

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 8:12:01 AM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Hauff	DLNR	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I am available for questions to DLNR. Please allow me Zoom access.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



**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
CULTURE, ARTS, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, March 16, 2022
10:30 AM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 329, Via Videoconference

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2059, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO STATE SYMBOLS**

Senate Bill 2059, Senate Draft 1, proposes to designate ‘ōhi‘a lehua (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) as the official endemic tree of the State. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

As the agency responsible for managing natural resources, including native plants and ecosystems, the Department recognizes the critical ecological and cultural roles of ‘ōhi‘a lehua in Hawai‘i. The Department is a lead agency on the response to Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death, and supports this designation as a tool to highlight awareness of ‘ōhi‘a and the importance of protecting this foundational forest species, and native Hawaiian forest health, generally.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 2:47:14 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Arwen Revere	Wild Kids	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee.

My name is Arwen Revere and I'm a high school student from Kailua and a member of the environmental organization Wild Kids, who I am representing today. I am testifying to express Wild Kids' concern for Hawaii's endemic species, particularly 'Ōhi'a lehua, which is greatly affected by ROD (Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death).

'Ōhi'a lehua is the most common endemic tree in the state of Hawaii and a habit for many native birds. It is imperative that we protect this beautiful tree for future generations and the birds that call it home. 'Ōhi'a lehua is also a large part of Hawaiian culture. This tree was used for building houses, canoes, and spears. The flowers are used in lei, sung about in chants, and the leaves were used in tea.

It's clear that 'Ōhi'a lehua is a very special part of Hawaii, and we believe that it should be recognized as such. By designating it as Hawaii's endemic state tree, more people (especially visitors) will be able to learn about the ecological and cultural significance of 'Ōhi'a lehua. Raising awareness for this species will result in higher compliance with conservation strategies and help develop thriving native forests.

Thank you for hearing our testimony. We appreciate your consideration of our view on this important matter.

Arwen Revere, on behalf of Wild Kids



The House of Representatives
Committee on Culture, Arts, and International Affairs
Wednesday, March 16, 2022
10:30 AM VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 329
State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

Testimony in Support for SB2059

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kailee Lefebvre and I am testifying on behalf of the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS). We **are in support of SB2059**, *Relating to State Symbols* which would designate ‘ōhi‘a lehua as the State Endemic Tree of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your support of the companion bill HB2202.

I would like to reiterate that this bill acknowledges the efforts of the incredible people across the state and beyond who are working towards a brighter future for our native forests, and for the endemic species, those native species that evolved only in Hawai‘i. ‘Ōhi‘a lehua is uniquely Hawaiian. ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Day is on April 25th. It would be amazing to celebrate with the added recognition as the State Endemic Tree of Hawai‘i.

Leading up to this session, I’ve had the opportunity to engage with kumu and K-12th grade haumana across the state in a hands-on lesson in civics, to help this next generation learn about ‘ōhi‘a lehua and about civics. As you may recall, the companion bill HB2202 had hundreds of written testimony submitted from these students. I believe their passion and dedication to this process and especially for ‘ōhi‘a has shown through and this is only a small fraction of students who love and appreciate the most important tree of our forests.

Hawaiian cultural practitioners often remind us to bring the conversation back to the intention. The intention of this bill would be to celebrate and raise awareness about the uniqueness of ‘ōhi‘a lehua, and its importance for the watershed, as a keystone for other native species, for its importance in Hawaiian culture, and its relevance to people today. For these reasons, we ask that you pass SB2059 and designate ‘ōhi‘a lehua as Hawaii’s State Endemic Tree. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Aloha,
Kailee Lefebvre
CGAPS Planner
kaileehl@hawaii.edu (808) 726-0181

Date & Time of Hearing: 2022 March 16, 10:30 a.m.
House Committee on Culture, Arts and International Affairs
Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Mrs. Addie Kim's 4th grade students at 'Iolani School, I would like to formally submit testimony in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols, which designates the 'ōhi'a lehua as the State Endemic Tree. Included in this document are students' written statements, poems, and artwork expressing their support for this bill and love for the 'ōhi'a lehua.

In recent months, the 4th graders have been learning and building their awareness of the 'ōhi'a lehua. Students first learned about the importance of the 'ōhi'a lehua to our watersheds, its significance in Native Hawaiian culture, and the critical threat of Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (R.O.D.).

Our haumāna have come to recognize and seek out the seven 'ōhi'a trees on 'Iolani's campus. They look forward to every opportunity to observe, admire, and understand more about our 'ōhi'a lehua - from their seed propagation through every flowering stage. While they are naturally embracing a sense of kuleana for it, their relationship with the 'ōhi'a lehua is fostering their commitment to conservation and biodiversity, and building skills for reflection, observation, questioning, and communication.

Thank you for your consideration of our students' testimony.

Sincerely,
Candice Sakuda
Director of Community & Civic Engagement
'Iolani School

Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1- Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Grace and Sofia, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

We are in support of the bill because we are aware of Rapid Ohia Death. Ohia is beautiful and we want to stop Rapid Ohia Death from killing many of Ohia trees and taking homes away from many Of Hawaii's native, birds, snails and many other types of amazing native species.

The Ohia tree means a lot to us and has really changed our perspective on life. We may not be Hawaiian but it would break our heart to see the Ohia tree die. We really hope you can consider making this a bill to kokua. During the time we noticed that the Ohia was even here on our campus, we noticed that people seem to not treat our island like how they used too. The least you can do is help us care for the Ohia by making it the state's endemic tree, Spread the word to family and friends, and care for the Ohia.

Thank you for reading our testimony. We hope you can consider making the Ohia the state's endemic tree.

Sincerely,
Grace and Sofia
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Reyn and Benji, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia tree as the state endemic tree. We have recently learned that the Ohia tree is in danger of extinction due to Rapid Ohia Death (R.O.D.), an infectious disease that has been terrorizing and killing Ohia trees in Hawaii. R.O.D. is a fungus that grows inside of a tree, taking all their water, and causing the tree to die.

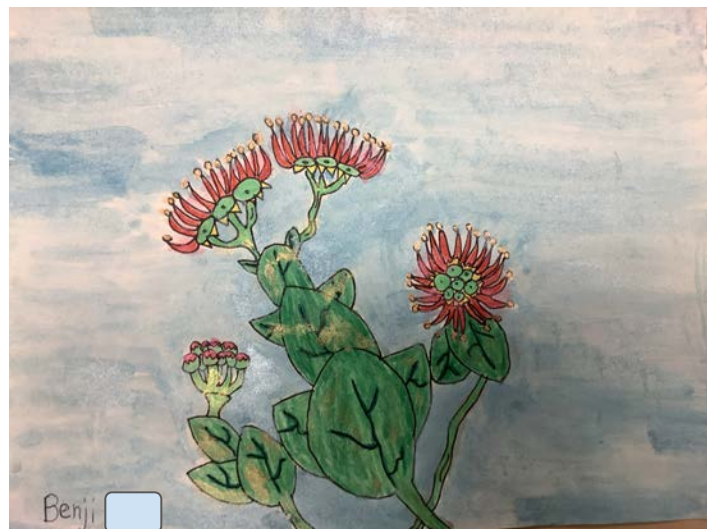
As 4th graders, we are learning that the Ohia tree is important to Hawaii in several ways. The Ohia tree is endemic, and can only be found in Hawaii. The Ohia tree is an essential water collector in the watershed. The Lehua flower captures a lot of water and allows it to slowly drip down and fill the aquifer. The aquifer is where water collects underground and supplies the Hawaiian Islands with drinking water. The Ohia tree is also important because many animals, like birds and snails, thrive in its branches. Endangered species like the honeycreeper and tree snail call the Ohia a home. Without it, the animals will have no home and will therefore become extinct. The Ohia tree is also a valuable part of Hawaiian culture because it is featured in Hawaiian legends and myths. The story of Ohia and Lehua is a famous story about how the Ohia tree came to be. The Ohia tree's wood is used in making images of Hawaiian akua or gods. Ohia wood is also used for woodworking, landscaping, firewood and building.

At school, we are doing our part by planting and taking care of Ohia trees. We humbly request your support of the bill SB2059 SD1, which would bring awareness of the Ohia tree, its importance to Hawaii, and the problems it is facing. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Benji and Reyn

Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Claire and Hulaliwai, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the Ohi`a Lehua as the state endemic tree.

We support this bill because the Ohi`a Lehua is an endemic tree to Hawaii and is presently being threatened by Rapid Ohia Death (a deadly fungus attacking Ohi`a). We need to raise awareness and protect the Ohi`a Lehua so we don't lose them forever. Another reason we should protect the Ohi`a Lehua is because the Ohi`a is one of the few plants that prevents erosion and mudslides in our rainforests that contributes to the water supply in the aquifer. The Hawaiians of old and today respect and honor the Ohi`a Lehua. Today, the Ohi`a are dying and we need to continue respecting and honoring the Ohi`a by making others aware of their importance to Hawaii.

We live in Hawaii, so protecting the native animals and plants in Hawaii is important to us. We need to save these native species so the invasive don't take over and so Hawaii can be like it was before. Thank you for reading this, and we hope you do consider naming the Ohi`a our endemic state tree to help raise awareness.

Aloha,
Hulaliwai and Claire
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Lily and Kaelyn, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

We believe that the Ohia should be the state endemic tree. One reason for this is because it could weaken our watershed if it became extinct. The Ohia is important because its petals capture rainwater and allow it to drip into the aquifer from rainforests. Another reason is that it is part of our Hawaiian culture. If it goes extinct, we'll lose some of our culture. Hawaiians did dances about Ohia. The Hawaiians believed they were the gods, also known as Ohia and Lehua together, so they made a legend about the akua (gods) and worshiped them.

To us, Ohia Lehua is important because lots of birds depend on it. For example, if there are no Ohia trees left, Iiwi, Hawaiian Tree Snail, Happy-Faced Spider, and the Akepa would go extinct as well.

Here is an acrostic poem that we wrote about the ohia lehua.

Only a little bit of the Ohia population left! We need to protect this lovely flower so it doesn't go extinct.

Helpful. Ohia is helpful because many animals need it for habitats and food. Animals like insects and birds. For example, the Iiwi and the Tree Snail.

