

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
2:00 PM

State Capitol, VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Conference Room 325

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 819, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO LIMU KALA

House Bill 819, House Draft 1 proposes to designate Limu Kala (*Sargassum echinocarpum*) as the official Hawai'i state limu. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) fully supports this measure.**

This bill acknowledges and promotes the critical role that limu plays in our natural environment and in sustaining the people of Hawai'i. Limu Kala is an excellent choice for the state limu due to its numerous uses and significant cultural importance. Traditionally, the word "limu" included a broad range of organisms such as terrestrial moss and lichen, and even some marine zoanthids. However, for the purpose of this testimony, "limu" refers to aquatic botanical species such as algae and seagrass.

The Department has realized the decline of desirable limu species, including Limu Kala, throughout the State. Currently, the Department is supporting non-government organizations in the propagation of limu species for community driven restoration projects.

Additionally, the Department has documented the proliferation of limu'ē (non-native algae) and its detrimental impact on native benthic species such as limu and coral. In response, a decade ago the Department established an urchin hatchery. Urchins produced by the hatchery are released in areas with high limu'ē concentrations. These urchins then feed on the limu'ē, reducing their populations.

DAWN N. S. CHANG
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

The Department recognizes that in Hawai‘i’s modern context there is an underappreciation of limu. House Bill 819, House Draft 1 is an excellent opportunity to increase awareness, understanding, and appreciation of limu in Hawai‘i, particularly Limu Kala.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea
Post Office Box 188
Hale'iwa, HI 96712

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Federal Nonprofit Organization
501(c)(3) FEIN 27-0855937
www.pupukeawaimea.org
info@pupukeawaimea.org

February 27, 2023

Re: **STRONG SUPPORT** for **HB819 SD1**: Relating to Limu Kala

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and the House
Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea (MPW) is the grassroots, community non-profit that actively works to care for, educate about, and protect our fragile, near-shore marine ecosystems of Pūpūkea and Waimea. Our mission is "working to replenish and sustain the natural and cultural resources of the Pūpūkea and Waimea ahupua'a for present and future generations through active community stewardship, education, and partnerships."

We are pleased to offer strong support of HB819 SD1. As part of the work we do, we have been monitoring the limu at Papakahāohina (a reef flat at Kapo'o/Sharks Cove) for the past seven years and have identified 32 native species of limu there so far, including Limu Kala, which is by far the most abundant. We regularly offer limu education for anyone, keiki to kupuna, and often host visits to the reef flat to learn more about this very important and special part of a healthy marine ecosystem.

In addition to being a significant source of vitamins, minerals, and fiber with many uses for traditional medicine, limu is a critically important component of a healthy, productive reef ecosystem. Limu is a primary producer and the base of the nearshore marine food chain, an important habitat for many marine creatures, and a key indicator of the health and resilience of the ahupua'a. Limu Kala, specifically, is special because has many uses for Native Hawaiian cultural ceremonies, is used in traditional fishing, and in the protection of ocean voyagers,

Naming Limu Kala as the State limu will help to bring awareness to the recapture, retention and sharing of limu cultural knowledge that will benefit the nearshore fishery and all people of Hawai'i for future generations.

Mahalo for hearing this bill and for the opportunity to provide testimony. **We strongly support HB819 SD1.**

Mahalo nui,

Jenny Yagodich
Director of Educational Programs &
Makai Watch Coordinator
Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea



Testimony Before The
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
IN SUPPORT OF HB 819 HD1
March 1, 2023, 2:00PM, Room 325

We are Malia Heimuli and Kevin Chang the Limu Hui Coordinator and Executive Director, respectively, of [Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). KUA works to empower grassroots rural and Native Hawaiian mālama 'āina groups to celebrate their places and pass on their traditions to better Hawai'i and achieve 'āina momona— an abundant, productive ecological system that supports community well-being.

KUA employs a community-driven approach that currently supports a statewide network of 36 mālama 'āina community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together), 40 fishpond projects and practitioners called the Hui Mālama Loko l'a, and a growing group of over 60 Limu practitioners and supporters called the Limu Hui.

KUA supports HB 819 as an incremental step on a pathway towards 'āina momona.

