and policies that add trees or vegetation to expand the urban tree canopy in urban areas to reduce ambient temperatures, increase climate resiliency, and improve greenhouse gas sequestration in Hawaii.*” The Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force is also tasked to submit a preliminary report of the task force's findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 2022.

The Office of Planning appreciates the opportunity to share its strong support of SB 167 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.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB 167.

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 Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS**

**Friday, February 26, 2021
9:30 AM**

State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 211

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 167
RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN**

Senate Bill 167 proposes to establish green infrastructure priority guidelines within the State Plan to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors by increasing outdoor public green spaces, connecting outdoor public green spaces with existing trails, and increasing urban tree canopy as objectives and policies for the environment. The bill also proposes to 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 priority guidelines established by this measure. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The mission of the Department's Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program is 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 collaborating with the Office of Planning on developing priority guidelines to promote the use of green infrastructure in state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

SB-167

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 3:37:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ted Bohlen	Testifying for Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

To: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair, The Honorable Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Climate Protectors Hawaii (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing SB167 RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN.

Friday February 26, 2021, 9:30 a.m., Rm. 211 and by videoconference

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT** FOR SB167!

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.

Amending the State Planning Act to to use sustainable design concepts in public infrastructure and use 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.

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

Climate Protectors Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)



To: The Senate Committee on Ways and Means
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Friday, February 26, 2021, 9:30am

In strong support of SB167

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee members of Ways and Means,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org strongly supports **SB167**.

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.

This Bill 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

SB-167

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 4:31:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Mulinix	Testifying for Our Revolution Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee,

On behalf of Our Revolution Hawaii's 7,000 members and supporters, I am testifying in support of SB167. with a goal of the state implementing Green Infrastructure goals, objectives, and guidelines.

Mahalo for your kind attention,

Dave Mulinix

Hawaii State Community Organizer

Our Revolution Hawaii



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

Re: SB167 – RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN

Meeting: Friday, February 26, 2021, 9:30 a.m., room 211 via videoconference

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii stands in **strong support** of SB167 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 21ST 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.

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gil Keith-Agana, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
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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

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gil Keith-Agana, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
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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.

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,

/s/ **Melodie Aduja**
Melodie Aduja
Co-Chair, Environmental Caucus
Democratic Party of Hawai`i



SB167

RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Ki‘ina Hana a me nā Kumuwaiwai

Pepeluali 26, 2021

9:30 a.m.

Lumi 211

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB167, 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 plants¹ 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 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

¹ 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.”

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** SB167. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Written Testimony before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Friday, February 26, 2021 (9:30 am)

RE: SB167 RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

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 a problem in the past when government staff members 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 legal clarification.

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 Contact us: 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 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.”¹ Trees meet this test -- they are stationary and, when installed correctly, have long lives.

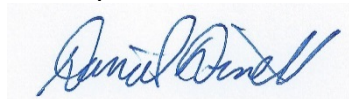
Internally, B&F guidelines state capital projects usually have a lifespan of over 15 years. So again, green infrastructure/trees that are designed to be permanent, qualify for CIP as a MOF. TFHF simply wants the Legislature to be explicit because current operating practice, at least at the City & County 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. Since oral testimony only is being accepted at this Hearing, 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

¹ See: https://www.sage.com/na/~media/site/Sage%20Fixed%20Assets/docs/GASB_Accounting.pdf

SB-167

Submitted on: 2/24/2021 6:31:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/26/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Travis Idol	Testifying for Hawaii Interfaith Power and Light	Support	No

Comments:

I am Travis Idol, resident of Honolulu and President of Hawaii Interfaith Power and Light, a local nonprofit helping people and communities of faith respond to the climate crisis we face now and in the future. I urge you to support Senate Bill 167, integrating green infrastructure considerations into planning for state facilities. This bill is an important expression of aloha aina, our commitment to care for and cherish that which nourishes and sustains us. Our state agencies and government officials and facilities should be leaders in showing the myriad ways we can put these values into practice. As a state, we have also set ambitious goals of 100% renewable energy use and net neutrality in greenhouse gas emissions. While a lot of technology and innovation are required to meet these goals, simple and traditional practices of caring for our environment are just as important. These practices are not only effective, they help reconnect us to our roots in the natural world. They have psychological and spiritual benefits for us and help heal the rift we have created with the aina in our modern world. Finally, they show that there is no need for strict tradeoffs between the built and the natural environment. We can use and take advantage of the natural world to help us live a healthy and productive life in the modern world. Please support and pass this bill and have Hawaii help set an example to all the world about how green infrastructure can help us show aloha aina wherever we are.