Important part of nature. The Ohia can capture rain water on its petals and release it into the aquifer, so we need it to stay in its natural habitat in nature so it can help us!

A species threatened by ROD (Rapid Ohia Death) because we aren't careful, and spread it with our utilities and equipment. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,
Lily and Kaelyn
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1- Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Ethan, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

I recently learned that the ohi`a tree is being infected by a disease called rapid ohi`a death or R.O.D., once the tree is infected it will die in just weeks. Another thing that I learned is that lots of native Hawaiian birds live and eat the in the ohi`a tree. I also learned that Hawaiians used the ohi`a tree for many things like structures of houses and canoes. Thank you for your time to read this testimony. The last thing I will say is that the ohi`a trees' Rapid Ohi`a Death is like our COVID-19 because it spreads very fast.

Please enjoy a poem about the Ohi`a that I wrote.

Our ohi`a trees are very important to the aquifer by letting water slowly drip from its leaves.

Hawaiians once protected the ohi`a trees.

In some forest ohi`a trees make up 80% of the trees.

A ohi`a tree can grow from 2 ft to 100 ft tall.

Sincerely,

Ethan

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Kylie and Emily, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

We think that Ohi`a should be named state endemic tree, we think this because a lot of animals depend on it, like the honeycreeper. If Ohi`a stopped growing, many animals like the honeycreeper would go extinct. Also the Ohi`a is also important to our watershed because water drips through its blossom slowly instead of it going down at one time and making a mudslide.

After we started to learn about and plant Ohi`a, we felt it was our Kuleana to care and look after these plants. Mahalo for reading our testimony and we hope you consider passing this bill.

Mahalo,
Emily and Kylie
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1- Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Payton, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have learned that Rapid Ohia Death is killing our ohia trees. I have also learned that the ohia tree is food for the I'iwi bird and many other birds. If all the ohia trees die, the native birds might go extinct too. One last fact is that ohia was used to make poi boards, kapa beaters, and medicine.

The ohia tree made me notice how important this endemic tree is to the island's birds. At first, I didn't even know about the ohia tree. Once we started learning about the ohia tree, I started to realize how important it is to the native birds. Thank you for reading and considering this bill.

Here is an acrostic poem I wrote about the ohia lehua.

Outstanding endemic tree

Helpful to the Hawaiians

I'iwi's food

An important tree to the watershed

Sincerely,

Payton

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Kaila, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

The ohi`a is facing a problem called Rapid Ohi`a Death. Over the past weeks I learned the importance of the ohi`a. The ohi`a provides food and shelter for native species. If the o`hia dies from this disease the native species will be extinct too. The o`hia was also very important to the Hawaiians. One way it was important to the Hawaiians was that the nectar of the o`hia was used for medicine. Also the strong wood of the o`hia was used to build their homes and canoes. The o`hia is very important.

The ohi`a really has made me realize my surroundings more too. It has made me discover more about the resources around us. I noticed that the ohi`a is important just like any other plant would be but people don't realize how important the ohi`a really is. I want to raise awareness of this wonderful plant. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kaila

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1- Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Starr, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to state symbols which designates the ohia Lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawai'i.

The ohia was very important to the Hawaiians. It was important to them because the sweet nectar of the ohia blossoms was used for medicine by mothers when they were giving birth, and the strong wood was used for building their canoes. I've also learned that without the ohia, some of our native species, that rely on the ohia, could become extinct.

The ohia is facing a problem called Rapid Ohia Death. This particular disease could kill thousands of ohia. It would be terrible to lose the ohia. If the ohia becomes extinct, other native birds will become extinct because they will have no homes and food to survive. This is so important to me because it opened my mind to care more about other native plants and to see what they are facing. I learned that every plant has a problem including Rapid Ohia Death. I hoped you learned something about what's going on in the native forests and considering to name the ohia lehua the endemic tree of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Starr

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1- Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Jake, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

The Ohi`a is important to me because over the time that I have been studying, growing, and visiting the Ohi`a it made me realize how special endemic trees or really anything that's endemic are and how we don't do much to save them if they are dying off just like the Ohi`a. Thank you for reading my testimony and hopefully you will name the ohia the state endemic tree.

Here is an acrostic poem I wrote about the ohi`a lehua

On top of many mountains, feeding lots of birds, such as the honeycreeper.

Hawaiians used the Ohi`a's hard wood to make tools, buildings, and flowers to make medicines

Important part of the watershed. It did this with its flowers which would catch the water and make it fall to the ground slowly.

And it is getting attacked by rapid Ohi`a death which has killed 1m+ Ohi`a trees on Maui.

Sincerely,

Jake

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Klinton, 4th grade student at Iolani school am in support of SB2059 SD1,
Or naming the Ohi`a tree the state endemic tree.

The Ohi`a is important in many ways. Over the past few weeks I learned that the Ohi`a tree was facing a threat. That threat is Rapid Ohia Death. I also learned that the Ohi`a Lehua was taken care by the Hawaiians because it represented two gods in love.

The Ohi`a Lehua is important to me because I was always curious on it surviving in the volcano and how much animals depended on it. I want the Ohi`a tree to live forever so I can learn more about it as I grow older. By naming the Ohi`a the state endemic tree this may make others interested in learning more about it and protecting it.

Sincerely,

Klinton

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Nixon and Ace, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

The Ohia is important to Hawai'i, because it is a key part of our island's watershed. The Ohia collects water on its petals so the water doesn't just go rushing down and create mudslides. The Ohia is also being threatened by Rapid Ohia Death also known as R.O.D. This is bad. Because if Rapid Ohia death kills all of the Ohia, then it will be extinct, and will affect our collection of water in our aquifers. Ohia also reminds us about the gods that created the islands of Hawaii.

The Ohia has changed me. Now we realize all we have been missing. We didn't even notice the Ohia and we have walked by it many times. I even have one in my backyard and I didn't even notice it.

Aloha and thank you for listening to our testimony.

Sincerely,
Nixon and Ace
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1- Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Craig and Juliette, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

We have learned that Ohi`a trees wood was used for kappa boards and more because the wood is so strong. The Ohi`a tree provides shelter and food to many native birds like the I`iwi. Many Ohi`a trees are being affected by Rapid Ohi`a Death/R.O.D.

Acrostic poem:

Ohi`a trees are used for shelter
Hard wood for kappa boards
Important for watershed
An important tree to the islands

Let's rainwater drip into aquifer
Early sprouting after a volcano's
Hard wood for tool
Underground aquifers are being helped
And dying to Rapid Ohi`a Death

Sincerely,
Craig and Juliette
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1- Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Kaitlyn and Madison, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

The ohia Lehua tree is endemic, many native animals depend on this tree. The ohia also collects water to send to the watershed which supplies us with the water we drink. The ohia is threatened because of a disease called Rapid Ohia Death, also known as R.O.D.

What ohia means to us is that it makes us feel joy in our lives. It makes us feel sad that it has this disease and we wish we could help. We are feeling this way because we planted our own ohia Lehua and saw our school's ohia which made us change our thoughts about the ohia. Thank you for your time and considering this bill.

Sincerely,
Kaitlyn and Madison
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Alexander, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a Lehua as the state endemic tree.

A recent fact I learned was that Rapid ohi`a Death, or R.O.D. for short, is a new threat to the ohi`a. R.O.D. has killed about 1 million ohi`a Trees on the island of Hawai`i. The ohi`a Tree is also very important to the watershed ecosystem, by helping the water seep into O`ahu's aquifers. It also is very important in Hawaiian culture and heritage. Finally, it feeds many of our native birds, such as the `I`iwi, `Apapane, and `Akohekohe.

Here is an acrostic poem that I wrote about the ohi`a lehua.

Our Ohi`a tree feeds many native animals

Hawaii's pride and joy is the Ohi`a

Is very important in the watershed

A very big part of our forests, Hawaiian culture, and heritage

Sincerely,
Alexander
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Addyson and Chelsie, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

I learned that some native endangered animals rely on Ohia flower's nectar for food. I learned that Ohia trees are dying due to R.O.D. I also learned that Ohia is endemic. Endemic means that it only grows in Hawaii. Ohia is also really durable. It can live on hard and dry volcanic rocks. Ohia is also important for the culture. Ohia was used for medicine, tools, such as kapa beaters, poi boards and structures for homes. Ohia is also very important to our water supply. The tree's leaves hold the water and help refill our aquifer so we have water to drink.

On our campus, we have several Ohia trees. Almost everyday we walk past the Ohia trees and stop to look at it. The Ohia trees are thriving, but if no one protects them, the trees will die from R.O.D other diseases. R.O.D is a fungus, it kills the Ohia within 2 weeks of entering the trees. R.O.D stands for rapid Ohia death. Ohia taught me to care for nature, and to observe them. I've learned to be careful around plants. I've also learned to not spread R.O.D. If the Ohia is named the state endemic tree, people will be more careful about the trees. Thank you for taking time to read this testimony. I hope you consider this and turn this into a bill.

Here is an acrostic poem we wrote about the ohia lehua.

Ohia is an endemic tree.

Has been used for many different things such as medicine long ago

Important because it feeds native birds. So, if Ohia dies, those birds do too.

A cres of Ohia are dying from R.O.D.

Sincerely,
Chelsie and Addyson
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Daniel, Iolani 4th grader, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the Ohi'a lehua as the state endemic tree.

I recently learned that the Ohi'a are dying of Rapid Ohi'a Death (ROD) and now I want to care for them. I also think this because they are home to many birds and insects such as the 'I'iwi bird. I also support this bill because the Ohi'a is an important part of the watershed because it makes the rainwater go into the aquifer so we can drink the water. The ohi'a also has cultural importance because it is a part of a few legends.

I like the ohi'a because it is unique and is endemic to Hawaii. I used to not even know about the Ohi'a but now we like to care for them and let them live to their full extent. Thank you for listening to my testimony, I hope you take this bill into consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Kana, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree. I have recently learned that the Ohi`a Lehua tree is a really important part of our community. Sadly the Ohi`a Lehua tree is dying because of a fungus named Caratasis.

This is an acrostic poem I wrote representing the Ohi`a Lehua tree.