One of the founding kupuna of our first network E Alu Pū, Uncle Henry Chang Wo Jr., a recognized loea limu (limu expert) grew up in 'Ewa Beach and personally witnessed the decline of limu there. He worked to create a Limu Management Area (LMA) in 'Ewa, a place legally designated for traditional limu gathering. Uncle Henry taught us that one of the main causes of the loss of limu is the loss of groundwater that once flowed abundantly along the shoreline. As the flow of groundwater decreased, limu abundance decreased. One of Uncle Henry's famous sayings was "No limu, no fish". Unfortunately, Uncle Henry passed away in 2015. He left a legacy which includes the Limu Hui, the 'Ewa LMA and the struggle to bring limu back to 'Ewa the way it once was. KUA works to perpetuate his legacy. This resolution is part of that legacy we wish he were here to testify on and help continue.

KUA supports SB 1037 because recognition of the significant socio-cultural dimensions of Limu Kala helps to elevate the importance of the resources, people and culture of Hawai'i broadly. It also uplifts the work and passion of generations of kūpuna like Uncle Henry to perpetuate the deeper socio-cultural ties that bind us to these islands. We also feel this recognition will provide many opportunities to increase awareness and to educate Hawai'i's residents of the environmental and Hawaiian cultural significance of Limu Kala and all limu.

Lastly, this bill is significant to Hawai'i's leadership in the world. Limu Kala is significant to Native Hawaiian processes of reconciliation and healing. Global environmental governance has begun to disentangle the *hīhia* of colonial environmental history and reconciliation is a major theme on the pathway toward better caring for our planet together. In this regard Hawai'i is not just a leader for its own kupa'āina but for the world.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify. Aloha 'Āina Momona, E Ola Limu!

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 10:21:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Heimuli	Limu Hui, Kuaʻāina Ulu ʻAuamo (KUA)	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

As a representative of the Limu Hui with Kuaʻāina Ulu ʻAuamo (KUA), we support naming Limu Kala as the State Limu. We hope this bill will spread awareness of the importance of limu to both our nearshore marine and island ecosystems here in Hawaiʻi.

I ola limu kala!

Me ka haʻahaʻa,

Malia Heimuli

Limu Hui Coordinator, Kuaʻāina Ulu ʻAuamo (KUA)

February 27, 2023



Re: **STRONG SUPPORT for HB819 HD1**: Relating to Limu Kala

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Takayama, and the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

We represent the Mālama Limu Club, a Kamehameha Schools Kapālama high school organization. The purpose of the Mālama Limu Club is to remove invasive limu from various fishponds and beaches, giving endemic and native Hawaiian limu the opportunity to thrive and maintain diversity in our ocean ecosystems.

Our entire club recognizes the environmental and cultural importance of seaweed. Limu is the foundation of all ocean ecosystems, as they provide a habitat and food source for various marine organisms. They also produce a large part of our world's oxygen and mitigate erosion and coral breaking. Culturally, limu was used in medicine, lei making, dying clothing, and is still found in a variety of Native Hawaiian dishes. Limu was also a cornerstone in the lives of Native Hawaiian women, as the process of collecting limu was entirely designated for women. Limu Kala, in particular, was used in ritual practices such as the ho'oponopono ceremony, where people would seek forgiveness as they ate or held the limu. It was also used for cleaning, in religious practices, after burials, and prior to fishing.

We strongly support HB819 HD1 which would name limu Kala as Hawai'i's official state limu. Due to the pollution and warming of our water along with the introduction of invasive seaweeds, which are much more resilient to these environmental changes, the endemic and native limu populations are rapidly decreasing. We believe that limu needs

to be recognized for its immense importance and that this bill will bring awareness to the great need for conserving our endemic and native marine ecosystems.

