

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 Senate Committee on**  
**AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Wednesday, February 9, 2022**  
**1:00 PM**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference**

**In consideration of**  
**SENATE BILL 313**  
**RELATING TO LITTER CONTROL**

Senate Bill 313 proposes to prohibit the intentional release of balloons inflated with a gas that is lighter than air. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this bill and provides the following comments.**

The Department recognizes the deleterious impacts that marine debris, including balloons, has on wildlife and their habitats, leading to an alarming natural resource concern throughout the state. Marine debris harms land and ocean-based habitat through smothering and abrasion and impacts a variety of wildlife through ingestion and entanglement.

A study conducted by the University of Tasmania (research conducted outside of Hawaii) found that 1 in 3 birds out of a sample of 1,733 sea birds, representing 51 different species, had ingested plastic marine debris. Balloons, as soft plastics, posed the highest risk for the sea birds since they can cause fatal obstruction. Sea turtles, as well, were susceptible to mortality from soft plastics, due to experiencing a blockage through the gastrointestinal tract lasting anywhere between 4 to 6 months. Gut-content studies from Australia have indicated that turtles may selectively ingest balloons and other soft plastics due to their similar appearances to a species of jellyfish consumed by all species of turtles. The negative impact of ingestion is compounded by the fact that plastics of all sizes absorb and release Persistent Organic Pollutants, toxic chemicals which adversely affect the health and longevity of marine organisms.

Senate Bill 313 is identical to House Bill 1102 (2021), which was signed into law as Act 141, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021. Act 141 will prohibit the intentional release of balloons inflated with a gas that is lighter than air beginning on January 1, 2023. Therefore, the Department does not see a need to advance Senate Bill 313.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

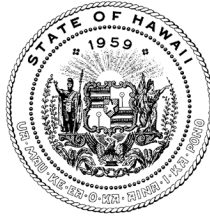
**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**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  
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STATE PARKS

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LAND  
STATE PARKS

**SB-313**

Submitted on: 2/6/2022 9:47:46 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/9/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Henry Curtis	Testifying for Life of the Land	Support	No

Comments:

Life of the Land supports this measure.

**SB-313**

Submitted on: 2/7/2022 8:46:09 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/9/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Maui OFR	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

If polluting the water and littering the ground are illegal, why is it not prohibited to release balloons into the air? It becomes trash - and most likely will end up in the ocean. I used to travel on a ferry to and from work, and we would find balloons in the ocean almost daily. There was a big trash pile of them at the harbor. Releasing balloons intentionally creates trash and pollutes the earth for no better reason than to watch it fly away.

**SB-313**

Submitted on: 2/7/2022 10:29:09 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/9/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Megan Lamson Leatherman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha and mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

I am totally in SUPPORT of banning intentional balloon releases across the state as proposed in SB313. We routinely collect balloons along the coastline during our regular beach cleanup events and they are known to cause problems for aquatic wildlife. Thanks for your time and consideration and support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Megan Lamson Leatherman, M. Sc.

Honalo, Hawai'i Island

**SB-313**

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 1:02:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/9/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Fern Anuenue Holland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly support this bill and the banning of ballon releases. Mahalo.

**SB-313**

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 5:22:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/9/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Lois Crozer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Balloons find their way into the oceans and eaten by marine animals. No need to release them into the atmosphere.

**SB-313**

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 12:13:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/9/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Makanoe Hufana	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB313 prevention of pollution by balloons with gas that is lighter than air.

Mahalo.