One of the endemic trees to Hawai`i. It is threatened by Rapid Ohi`a Death.
Has a mean fungi on it's trail that is trying to steal the Ohi`a Lehua's water supply,
Is super strong and tough but looks delicate,
And can grow on magma rock and can grow in forests.

The Ohi`a Lehua tree is important to nature and me because Hawai`i's native birds rely on the lehua blossom for nectar. I have changed to loving nature even more ever since my classmates and I started studying the O`hia Lehua tree. I hope that you consider this bill.

Sincerely,
Kana
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Jonah, a 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the Ohi`a Lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have recently learned that the O`hia is endangered due to a sickness called Rapid Ohi`a Death (R.O.D.). I also have learned that it is home to many native Hawaiian animals which are either rare or extinct. This tree feeds the birds nectar and provides a very large and happy habitat to natives.

In my opinion, the Ohi`a should be named the state endemic tree because it is very beautiful, and it has taught me to be more mindful of it and to other trees and plants. My studies about the Ohi`a makes me want to protect it. I do not want to see a tree like the Ohi`a go extinct. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jonah

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Riley, 4th grade student at ‘Iolani school, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols, which designates the ohi’a lehua as the state endemic tree.

The ohi’a tree is valuable to Hawaii’s ecosystem and is part of Hawaiian culture. It is important to our watershed because it collects mist and rain water with its canopy. If the ohi’a tree dies, native species like the honeycreeper and the i’iwi will die too. These kinds of birds rely on the ohi’a tree to pollinate. Ohi’a is also important to Hawaii’s culture too. The ohi’a’s bark was used for structures of homes and ancient Hawaiian statues. The flowers were also used for medicine. We should remember how crucial this tree was to our ancestors and culture.

The ohi’a tree is like ohana to our fourth grade community because we have these trees on our ‘Iolani campus, and we can visit them whenever we want to. They are located behind the Sullivan Center. We always make sure to check on the trees every week and write down some notes of our observations of how the trees are doing. When I first heard that R.O.D. was killing ohi’a trees, it made me feel sad because ever since my teacher introduced me to these trees, I have started to pay more attention to them and notice how they are special. Everyday, while walking back from swimming, I also make sure to check on the ohi’a trees to see how they are doing. Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony, and I hope you will consider this.

Sincerely,

Riley

‘Iolani School 4th Grader



Ohi’a Lehua Haiku

A beautiful tree
A tree that means ohana
Precious lehua

Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Melody, 4th grade student at 'Iolani school, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols, which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

Recently, I have learned that the Ohia Lehua, or the Ohia flower is filled with a sweet nectar, a source of food for the endangered I'iwi, or Hawaiian honeycreeper that is rapidly disappearing. Many living organisms depend on the Ohia tree for food and water. The Ohia tree is part of the watershed and collects water on its leaves and lets it drip into the aquifer. This gives humans clean and fresh water. Many birds in Hawai'i depended on the Ohia flower, and some are now extinct. There is also a fungus called Rapid Ohia Death (R.O.D.) which is wiping out many Ohia trees by taking the Ohia's water. There is currently no cure for this fungus.

Learning about the Ohia tree has forged a bond between me and the tree. There is an Ohia tree on campus which I never really paid attention to, and now I pay more attention to the tree and its growth. I want to protect the trees from R.O.D. and save the Ohia trees. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and please consider this bill.

Ohia Haiku

Ohia's nectar

Source of food for many birds

Some are now extinct

Sincerely,
Melody
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Bradley, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ōhi`a lehua the state endemic tree of Hawai`i.

I have recently learned that the ōhi`a tree is being threatened by a disease called Rapid Ōhi`a Death(R.O.D.). R.O.D. has knocked out a big chunk of the ōhi`a population. I would not like it for the ōhi`a tree to go extinct because that would have devastating effects on the native birds and snails. The ōhi`a is also important for culture. The ancient Hawaiians used the ōhi`a tree wood for building canoes. They also used the ōhi`a blossoms for medicine.

Here is a haiku I wrote for the ōhi`a tree.

Oh Great Ōhi`a

Devastate natives

From on land to shining sea

We must act quickly

The ōhi`a tree and I have this sort of connection. I know that many of the last natives of Hawai`i depend on the ōhi`a's nectar to survive, so because of that I will protect it so that the ōhi`a tree and the natives that depend on it can survive as well. Please consider this bill, and thank you for taking the time to read this message.

Sincerely,

Bradley

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Mikayla, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ōhi`a lehua the state endemic tree of Hawai`i.

Some facts you should know about the Ohia Lehua is that it provides canopy shade. This tree is very important to our watershed because it captures mist from precipitation which we will eventually drink. The Ohia`a Lehua provides a habitat for native species like the I`iwi and Honeycreeper. In addition, it's beautiful colors like red, yellow, orange, salmon and white brighten our environment. Something bad is also happening to these trees. Rapid Ohia Death is happening (R.O.D.).

My personal connection is that my preschool (Unity Preschool) named their classes after certain plants. I grew up loving all the plants at my preschool and especially loved the Lehua flower. The Ohia Lehua is a big part of my childhood and I would like to know that the Lehua is thought of more now. Thank you very much for taking time to listen to my testimony.

Sincerely,

Mikayla

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Kiara, a 4th grader at ‘Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to the State Symbols which designates the ohī‘a lehua as the state endemic tree.

I recently discovered the ō‘hi‘a lehua tree and I learned the cultural importance not only to the Hawaiians but also to the native birds that drink the sweet nectar from the lehua flower. I have also learned that rapid ō‘hi‘a death also known as R.O.D. has taken over our ō‘hi‘a forest and hurt 90% of the population of trees in the past 3 years. In addition, the ō‘hi‘a lehua tree collects rain water and leads it into our aquifers.

The ō‘hi‘a lehua is important to me because it makes me more curious to learn more about the different stages of the tree and helps me be more aware of my surroundings.

Sincerely,

Kiara

Iolani 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Kameron, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ōhi`a lehua the state endemic tree of Hawai`i.

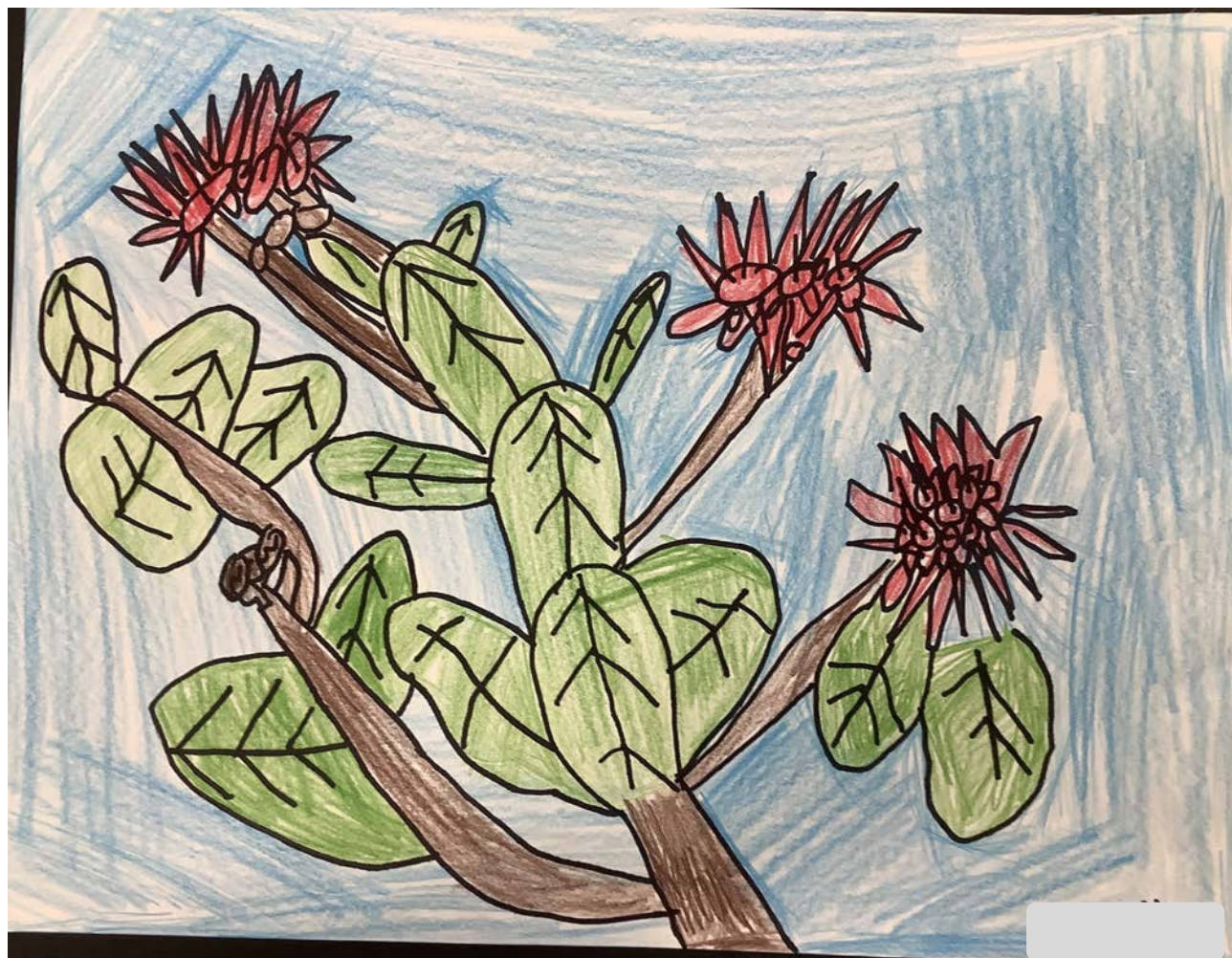
I have learned that the Ōhi`a Lehua is getting killed by a fungus called, Rapid Ohia Death. It is a fungus that goes into the tree from any wounds or holes in the tree. The Ōhi`a helps native birds live like the I`iwi or the Apapane. The native birds drink the nectar from the flower and that's how they get their food. The Ōhi`a can also help make small canoes from the tree trunks.