On behalf of the Mālama Limu Club Members, mahalo nui for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Mahalo,

Madison Murata

Mālama Limu Club President

Members: Hope Rosenbush, Brady Akau, Amara Martin, Shaina Wandasan, Amara Martin, Aidden Murray, Alyssa Faulkner, Ava Pasa, Brayden Van Kuren, Carleena Mattos, Carly Lasconia, Chloe Martin-Blevins, Clarice Hutchison, Cloey-Anne Yamasaki, Eli Nagaishi, Emily Loscalzo, Emma Attwood, Ethan Abraham, Gage Bassett, Hailey Ching, Harryzen Soares, Haylie Reiny, Hekili Kamalani, Jack Poepoe, Jadon Koa Haina Dumlao, Jenna Lingenbrink, Jordyn Lee, Kahiau Kaopuiki, Kaila Kim, Kailani McLain, Kaimana Eliana-Pantil, Kaimana Kau, Kaiya Hoopai, Kaohu Helenihi, Kapua Pupuhi, Kassidy Kepa, Kau'i Sato, Kekai Wong, Kekoa Kenichi Agpalsa, Kekoapiilani Moses Kekina Dierks, Kili Rowe, Kilinoe Brown, Korie Lee, Kukamaehu Tamashiro, Lanamalieikekai Haverly, Landon Choy, Lea Richardson, Leilani Jensen, Lucas Valleriani, Mahealani Plunkett, Makamaenamakanamaikalani Santiago, Makayla Lee, Malia Victor, Mālie Nee, Mattea Skeen, Maya Willing, Mehana Silva, Melissa Kaanoi, Mikala Akiona, Mima Field-Perkins, Moanahiwalani Walker, Nikki Chong, Ocean Bustamante, Pi'i McKenzie, Rhyllie Skye Rabang, Roma Lerner, Sanae Oye, Shalem Asano, Shane Pinho, Shyla Aki, Stella Imada, Tiani Ing, Trevyn Nishimura, Nakoa Moses-Gomera

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 1:08:48 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katie Kealoha	Marine Science Learning Center at Waianae High School	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 28, 2023

Representative David Tarnas , Chair

Representative Gregg Takayama, Vice Chair

House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Hearing: Wednesday March 1st, 2 p.m.

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Re: HB819 HD1 Limu Kala; Hawaii State Limu

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

My name is Katie Kealoha, I am the coordinator for the Marine Science Learning Center at Wai‘anae High School, and I am writing to encourage you to support HB819 which would establish Limu Kala as the Hawaii State Limu and encourage DLNR to develop programs to capture, maintain and share the cultural and environmental knowledge of limu kala.

Hawaii has four endemic sargassum species, all commonly referred to as limu kala. Probably the most culturally significant and easily identifiable Hawaiian limu, limu kala serves many important functions, both ecologically and culturally. Almost anyone who has grown up visiting Hawai‘is coastlines will recognize it, and it serves as a key building block,

both as food and habitat, in the lives of Hawai'i's many unique and valuable coastal species. It's name, kala, which means to release or forgive, makes it an apt symbol for Hawaiian practices of conflict resolution, as well as ceremonies meant to release people from illness. As a high school teacher, I make sure to help my students to learn to identify their limu, as well as understand it's uses and importance. I can see through these conversations that much of the community and folk knowledge we consider to exist relating to Hawaiian seaweeds in general has been greatly reduced with the passage of time, at least in my community, and there is a need to reinvigorate interest in the next generation.

This resolution would provide opportunities for all the communities in Hawaii to learn about Hawaii's native limu, increase interest and care in the health of our coastal resources and insure that valuable knowledge is not lost. I urge you to support it's passage.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Katie Kealoha

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 2:30:41 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 10:22:02 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support. Fortunate as an island community to be able to recognize the importance, both culturally and as a food source, of the limu.

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 6:14:06 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HD1. Thank you.

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 6:41:17 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather McMillen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I write in strong support of this bill that will elevate awareness of the important role limu plays in our biocultural systems statewide. Limu kala is a fitting choice to be our state limu because it invites opportunity for conversations about the nutritional, ecosystem, and cultural values it carries. I urge you to pass this bill.

Thank you,

Heather McMillen

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 7:05:27 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pamela Lota Fujii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

My name is Dennis H. Fujii and my wife is Pamela Lota Fujii. We have lived in the ahupuaa of Kuli'ou'ou for 43 years and are volunteers with the Ewa Limu Project, Limu Hui, Paepae O Heeia, Keiki O Ka Aina, Hui Malama O Ke Kai, the Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center, Hui Maka'ainana o Makana and Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (or KUA) and this is our testimony in support of HB 819 - Relating to Limu Kala and our intention to continue to grow limu awareness to communities across the pae 'āina.

