HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023
STATE OF HAWAII

H.R. NO. 86

HOUSE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING AUGUST 8, 2023, AS HAWAIIAN HONEYCREEPERS CELEBRATION DAY.

WHEREAS, Hawai‘i is experiencing a bird extinction crisis, with ninety-five of its one hundred forty-two endemic manu (bird) species having become extinct and the remaining forty-seven species facing critical threats; and

WHEREAS, of the more than fifty species of honeycreepers endemic to Hawai‘i, only seventeen species remain, and twelve of those are designated--by the federal or state government--as critically endangered or threatened; and

WHEREAS, the threats to the remaining manu species, particularly honeycreepers, include loss of their feeding and nesting habitat; degradation of that habitat by invasive plants, insects, and even diseases such as Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death; direct predation by invasive rats, cats, and mongoose; and deadly diseases spread by mosquitoes, particularly avian malaria; and

WHEREAS, since the introduction to Hawai‘i of mosquitoes in 1826 and mosquito-spread diseases, such as avian malaria and pox, in the 1900s, the range of Hawaiian honeycreepers has largely shrunk to high-elevation cool forests, such as the Alaka‘i Plateau on Kaua‘i, Haleakalā on Maui, and Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa on Hawai‘i Island; and

WHEREAS, the gradual warming of Hawai‘i's climate is enabling mosquitoes to move into the remaining disease-free, higher-elevation refuges; and

WHEREAS, for most honeycreepers, one bite from a mosquito carrying avian malaria can result in death, and it is estimated that many Hawaiian honeycreepers will become extinct within the next ten years if mosquito populations are not controlled,

predators are not better managed, and ongoing conservation efforts are not continued; and

WHEREAS, the Hawaiian honeycreepers, like all native manu species, are integral to the State's ecosystems and culture, and the once intimate pilina (relationships and connections) between communities and manu have been diminished due to their disappearance from the landscape; and

WHEREAS, Hawaiian honeycreepers, like all the manu species, function as pollinators, nutrient cyclers, seed dispersers, and pest managers, keeping the forests of Hawai‘i healthy and ensuring that the forests can function like a sponge to draw in, filter, and retain wai (water); and

WHEREAS, Kānaka Maoli foster reciprocal relationships with the native manu of Hawai‘i and respect them as messengers between the akua (gods; elements in nature) and kānaka; and

WHEREAS, these relationships are captured within cultural knowledge, including mo‘olelo (stories), ‘ōlelo no‘eau (proverbs), ka‘ao (legends), and mele (songs); and

WHEREAS, feathers from honeycreepers played an integral role in ancient Hawai‘i, where they were used in an artform of global excellence to adorn ali‘i with symbols of their power and authority; and

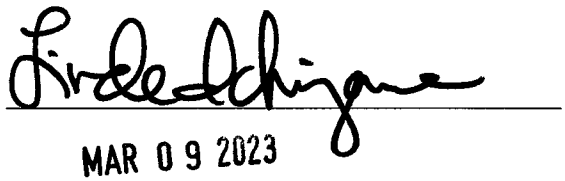
WHEREAS, community awareness and support are essential to the success of the actions needed to mālama Hawai‘i's native manu, particularly honeycreepers; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i, Regular Session of 2023, that this body recognizes August 8, 2023, as Hawaiian Honeycreepers Celebration Day throughout the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the people, organizations, and government of Hawai‘i are encouraged to observe Hawaiian Honeycreepers Celebration Day with appropriate activities and ceremonies to deepen the pilina with the native manu and to

strengthen support for conservation efforts to restore the native birds of Hawai‘i to abundance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; mayor of each county; each member of Hawai‘i's Congressional delegation; Regional Director for Parks in the Pacific West Region of the National Park Service; Regional Director of the United States Geological Survey, Northwest/Pacific Islands; Field Supervisor for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office; Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources; Director of Health; Chairperson of the Board of Regents and President of the University of Hawai‘i; co-chairs of the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council; head of Birds, Not Mosquitoes; Hawai‘i State Director of The Nature Conservancy - Hawai‘i and Palmyra; Hawai‘i Program Director of the American Bird Conservancy; Chief Executive Officer of Island Conservation; Project Coordinator of the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species; Research & Management Project Coordinator of the Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project; Project Leader of the Kaua‘i Forest Bird Recovery Project; and Chairperson of the Hawai‘i Association of Watershed Partnerships.

OFFERED BY: 

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