The Ōhi`a taught me to notice more of the nature around me. It taught me to respect nature and I used to never notice it in nature but now I see the Ōhi`a. Thank you for taking the time for reading my testimony, and I hope you pass this bill on.

Sincerely,

Kameron

Iolani School 4th Grader



SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 9:00:49 AM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Secreto	Manoa Elementary School 5th graders	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

On behalf of our fifth graders who are on spring break and cannot testify via zoom, please consider our testimony written for the former HB2202. Mahalo for your consideration.



HAWAII FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (HFIA)

P. O. Box 66 ❖ 'O'ōkala, HI 96774

Phone: 808-933-9411

Email: hfia@hawaiiforest.org

Website: www.hawaiiforest.org

Date: 3/14/22

TO: CAI Chair Cedric Asuega Gates , CAI Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam , CAI committee members Sharon E. Har, Jeanne Kapela, Scott Y. Nishimoto, Ryan I. Yamane, Gene Ward

FROM: Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of SB2059 Relating to State Symbols

Dear Hawaii Legislators,

On behalf of the Directors of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), this testimony is in support of SB2059.

As an association made up of individuals, small businesses and corporations, many of which are professionals and experts in the field of forest conservation and forestry in Hawaii, we know and understand the ecological, cultural and biocultural value of 'ōhi'a lehua. 'ōhi'a lehua is already a symbol for most who call Hawaii home. We see 'ōhi'a lehua in oli, mele, mo'olelo and hula. We see 'ōhi'a lehua as representing the strength and resilience of the Hawaiian people and of Hawaiian lands, forests and resources. We also see 'ōhi'a lehua as a broader symbol for Hawaii's native species including the other native tree and plant species it encourages and nurtures in the forest, and for the native birds it provides nectar for.

While 'ōhi'a lehua is greatly appreciated and respected, it is also under siege by Rapid 'ōhi'a Death. While it seems as though the majority of Hawaii's population is aware of this invasive fungal pathogen and the detrimental effects it has on our beloved 'ōhi'a lehua, it cannot hurt to further raise awareness of this issue. Naming 'ōhi'a lehua the State endemic tree can do this as well as recognize its ecological, cultural and biocultural importance.

We hope that you will support this resolution.

Mahalo,

Don Bryan

Don Bryan, President

Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

Established in 1989, HFIA's is a nonprofit organization founded by people committed to sustainable forest management.

HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 100 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.

HFIA Board of Directors

Officers: President Don Bryan, Vice-President Guy Cellier, Secretary Peter D. Simmons, Treasurer Wade Lee
Directors: Thomas Calhoun, Jeremy Campbell, Aaron Hammer, Nickolas Koch, Tai Lake, Gilles Lebbe, Michael Sowards, Irene Sprecher, Michael Tam, Jorma Winkler, Ron Wolfe, Aileen Yeh

The House Committee on Culture, Arts, and International Affairs
Wednesday, 3/16/2022
10:30 AM VIA Videoconference

Testimony in Support for SB2059

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ambyr Mokiao-Lee and I am the Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) Statewide Outreach Coordinator, which is part of the ROD Strategic Plan. I am testifying in **support of SB2059, Relating to State Symbols**, which would designate 'ōhi'a lehua (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) the State Endemic Tree of Hawai'i. This is a personal testimony and does not reflect the University of Hawaii's legal stance towards the issue.

This bill seeks to recognize the importance of our most iconic and beloved Hawaiian tree, 'ōhi'a lehua, by designating it as Hawaii's State Endemic Tree. By definition, endemic is something that has evolved over time in a location and is found nowhere else in the world. Our native 'ōhi'a lehua is a true definition of an endemic species and is uniquely Hawaiian. This tree has not only ecological value but it is so entwined with the Hawaiian culture and its peoples and is currently being threatened by a disease that has been decimating forests across our islands.

ROD is caused by a recently discovered fungal disease that infects 'ōhi'a lehua, and is killing 'ōhi'a at an alarming rate. This tree is not only the most abundant tree in our state, but it also serves as the foundation of our native forests, providing much of our water supply that we rely on. Wide-scale loss of the 'ōhi'a forests would be an environmental and economic catastrophe for the state.

Over the past 6 months, I have been working with the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) staff to reach out to K-12th grade students and teachers from across the state and engage them in the legislative process. We have taught them lessons about the importance of 'ōhi'a lehua, ROD, advocacy to over 25 schools across the state. We have been impressed with the dedication and commitment from these teachers and students and their willingness to engage in the legislative process.

The intention of this bill will aid in raising awareness about ROD and the ecological and cultural importance of 'ōhi'a lehua. Without 'ōhi'a, we will not only lose part of a unique and important ecosystem, but more importantly we would lose the function and ability for our systems to create the freshwater that we need to survive here in Hawai'i. The loss of our native forests would also equate to a loss of the cultural identity of the people of Hawai'i. For the reasons stated above, we ask that you pass HB2202 and designate 'ōhi'a lehua as Hawaii's State Endemic Tree. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Ambyr Mokiao-Lee
ROD Outreach Coordinator
ambyr@hawaii.edu
(808) 989-7222

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 12:12:31 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marc Hughes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In regards to Bill SB2059, for ohia lehua (*Metrosideros polymorpha*) to be adopted, established, and designated as the official endemic tree of the State.

Dear Culture, Arts, and International Affairs (CAI) committee,

My name is Marc Hughes, I am a forest pathologist and resident of Hawaii Island. I am in support of this bill. I believe that ohia lehua is the most important tree to the state of Hawaii and thus so, should be recognized as the state's endemic tree. Ecologically, ohia is a keystone species that is foundational to the state's precious native forests and it supports a variety of dependent plant and animal species. Ohia and the forests it creates are vital to our watersheds that provide residents clean and ample water that allow us to reside on this island. Culturally, I believe ohia to be the most iconic symbol of Hawaii and its natural beauty. By making ohia the state endemic tree, it will provide the recognition needed to further support its conservation against invasive pests and diseases, while also fostering a gateway for others to learn about the importance of this native and beautiful tree species so important to our state. I sincerely support Bill SB2059.

Mahalo,

Marc Hughes

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 12:13:57 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chuck Chimera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2059 SD1. I can't think of a more important, or more imperiled, tree than the 'Ohi'a Lehua deserving of recognition as our state endemic tree.

Mahalo,

Chuck Chimera

Honokaa, HI

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 12:35:36 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Rogers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Cedric Asuega Gates and Vice CHari Adrian K. Tam, I am writing in support of naming 'ōhi'a as the State Endemic Tree of Hawai'i.

As you likely well know, 'ōhi'a is critical to our way of life in Hawai'i. In the forest, 'ōhi'a help pull moisture from the sky and ensure we have water to drink. Additionally, 'ōhi'a provide nourishment and a home to flora and fauna, many endangered. 'Ōhi'a even help ensure we have healthy ocean reefs for surfing and fishing. (You could even say, 'ōhi'a equal fish!) And 'ōhi'a are vital to Hawaiian culture, from mele to oli to hula to la'au lapa'au and more.

I appreciate all you are doing to name 'ōhi'a as our State Endemic Tree. This will raise its awareness and importance in the community in tremendous ways.

Mahalo nui,

Kim Rogers

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 1:34:21 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Azuma Chrupaluk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

When this news is announced, can the public also be equipped with information on how to get an 'ohia for their yard? How can we multiply this tree so that the tree outlives Rapid 'Ohia death? With so many species on the endangered list, it is important that we save the biodiversity that still remains. Also, with all the trees that have been being leveled for development, that is the cause of our droughts becoming more imminent. Please encourage 'ohia growth in the announcement.

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 3:00:04 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Foley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

'Ohi'a is a cultural and ecological cornerstone to Hawai'i and should be designated as Hawaii's State Endemic Tree.

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 9:50:00 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James B Friday	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha chair Gates, vice chair Tam, and members of the House Committee on Culture, Arts, and International Affairs

I am writing to support SB2059 SD1 to make 'ōhi'a lehua our state endemic tree. I am a professional forester by training and faculty at the UH Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, but this testimony is my own position and does not reflect official University positions. While most tropical forests are very diverse, most of Hawaii's forests are comprised mainly of 'ōhi'a trees. 'Ōhi'a forests protect our watersheds, provide habitat for rare native birds and plants, and are sacred in traditional Hawaiian culture. At the same time they are threatened by Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death, invasive species, and wildfires. Giving 'ōhi'a lehua recognition as our state endemic tree will encourage people to protect our remaining native forests for all our benefits.

Mahalo for your consideration,

James B. Friday

Date & Time of Hearing: 2022 March 16, 10:30 a.m.
House Committee on Culture, Arts and International Affairs
Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of my Iolani 4th grade students, I would like to formally submit their written testimony in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols, which designates the ‘ōhi‘a lehua as the state endemic tree. Included in this document are student written statements, poems, and artwork expressing their support and love for the ‘ōhi‘a lehua.

In recent months, the 4th graders have been learning and building their awareness of the ‘ōhi‘a lehua. Students first learned about the importance of the ‘ōhi‘a lehua to Hawai‘i’s watershed, its cultural connections to the Hawaiians of old, and the unfortunate threat of Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death (R.O.D.) that a growing number of these endemic trees are facing.

To assist students with forming a deeper understanding and connection to the ‘ōhi‘a lehua tree, students were introduced to the seven ‘ōhi‘a trees on our ‘Iolani School campus. Many of our 4th graders were unaware that these beauties even existed in our own backyard. Since then, students have taken occasional walking trips across campus to observe, admire, and connect with our ‘ōhi‘a lehua. They have witnessed firsthand every flower stage of the ‘ōhi‘a lehua and are forming a special relationship and kuleana for being caretakers, as they have each harvested and planted their own ‘ōhi‘a seeds. It is exciting that they now have the opportunity to mālama the ‘ōhi‘a and advocate for these native trees to increase awareness in other people. Their love for the ‘ōhi‘a lehua is growing and will hopefully blossom into something wonderful in the months to come.

Thank you for your consideration and time spent reading through my students’ testimony.

Sincerely,

Addie C. Kim

‘Iolani School 4th Grade Teacher

Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Mia and Allison, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

Here is an acrostic poem we wrote about the ohi`a lehua.