As volunteers for these community organizations we have the humble privilege to help restore our fishponds, native limu and nearshore habitats to ensure that traditional and cultural practices are sustained for future generations.

WE STRONGLY SUPPORT HB 819 to continue to grow limu awareness to communities across the pae 'āina.

Supporting House Bill 819 will empower rural and Native Hawaiian communities across the state to continue to PROTECT, PRESERVE AND PERPETUATE our native resources FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Aloha 'Āina Momona.

Dennis H. Fujii and Pamela Lota Fujii

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 7:50:17 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeanette Esquivel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support bill HB819 since limu preservation it important to the Hawaii environment.

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 9:29:52 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Miwa Tamanaha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I write today in strong support of this measure. Raising awareness of the importance of our native seaweeds (limu) is important to environmental and near shore community stewardship of our natural resources.

Miwa Tamanaha
94-1144 Moolelo St., Waipahu 96797

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 10:14:35 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellie S. Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the committee hearing HB819,

My name is Ellie and I am a marine scientist, fisher, and resident of Mānoa Valley on O‘ahu. I am writing in support of this bill to designate Limu Kala (Sargassum aquifolium) as the official State Limu of Hawai‘i in order to raise awareness for this beloved limu. Sargassum has special cultural and ecological significance to Hawai‘i, but much of the cultural knowledge surrounding use of limu kala for bait, wound healing, and protecting ocean voyages may be lost if it is not highlighted and passed down. Designating limu kala as the state limu will help to perpetuate this knowledge. Additionally, it will build on the precedence of limu appreciation and awareness set by last year’s Year of the Limu in 2022. The designation of 2022 as Year of the Limu brought together people from around the state all year to celebrate, learn about, and share knowledge of native limu in our State waters. Designating limu kala as the official State Limu of Hawai‘i will build on last year’s momentum for recognition of the significance of limu to Hawai‘i.

Mahalo nui for hearing this bill and for your support.

Ellie S Jones

HB-819-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 10:29:28 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/1/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly Moa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Moa Vargas ‘Ohana strongly supports this measure to designate limu kala as the state limu. This is one small action state lawmakers can make to elevate the efforts of kūpuna and mālama ‘āina practitioners working to care for this important environmental and cultural resoucre. It creates opportunities to educate Hawai‘i’s people and those who visit our islands about the biocultural significance of limu and the ways in which we should ALL care for the resources that feed our communities. Be it the first step in your committment to the indigenous lifeways of our original caretakers of this ‘āina, the people of Hawai‘i and the generations to come. Mahalo nui!



Support for HB 819
Designates Limu kala as the official Hawai'i state limu

Aloha mai kakou,

February 28, 2023

This letter is sent to support HB 819 to designate limu kala as the kia'i for our pae aina o Hawaii, for the state of Hawai'i. I am writing as a community member dedicated to bringing back this kind of awareness and knowledge for a specific purpose.

- Ho'okahi la'au, he mihi. *The first medicine is forgiveness.*

Limu kala is used for many purposes: for garnish, for poke, for fertilizer, and to ritualize the release and forgiveness exchanged in ho'oponopono. Ho'oponopono is a ritualized group communication process aimed at restoring healthy and loving relationships within families and close relations. Gathering limu kala to share at the closing meal is part of the richness of how families forgive each other and continue on with their lives.

As a haku ho'oponopono for 30+ years, the use and beauty of limu kala has been a joy for my ohana. Highlighting the many aspects of why Hawaiians use limu kala will bring awareness to our coastal waters, and to the depth and brilliance of 'ike kupuna, of our elder knowledge we are working to re-establish here in Hawaii.

Please support this small but significant effort to introduce, yet again, another way of detailing the healing process of our kanaka world within a larger milieu.

Me ka 'oia i'o,

Dr. Manulani Aluli Meyer
Konohiki – Kūlana o Kapolei
University of Hawai'i West O'ahu
manulani@hawaii.edu
phone: 808-954-2531