Ōhi`a Lehua trees need to stick around because native birds and insects depend on the 'Ōhi`a.

However, Rapid Ōhi`a Death is killing the Ōhi`a and soon might be extinct.

Important to Hawaiian culture.

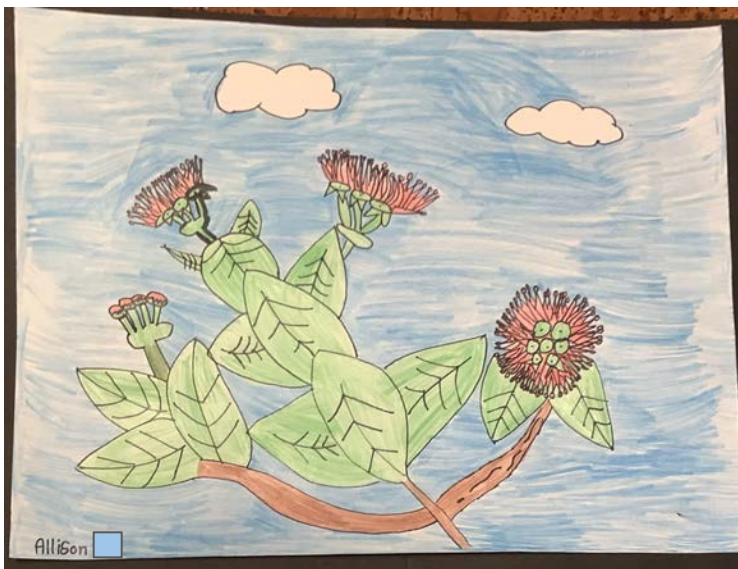
Aquifer depends on the Ōhi`a Lehua.

Since we were introduced to the ohi`a lehua tree it has changed the way we think about nature and our surroundings. Thank you for taking the time to read our testimony and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Allison and Mia

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Avery and Seri, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the `ohia lehua as the state endemic tree..

We have been learning about the `ohia tree and that it is very important to many other native species. It is also important because it preserves the Hawaiian culture and replenishes our aquifer after it replenishes our aquifer we can drink the water and/or use it for different uses . We have also learned that ROD (Rapid `Ohia Death) has been a threat to our `Ohia trees and this would affect the animals that depend on the `ohia. It is also our Kuleana (responsibility).

We feel since we learned about the `ohia that it made us more aware of our surrounding and the `ohia we have on our campus. We recently planted our own `ohia seeds and have been taking care of our seeds, these seeds are very important to us. I hope you will consider this bill as it will kokua (help) protect our ohia and will raise awareness of R.O.D. Mahalo for considering this bill.

Sincerely,
Avery and Seri
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Kaika, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of bill SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

Here is an acrostic poem I wrote about the ohi`a lehua.

Ohi`a wood helped the ancient Hawaiians make things like a house post to keep their hale strong.

Hawai`i used to have tons of Ohi`a in its forest before R.O.D. came along. We need to keep our Ohi`a healthy for the future of Hawai`i.

In the Hawaiian islands, Ohi`a were important to the watershed because they helped get water to the aquifer. The leaves would allow rainwater to slowly drip to the ground.

A lot of animals depended on the Ohi`a trees like the Honeycreeper or I`iwi.

I care about the Ohi`a because I recently learned Ohi`a are endemic to Hawaii because they can only be found in the Hawaiian forest or mountains. I also care about the Ohi`a because they help me understand that the Ohi`a is very important to Hawai`i. I don't want the tree to be extinct like some of the birds that are already extinct. I also care for it because I don't want the birds that drink from it to be extinct too. Also, I don't want an important piece of the Hawaiians to be extinct. I have lots of ho`ihi (respect) for the Ohi`a because I had so much care for the Ohi`a tree when I first learned about it. Please consider this bill so that the Ohi`a can be named the Endemic Tree of the state of Hawai`i. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Kaika
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Tye and Luke, from Iolani school 4th grade, are in support of bill SB2059 SD1 . We are in support of it being designated the State Endemic Tree of Hawaii. Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony.

Here is an acrostic poem we wrote about the ohi`a lehua.

Ohi`a trees gave nectar to birds such as the black hawaiian honeycreeper which are now extinct. Today, the Ohi`a provides nectar to birds like the i`iwi.

Hawaiians used the Ohi`a trees' blossoms for medicinal purposes.

In Hawai`i Ohi`a tree's are endemic and it's important that we keep them around because they are an important part of our aquifer because they slow down the dripping water with their leaves.

An Ohi`a can be dying right now because of R.O.D. If we don't become more aware of the ohi`a and take action or the Ohi`a trees will go extinct. Naming the Ohi`a trees our endemic state tree, will help others to be more aware of this island treasure.

Sincerely,

Tye and Luke

Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Ellery, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

The Ohi`a has an enemy, R.O.D (rapid ohia death). R.O.D. is a fungi that enters through cuts and clogs the tree's water system. Sadly R.O.D. only affects Ohi`a trees. We need this tree because it provides us with healthy rainforests, beautiful lei, and a lot of shelter for animals like the `i`iwi. Not a lot of people know about this amazing tree. More people would know and pay more attention to it if it was named our state endemic tree. People would help fight off R.O.D. I think it is my kuleana (responsibility) to malama (care) for these precious Ohi`a. Thank you for considering this bill.

Sincerely,

Ellery

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Sophia and Mikayla, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of bill SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

We have learned that the ohi`a is extremely important to the preservation of Hawaiian culture, it's a cornerstone species of our forests, and is important as a vital water gatherer to refill our aquifers. We've also learned the sad reality of Rapid Ohi`a Death or R.O.D. R.O.D. is a fungus that clogs it's water supply.

We think that if the ohi`a lehua is made the state endemic tree, people would pay more attention to it, want to learn about it, and help stop R.O.D. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Sophia and Mikayla
Iolani School 4th Graders



...



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Aya, 4th grade student from Iolani school, am support of SB2059 SD1 , relating to state symbols which designates the Ohi'a Lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have recently learnt about the Ohi'a tree and rapid Ohi'a death (R.O.D). I have also learnt about the cultural importance to Hawai'i.

Another reason for this is there are many birds that depend on the Ohi'a tree for food. I think if the Ohi'a tree is named The State Endemic Tree Of Hawai'i, people will Ho'ihi (respect) it more. As I said before, I have learned a lot about the Ohi'a tree in class. I hope you accept this bill and choose to name the Ohi'a tree The State Endemic Tree of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Aya

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Sydney, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have recently learned that the ohi`a has an enemy, Rapid Ohi`a Death, which is also known as R.O.D. Something else I have learned is the cultural importance the ohi`a brings to Hawai`i, like it being an island flower and part of some of the legends of which Hawaiians believe. In addition to this, there are many birds who depend upon this lovely tree for part of their lives. I also believe that if the ohi`a was the state endemic tree of Hawai`i, people would ho`ihi (respect) and kokua (help) it a bit more than they do now.

I have made many connections to this tree and one is that I have lived around it, as it's in my backyard, and have learned so many interesting facts just by looking at it every day. I thank you for reading and considering this bill and hopefully making the ohi`a lehua the State Endemic Tree Of Hawai`i.

Thank you for your service,
Sydney
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Audrey, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of bill SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

During Social Studies, while we learned about the Hawaiian plants, I realized the importance of this endemic tree. The beautiful `Ōhi`a is extremely durable and important to our environment. It is one of the main parts of Hawai`i's water supply. The `Ōhi`a, along with the Koa tree, slows rainwater from creating run-off on the mountains. The `Ōhi`a was also a resource of medicine for the ancient Hawaiians. Plus, it is a native plant and keystone species. A keystone plant is a plant that is a very important part of an ecosystem. Native birds and insects rely on the `Ōhi`a for food and homes. With strong, hard wood, the `Ōhi`a also has many uses.

While we speak a fungus called R.O.D. (Rapid `Ōhi`a Death) is infecting our `Ōhi`a. To protect our beloved `Ōhi`a we ask you to consider our bill. These `Ōhi`a are so important to me because they help the environment. It's also an important part of Hawaiian culture.

Here is a haiku poem I wrote about the ohi`a lehua.

A Beautiful Tree

Blood-red flowers sway,
Strong wood rooted in the earth,
Both make `Ōhi`a.

Sincerely,
Audrey
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Hunter and Jax, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1 relating to State Symbols which designates the Ohi`a Lehua as the state endemic tree.

In class we have learned that the Ohi`a tree holds a lot of rainwater that drips slowly into the aquifers. Another thing that we have learned about the Ohi`a is that Hawaiians used Ohi`a for many things like canoes and posts to support their home. The Lēhua blossom was used for dyes, leis, clothes, and medicine for women giving birth. Another thing that we have learned is that R.O.D. or Rapid Ohi`a Death is killing our Ohi`a trees.

The Ohi`a tree means a lot to us because it is an important part of Hawaiian culture and good for our aquifer, native plants, and native animals. If we didn't have Ohi`a trees we would not have enough rainwater to drink from our aquifer. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,
Jax and Hunter
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Mattie, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ōhi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have been learning about the ōhi`a lehua tree and have started to realize that it is a very important part of Hawaiian culture, our watershed, and the life of many native birds. I have also been learning about Rapid Ōhi`a Death (R.O.D) which has been affecting and killing millions of ōhi`a in the state of Hawai`i. With many ōhi`a trees dying, it is our kuleana (responsibility) to protect and ho`ihi (respect) it. If we don't protect the ōhi`a, this would not only affect many native birds and animals it would also affect us. I believe that if you decide to make the ōhi`a the State Endemice Tree of Hawai`i, people would become more aware of the situation that the ōhi`a is facing. For these reasons I think that the ōhi`a should be named the State Endemic Tree of Hawai`i. Thank you for reading and considering this bill.

Mahalo,
Mattie
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

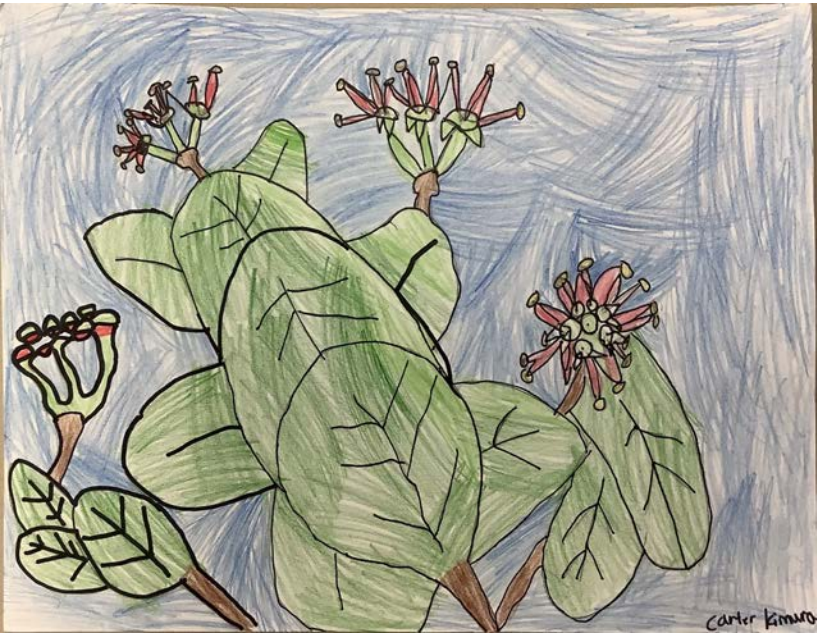
We, Carter and Henry, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

We have recently been learning about Rapid Ohi`a Death, the fungus that spreads to Ohi`a trees. We have learned that R.O.D. has killed over one million Ohi`a trees. The trees are in danger so it`s our kuleana (responsibility) to ho `ihi (respect) and care for them. We need to do this because the Ohi`a trees give many animals shelter, food, and nectar. Ohi`a is also a staple of Hawai`i history being the mostly used tree for lei and canoe. Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony and we hope you will consider this bill.

Ohi`a Haiku

The Ohi`a Tree
Brilliant Red, White, Yellow
Honey and Nectar

Sincerely,
Carter and Henry
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Kara, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

In our social studies class we started to learn about the Ohi`a tree. I learned how it kokua (helps) Hawai`i. It gives shelter to native birds, its flowers are made to make leis, and much more. Sadly, the Ohi`a tree has an enemy. R.O.D., also known as Rapid Ohi`a Death. R.O.D has killed over one million Ohi`a trees. I think if you make the Ohi`a tree the state endemic tree, people will try to learn about the Ohi`a and tree to help it. I think it is my kuleana (responsibility) to inform you about this and I feel strongly towards showing malama (care) to the Ohi`a. Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,
Kara
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Brady, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have recently learned about a tree called Ohia. We also planted Ohia seeds and are caring for them. But there is an enemy to the Ohia called ROD it is a disease that is killing millions of Ohia they need our help. We know the Ohia was important to the Hawaiians to make medicines, canoes, and house supports. That is not all it is helpful for we have also learned that the Ohia is important to the watershed by funneling the water with its leaves and transferring it into the aquifer. We are not the only ones who depend on the tree. This tree gives shelter and food to native help birds and bugs that inhabit our island.

We want the Ohia to be named the state endemic tree so that we can build awareness to preserve this tree. The Ohia is important to us because it has it has also helped the it also gave me water to drink which helped our aquifer collect more. I want to spread awareness to help the Ohi`a with stopping R.O.D. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brady

Iolani 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Archie, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have learned that the Ohia is a very important tree to the environment because it provides shelter and food for many endangered and native Hawaiian animal species such as the honeycreepers and spiders. I also learned that animals are losing their shelter and food to wood gathering and **R.O.D** .(Rapid Ohia Death).It's my Kuleana (responsibility) to care for the Ohia on and off our campus.

This tree is important to me because when I planted an Ohia at school, I learned to care for it. Now the Ohia are like family to me.Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,
Archie
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Avalon, am a student at Iolani School, and I am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols, which would designate the Ohi`a Lehua as the State Endemic Tree of Hawai`i.

I have recently learned that Ohi`a trees are extremely important to Hawaiian culture. The Ohi`a trees also have a vital role in Hawai`i's watersheds. The Ohi`a allows water to sink into Hawai`i's natural aquifers. Unfortunately, the Ohi`a trees are in danger. R.O.D. (Rapid Ohi`a Death) has killed over 1 million Ohi`a trees on the Island of Hawai`i alone.

Learning about the Ohi`a has made me feel ho`ihi (respect), it is my kuleana (responsibility) to help protect the Ohi`a. I feel that if the Ohi`a Lehua is the State Endemic Tree, we could spread awareness about R.O.D. and how to protect our beloved Ohi`a. Thank you for putting this into consideration.

Sincerely,

Avalon

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Thomas, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to state Symbols which designates the Ohi'a Lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have been learning about how the Ohi'a tree is so important to Hawaii. The Ohi'a's sweet nectar helps feed the native birds. The Ohi'a tree also sucked the water in and then goes into the aquifer for us to drink. The Ohi'a tree is in danger because of the Rapid Ohi'a Death. Rapid Ohi'a Death has been killing a lot of Ohi'a trees.

It is our job to protect the tree from ROD and let everyone else know how important this tree to Hawaii. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Aiden, a 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

These past few weeks, I've learned a lot about the ohi`a tree, including the fact that the ohi`a is endemic to Hawai'i. If the tree becomes extinct because of R.O.D., then, you cannot find it anywhere else in the world. I've also learned that if the ohi`a becomes extinct, the native birds that need the tree to live will also become extinct. The native birds are a cultural importance to Hawai'i, so people that live in Hawai'i will be really sad because it may be very important to them.

The ohi`a is important to me because it taught me to be more careful around plants because they can be very important too. I've learned how to take care of an ohi`a tree because I had experience planting my own ohi`a. The ohi`a is also important to me because whenever I see a fully bloomed tree, I get filled up with joy for the rest of the day.

Thank you for your time and maybe considering this bill.

Mahalo,
Aiden
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Kaitlyn, an Iolani 4th grader, am in support of SB2059 SD1 , Relating to State Symbols which designates the Ohi`a Lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have recently learned that Ohi`a is very important to the Hawaiian cultural and ecosystem. I have also recently discovered that Rapid Ohi`a Death (or R.O.D.) has invaded our Ohi`a forest and has damaged many of these special trees. The Ohi`a is a big part of our water cycle. It leads the water droplets to our aquifers which leads into our everyday lives. Ohi`a was also important to the Hawaiians of old. They used the Ohi`a wood for carvings of their akua (or Gods). Ohi`a also provides sweet nectar to our native birds, such as the I`i`wi and Honeycreeper. These birds depend on the nectar to survive.

When my family and I take an evening walk, I like to take a look at the Ohi`a that hides behind a big tree up our street. This Ohi`a is small but it has beautiful blossoms blooming. I`d like people to know more about the Ohi`a and why it`s so important to us and nature. Thank you for your kind courtesy towards our sacred Ohi`a Lehua.

Here is an Ohi`a Lehua acrostic poem that I wrote.

Ohi`a has made me care and notice the beauty around us much more.

Helping this Ohi`a has made me want to save our Native creatures around us too.

I feel like the Ohi`a gives me a calming sensation.

As the months pass, Rapid Ohi`a Death (or RO..D) has killed to much Ohi`a, that now

I want to help these trees as much as I can before it`s too late

Mahalo,
Kaitlyn
Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Kayde, a 4th grader at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the Ohi`a Lehua as the state endemic tree.

I recently learned that native birds like the `i`iwi like to suck the nectar from the ohi`a lehua. If the ohi`a lehua is gone, the native birds may be extinct soon due to Rapid Ohia Death. The ohi`a is important because it can be a food source for animals, and can make things like canoes or medicine. The ohi`a tree also mattered to the native Hawaiians, they were the ones who made the canoes and medicine.

The ohi`a is important to me because it has made me realize that it's only here in Hawai`i. We have to be aware of the ohi`a because they are dying to Rapid Ohia Death. We need to help the ohia, before the tree itself and a lot of animals die too.

Sincerely,
Kayde
Iolani School 4th Grader

Ohia Haiku
Red, yellow, orange,
Really high in the mountains,
On volcanic land



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

We, Asher and Angelina, 4th grade students at Iolani School, are in support of SB2059 SD1, relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

We have recently learned that the Ohia is dying of the spreading of Rapid Ohia Death. We think that by naming the Ohia Hawaii's state endemic tree, people will recognize it more and help protect it from dying out. We need to save the Ohia because it is food for many animals, and those animals depend on Ohia to survive.

Learning about the Ohia has changed how we feel about nature. We have seen Ohia before, but have never really noticed it. We hope you will consider naming Ohia the state endemic tree of Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Asher and Angelina
Iolani School 4th Graders



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Luke 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have recently learned that native birds rely on this tree to live. For example the native birds drink out of the ohia blossoms, so if the ohia tree dies out the native birds will too. I have also learned that the ohia is endemic to Hawaii. Since it is endemic to Hawaii, if it dies out, it's gone forever. If it's gone forever Hawaiian people may be really sad.

In my opinion I think that the ohia tree represents Hawaiian culture because back in the day the old Hawaiians used it, and without it, Hawaii wouldn't be the Hawaii we are today. Thank you for your time and hopefully considering this bill.

Sincerely,

Luke

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Arya, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have learned many things about the 'ohi'a and its vital importance to our ecosystem. I have learned that the 'ohi'a is an important freshwater gatherer, and catches water for our daily activities. The 'ohi'a's leaves are cupped and they catch freshwater from the clouds. There's an endangered bird species called the Hawaiian honeycreeper, and it relies on the 'ohi'a's nectar for food. Without it the honeycreeper would probably go extinct. It also helps to remind us of the story of 'Ohi'a, Lehua, and the fire goddess Pele. Pele was jealous of 'Ohi'a and Lehua's love, so she turned 'Ohi'a into a tree, then the akua turned Lehua into a beautiful flower so the two lovers could be together again, the legend is that if you pick the 'ohi'a flower their tears will fall from the sky. I have also learned of a big threat to the 'ohi'a called Rapid 'Ohi'a Death, or R.O.D. A fungus that is killing and infecting these beautiful trees.

If I hadn't been introduced to the 'ohi'a I would have thought it was just a tree, but now that I am caring for and slowly understanding the 'ohi'a tree, I've grown to respect it and other trees more. I think growing and learning about the 'ohi'a made me realize that it's more than a tree, that it's a species that has many benefits to our ecosystem. I hope you will understand and consider this bill to help our beloved 'ohi'a. Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely,

Arya

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Emma, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi`a lehua as the state endemic tree.

I think this because the tree is important in many ways, for example, native birds. The O`hia is important to native birds because the birds drink the sweet nectar from the flower. Another important thing to know about the O`hia is that ancient Hawaiians used the stump of the tree to make a house also known as a hale. If the O`his is named the state endemic tree, people will find out about the Rapid O`hia Death and they will be more aware of it. I think that making it the state endemic tree will teach people more about the tree and might get attached to it like how I did.

I think that the tree is really cool and amazing. Sometimes in school, I go to visit the O`hia trees on campus and always find something different and interesting to look at. Finding out that I was going to have the opportunity to plant my own O`hia tree made me really excited. Thank you for listening to my testimony. I hope that you will consider accepting it.

Sincerely,

Emma

Iolani School 4th



Emma

Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Alec, a 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree. I think that the Ohia Lehua should be designated as the state endemic tree.

I have learned that the Ohia is an important part of our ecosystem because it helps in all different kinds of ways for different things for example the honeycreeper drinks the nectar of the Ohia tree. The Ohia tree is resilient like the people of Hawaii.

The Ohia tree made me more careful where I step. The Ohia tree has made me more observant of the Ohia tree now I see details I didn't see before. Thank you very much for reading my testimony and I hope you consider this bill.

Sincerely,

Alec

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Maddy, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

I support this bill because the Ohia is important in so many ways, for example the native birds. The Ohia is important to the birds because they rely on the trees' sweet nectar from the flower to drink. Another important thing to know about the Ohia tree is that naming the Ohia the state endemic tree will make others notice the tree and realize how important it is. If this tree does become the state endemic tree then people will find out about the Rapid Ohia Death and hopefully be more aware of what's happening to them.

Sometimes in school I go to visit the Ohia trees on our campus. Every time I check the tree there are more interesting things to see. When I first heard about the Ohia I wasn't too excited because I thought that it was just a simple tree but as I learned more about it I got more connected to the Ohia. Planting my own Ohia was super exciting to do.

Thank you for listening to our testimony and I hope you will consider this.

Sincerely,

Maddy & Emma

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Aryanna, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohia lehua as the state endemic tree.

I have recently learned that Ohia is an important part of the watershed and culture. The Hawaiians used to use the ohia flower for medicine, They also used the ohia flower's nectar to help feed native birds. Rapid Ohia Death, also known as R.O.D., is spreading and killing the Ohia. The hardwood of the Ohia tree was used to make homes and statues by the ancient Hawaiian people.

The ohia is very important to me because I used to walk past the tree everyday, now every time I walk past the ohia I always check if it's healthy so we can keep the ohia protected. Thank you for taking your time to read this bill, I hope you take it into consideration.

This is a acrostic poem about the Ohia`a

Ohi`a is an endemic tree.

Hawaiians used Ohia`a's tree wood for tools

In the Hawaii island it is illegal to take Ohia`a off of the island.

A serious disease is spreading killing Ohia.

Sincerely,

Aryanna

Iolani School 4th Grader



Testimony in Support of SB2059 SD1 - Relating to State Symbols

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I, Rylen, 4th grade student at Iolani School, am in support of SB2059 SD1, Relating to State Symbols which designates the ohi'a lehua as the state endemic tree. Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Pihana Branco, and Members of the Committee,

This bill is important to me because it will get people interested in the Ohi'a tree so maybe they will be more careful and considerate about nature and it might get people interested in R.O.D (Rapid Ohi'a Death) and the Ohi'a is also important to native birds because it is food to these native endangered birds of Hawai'i.

I like the Ohi'a because ever since we planted our own Ohi'a in school and saw some on our school campus, I just find these plants and nature is making me notice stuff I never noticed before.

THE OHI'A BLOSSOM

Usually bright red
Pick blossom and sky will cry
On molten lava

Sincerely,
Rylen
Iolani 4th Grader



SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 10:05:27 AM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lily Corpuz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, ARTS, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Chair Cedric Asuega Gates

Vice-Chair Adrian K. Tam

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

10:30 AM VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 329

State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

Testimony in Support of SB2059

Aloha Chair Cedric Asuega Gates and Vice-Chair Adrian K. Tam

I, Lily Corpuz, agree in terms of SB2059, relating to the state endemic tree, which would be the Ohia Lehua.

The ohia lehua serves a huge role in Hawaiian culture, is fundamental in our ecosystem, and is essential in gathering water for our local aquifers. I am aware of the many threats involving Rapid Ohia Death, and of the fungus called keratocystic Fimbriata, the vascular wilt fungus. Without Ohia, numerous species of plants and animals might die, because of the perfect habitat it gives. The Ohia is also a primary source of water; it catches water in the leaves and branches, which then drains into our aquifers. The Hawaiians sing songs, chants, and tell stories about this plant and have for generations. It is such a beautiful tree and a foundation for Hawaii. I would hate for generations to not be able to learn and see for themselves this magnificent plant.

Sincerely,

Lily Corpuz

Citizen of Hawaii



**SB2059 SD1
RELATING TO STATE SYMBOLS**

Ke Kōmike Hale o ka Mo'omeheu, nā Hana No'eau, a me ke Kuleana o Nā 'Āina 'ē
House Committee on Culture, Arts, & International Affairs

Malaki 16,2022

10:30 a.m.

Lumi 329

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB2059 SD1, which would designate 'Ohi'a lehua as the State endemic tree in order to recognize its cultural and ecological importance and raise awareness of the critical threats to 'Ohi'a ¹with the hope that this awareness will result in effective conservation and healthy 'Ohi'a forests across the Hawaiian Islands.

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 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 awareness of Hawaiian plants will 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.

Found nowhere else in the world, 'ōhi'a or *Metrosideros polymorpha* is a key component of Hawai'i's culture, ecology and environment. Native Hawaiians recognize 'ōhi'a as the first sign of life to emerge after a lava flow, and have developed a range of medicinal, spiritual, practical and other uses for all parts of the plant. Many aspects of our islands' ecosystems also depend upon the unique characteristics of 'ōhi'a, and a number of endemic and often endangered species have evolved to form close relationships with what is still one of the most common trees in Hawai'i. Moreover, the restoration of our once abundant 'ōhi'a forests is now recognized as critical to watershed protection and aquifer recharge, a growing concern given the anticipated impacts of an increasing population base, decreasing rainfall trends and climate change.

More than 365 of Hawai'i's plant species are now considered threatened or endangered²; native animal species have also declined due to the lack of food and habitat

¹ Ohia Decline study: https://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw_gtr086/psw_gtr086.pdf, LAST VIEWED 2/7/22

² Officially, 366 of the Hawaiian plant taxa are listed as Endangered or Threatened by Federal and State governments, and an additional 48 species are Proposed as Endangered. <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/ecosystems/rare-plants/>; LAST VIEWED 2/7/22

historically provided by such plants. As an advocate for Native Hawaiians, OHA recognizes that the extinction of plant species can result in the extinction of traditional and customary practices associated with them, as well as indigenous knowledge that has been passed down for centuries. Increasing the awareness of Hawaiian plants can help to reverse this trend and provide greater local knowledge of Hawaiian plants' ecological importance.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS SB2059 SD1**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important endemic tree.

The House of Representatives
Committee on Culture, Arts, and International Affairs
March 16, 2022, 10:30am
State Capitol

Aloha e Chair Asuega Gates, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Carli Gardner, I am the Natural Resources teacher at Kalāheo High School. I am writing in support of SB 2059, relating to State Symbols, to designate 'ōhi'a lehua our State Endemic Tree of Hawai'i.

'Ōhi'a lehua is a keystone species that holds significant importance for our native ecosystems, watershed, and Hawaiian culture. My students and I have spent this school year learning about the importance of 'ōhi'a and ways we can protect it from ROD and other invasive species. I have attached written testimony from a few of the students in my natural resources classes. I hope you enjoy reading about the ways 'ōhi'a is important to them.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Aloha,
Carli Gardner

The House of Representatives
Committee on Culture, Arts & International Affairs
March 16, 2022
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of SB 2059
Relating to State Endemic Tree

Aloha Chair Cedric Asuega Gates, Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrea James, I am a sophomore at Kalaheo High School on the island of Oahu. I am in support of SB 2059, Relating to State Endemic Tree which would designate Ohia Lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawaii.

This bill is extremely important and significant because it will positively impact many aspects of the Hawaiian islands. The Ohia tree is very significant to Hawaii's culture, people, ecosystems, and so much more. I believe it is respectful to recognize nature not only for ecosystems but also for the people/humans that live in these ecosystems. Right now the Ohia tree's species is declining due to a fungal pathogen known as ROD (Rapid Ohia Death). It is

infecting and killing many Ohia trees all across the islands of Hawaii. Many conservational efforts are being made to keep the Ohia tree species in abundance but more needs to be done. Ohia is such a beautiful tree which deserves as much love as it could get because of the significant role it plays in our ecosystems. It is part of nature's balance.

With everything being said, if Ohia Lehua becomes the state endemic tree of Hawaii it will bring in more awareness and the love that Ohia deserves. I am only fighting to keep nature living as me and every other human being on earth is nature.

I give thanks and appreciation to the committee for taking the time to read my testimony. I hope you guys show the love that Ohia deserves and understand the significance and importance of this beautiful tree to the Hawaiian islands.

Peace and Love,
Andrea R. James
Kalaheo High School, 10th Grade

Aloha Chair Cedric Asuega Gates, Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam, and Members of the Committee,
I am Eve Brady, a junior at Kalaheo High School, and I am in support of SB2059, Relating to State Native Tree which would designate Ohia Lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawaii.

Designating Ohia Lehua as the state endemic tree would benefit conservation efforts to protect this tree. People will be more likely to learn about Ohia Lehua's cultural significance in Hawaii. In relation to conservation, the more people learn and care about Ohia Lehua, the more money and energy can be put into combatting Rapid Ohia Death, a fungal disease that is decimating many Ohia Lehua trees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Eve Brady
Kalaheo High School Class of 2023

Aloha Chair Cedric Asuega Gates, Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam, and Members of the Committee,
My name is Dalia Hembal and I am a freshman at Kalaheo High School. I am **in support of SB 2059**, *Relating to State Native Tree* which would designate ohia lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawaii.

Ohia lehua is a very important plant to the Hawaiian ecosystem. It provides native birds with food and shelter, makes up the main portion of the canopy in native wet forests, is critical to our watershed and holds moisture, allowing streams and aquifers to refill. In addition, almost 40% of above-ground forest carbon is stored in 'Ohi'a forests. Not to forget the many cultural uses this plant has, especially the many things it's wood and leaves were used for by native Hawaiians. So, taking all this in consideration, I believe that 'Ohia lehua should be designated as Hawaii's state endemic tree, especially since it's the most common native tree species on our islands.

Thank you, Committee, for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Dalia Melody Hembal
Kalaheo High School, 9th Grade

Aloha Chair Cedric Asuega Gates, Vice Chair Adrian K. Tam, and Members of the Committee,
Hi, I am Zariah Schubert and I'm a freshman at Kalaheo I am **in support of SB 2059, Relating to State Native Tree** which would designate ohia lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawaii.

Ohia is important to me because it is part of the Hawaiian culture and is one of the most important native plants in Hawaii. Ōhi'a trees make up the largest portion of the canopy in native wet forests. Lastly, they provide shelter and food for numerous native birds. Ōhi'a trees are celebrated in chant, song, dance, and ceremonies by the Hawaiian people. Ohia's sturdy wood was also used to create weapons, Kapa cloth, boards for poi pounding, enclosures, and statues its leaves were used as medicinal tea. Due to rapid ohia death, lots of the Ohia trees have been dying because of this. If the Ōhi'a trees die lots of animals will also become extinct because Ōhi'a is one of their main food sources. As you can see Ohia is used in many different ways for many different things we can all come together as a community and save and protect the Ōhi'a.

Mahalo Nui Loa
Sincerely,
Zariah Schubert
Kalaheo High School - (Freshman)

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah Harrold and I am a student at Kalaheo High school on Oahu. I am in support of SB 2059, relating to the designation of Ohia Lehua as the state endemic tree.

I am in support of this bill for many reasons, first and foremost being that the Ohia tree is of utmost importance to the remaining native Hawaiian ecosystems. To it we owe our gratitude, for it provides us our water, our rains, and our spirit. It is the keystone to not only the welfare of the land but the welfare of the people, many of whom have a deep personal and cultural connection to this tree. And, despite its importance, it is in danger of becoming endangered due to habitat loss and disease. The designation of the State Endemic Tree would make more people aware of its importance, and make it a symbol of Hawaii. It represents the land and the life of the people, and so please hear us and protect this symbol of utmost importance.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sarah Harrold

Kalaheo High School, Grade 11

House of Representatives
Committee on Culture, Arts, & International Affairs
March 16, 2022, 10:30 am.
State Capitol

Testimony in support of the Ohia Lehua being recognized as the State endemic tree

Aloha,

My name is Carver Jamison, Senior at Kalaheo Highschool, I would like to present my testimony in favor of the Ohia Lehua becoming the state endemic tree. The Ohia Lehua is very important to Hawai'i; it provides food for our Endemic animals, captures water that nourishes the soil and its people, and holds an enormous amount of Cultural importance to the people of Hawai'i. I sincerely hope you at least read and consider this testimony.

Thank you,
Carver Jamison

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mary Kathman and I am a freshman at Kalaheo High School. I am taking courses in the Natural Resources Core and spend much of my time outside of school in the mountains and forests. I am **in support of SB 2059**, *Relating to State Native Tree* which would designate ohia lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawaii.

This bill is important because it will help raise awareness about ohia lehua and the threats against it such as rapid ohia death. It will also increase funding to organizations dedicated to protecting this valuable natural resource of our state. For me, this bill holds importance because, as someone who wants to go into the natural resources field, I see the value of protecting endemic species, especially those that hold such cultural significance for Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Mary Kathman
Kalaheo highschool, Grade 9

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am a Junior at Kalaheo High School and am born and raised in Kailua, O'ahu. I am in support of SB2059, relating to the state native tree, which would designate Ohi'a Lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawai'i.

Ohi'a Lehua makes up approximately 80 percent of Hawai'i's native forests, as it's home to many native birds and provides endangered species with a safe home. Unfortunately, Rapid Ohia Death (ROD) has killed off a lot of Ohi'a trees, and has taken away a safe haven for many species. This is important as Ohi'a holds a great amount of cultural significance within the Hawaiian Islands, as it has for years. Within ancient Hawai'i, the Ohi'a wood was used for weapons, Kapa cloth beaters, boards to pound poi, enclosures, and statues. Although the use for

Ohi'a may no longer be the same, the bonds it has created for the people of Hawai'i and the strong connection with the aina' it has provided, is timeless.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kassidy Lyons

Kalaheo High School, Junior

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Keonaona Peters and I am a current High School student at Kalaheo High School. I am in support of SB 2059, Relating to State Native Tree, which would designate 'ōhi'a lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawaii.

'Ōhi'a lehua holds significant cultural importance. Many native Hawaiian traditions refer to the tree and the forests it forms as sacred to Laka, the goddess of hula, and to Pele, the volcano goddess. Also, 'ōhi'a lehua holds importance in overall environmental health. Colonizing fresh lava substrate, it is instrumental in the process of soil development and ecological succession. They make up the largest portion of the canopy in native wet forests, providing shelter and food for numerous species. Yet, our state is currently facing an uprise in rapid 'ōhi'a death (ROD). On Hawai'i Island, hundreds of thousands of 'ōhi'a lehua trees have died from a fungus called Ceratocystis. It has killed trees in all districts of Hawai'i Island and has the potential to kill trees statewide. By making 'ōhi'a lehua the state endemic tree of Hawai'i, we can educate people about its essentialness and promote vital conservation efforts.

Mahalo Committee on Culture, Arts, & International Affairs.

Sincerely,

Keonaona Peters

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Daisy Tai and I am a current student attending Kalaheo High School. I am just one person in support of SB 2059. This bill will relate to the State Native Tree and create a new category designating Ohia Lehua as the State endemic tree of Hawaii.

This bill is important to me because Ohia Lehua not only holds cultural importance for Native Hawaiians but it's also a keystone species in our Native forest. It provides natural shelter

and food for multiple native bird species, insects and invertebrates. In Addition it captures 50% more water than other tree species in our forests. Learning about Ohia Lehua in school has brought mine and fellow students attention to it, especially Rapid Ohia Death (R.O.D). R.O.D is a disease caused by two fungal pathogens that kill Ohia, Hawaii's most abundant Native Tree. With the passage of bill SB 2059 more attention, help and progress will help bring awareness and hopefully a solution to Ohia Lehua and Rapid Ohia Death.

Thank you Culture Arts & International Affairs for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Daisy Tai

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am Clifton N. Layman, a sophomore at Kalaheo High School, and I am in support of SB 2059, Relating to State Native Tree, which would designate ohia lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawai'i.

This bill is important to raise awareness for the wellbeing, preservation, and protection of ohia lehua, which is currently threatened by a fungus causing rapid ohia death (ROD). Ohia lehua is an important species, as it houses native bird species and colonizes new land after lava flow, and it is used in hula and other traditional culture practices. It would mean very much to my classmates and I if this bill were approved, encouraging our involvement in local government.

Thank you all for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Clifton N. Layman
Kalaheo High, 10th Grade

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am Roen Wainscoat and I am a student at Kalaheo High School in Kailua, Hawaii. I am in support of SB 2059 relating to the state endemic tree which would designate 'ōhi'a lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawaii.

I believe that it is important to raise awareness for the problems faced by 'ōhi'a which are posed by the prevalence of rapid 'ōhi'a death (ROD). I believe that making 'ōhi'a the state endemic tree will fulfill this purpose.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Roan Wainscoat
Kalāheo High School
Grade 12

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cameron Barra. I'm from kalaheo high school in grade 9. I am **in support of SB 2059, *Relating to State Native Tree*** which would designate ohia lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawaii

There are many important reasons for making ohia the state native tree. Ohia lehua is a native species and is important in Hawaiian culture. Having the ohia lehua as Hawaii's state native tree will increase awareness of this exceptional tree. This awareness will help efforts to help and rebuild the ohia lehua population. My hope is that through the passage of this bill, there can be an increase in funding for groups that are protecting the ohia lehua tree.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cameron Barra

Kalaheo High, grade 9

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kealii Camarillo and I am a student at Kalaheo High School. I'm currently taking a natural resources class and we just learned about the dangers Ohia is facing. So I am in support of SB 2059, relating to state native which would designate Ohia Lehua as the state endemic tree of Hawai'i.

I feel it would be a good thing for everyone if this bill passed because if it does the trees would be in less danger and the wildlife that lives in them would be able to flourish for all to see. I've lived here most of my life so if something like Ohia were to disappear it wouldn't be the same and I believe others think so as well, so if this bill were to pass it wouldn't only make me happy but everyone from Hawai'i as well. Ohia is family and if it were to be torn away from the people of Hawai'i it would deeply hurt us all.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely

Kealii Camarillo

Kalaheo High School Grade 10

SB-2059-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 3:08:22 PM

Testimony for CAI on 3/16/2022 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JC Watson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and mahalo for the opportunity to testify on SB2059.

I strongly support this bill to name 'ōhi'a lehua as the endemic tree for Hawai'i.

'Ōhi'a are the most important tree in the Hawaiian forest. They are one of the very first plants to colonize new lava flows, and literally create a forest from a barren landscape. As the primary keystone species, they not only make habitat for myriad of other natives, but serve as a main driver for water retention and aquifer recharge, thus producing all of our drinkable water. Without water there is no life. Without 'ōhi'a there is no water.

Mahalo for your consideration.

JC Watson