

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

House Committee on Tourism

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

10:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 423 and Videoconference

In Support

S.B. No. 304, S.D. 2, Relating to Visitor Impact Fees

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and members of the House Committee on Tourism:

The Office of the Governor supports S.B. No. 304, S.D. 2, Relating to Visitor Impact Fees. Hawaii's oceans, reefs, streams, waterfalls, forests, other natural resources, and ecosystems are part of Hawaii's natural and cultural heritage and precious resources to an estimated 1,400,000 Hawaii residents. These natural resources are also primary attractions to the State's 9,720,000 visitors estimated to come to Hawaii in 2023, according to the forecast of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. The number of visitor arrivals to our State is forecasted to grow to 10,330,000 in 2025.

The economic benefits of visitor travel to our State are significant. Tourism provides jobs, enhances economic growth and development, and generates revenue; however, there is greater policy focus on recognizing *all* impacts of tourism on our State, particularly the effects of tourism on our natural resources and natural environment. The impacts on Hawaii's natural resources, consequences of both residents and visitors, is an overarching concern and one of the priorities of this Administration.

This is one of several measures that recognizes that human-induced impacts on our environment, including increased pollution, stress on our natural resources, soil degradation, and natural habitat loss, are cause for concern and immediate action. Hawaii's natural resources are invaluable to all who live here and primary attractions for those who visit our State.

It is well recognized that Hawaii residents already contribute to the protection and management of the State's natural resources through taxes, environmental care, subsistence and cultural practices, and the values and practices embodied in the Hawaii State Constitution. However, the State has not yet dedicated enough financial resources to address the impacts by visitors. This measure establishes a visitor impact fee program within the Department of

Testimony of Office of the Governor
S.B. No. 304, S.D. 2
March 14, 2023
Page 2

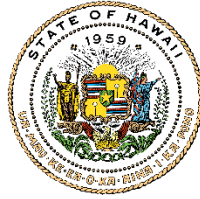
Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) in which DLNR will collect a fee from visitors through a license to visit a state park, beach, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area. The allocation of revenues collected from the fees will be used to protect, restore, and manage natural and cultural resources impacted by visitors.

The Office of the Governor appreciates the Committee's consideration of S.B. No. 304, S.D. 2 and other measures that seek to ensure that the impacts of visitor use on state parks, beaches, forests, hiking trails, and other state natural areas are compensated through resources that address the environmental footprint of visitors. We look forward to working with the Legislature on legislation that establishes a means to offset the detrimental impacts of visitor use on designated state natural resources, and protects, restores, and manages Hawaii's natural resources to benefit those who travel here and those who make Hawaii home.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
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

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
TOURISM

Tuesday, March 14, 2023
10:00 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 423, Via Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 304, SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES

Senate Bill 304, Senate Draft 2 proposes to establish the Visitor Impact Fee Program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department), through which the Department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area. The measure will establish and appropriate moneys into and out of the Visitor Impact Fee Special Fund. **The Department appreciates all proposed green fee program measures and supports this measure.**

Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources provide our drinking water and sustain all life on our islands, are huge economic assets and prime attractions of our tourism industry, and support the well-being, health, and identity of our communities. A University of Hawai'i study examined the various services provided by O'ahu's Ko'olau forests - including drinking water recharge, flood prevention, water quality, carbon storage, biodiversity, cultural, aesthetic, recreational, and commercial values. These services were calculated to have a net present value of between \$7.4 and \$14 billion. In the Pearl Harbor aquifer, full forest protection (~20,000 acres) saves the water utility \$26 to \$39 million per year (after 50 years) in replacement costs. Coral reefs - the first line of defense to large ocean swells - annually protect \$836 million in averted damages to property and economic activity in Hawai'i. Despite the value of our forests, coastlines, cultural sites, and oceans, Hawai'i invests less than 1% of the total state budget into maintaining these assets.

The establishment of green fees in several other tourism-focused economies has allowed places like the Republic of Palau, Galapagos Islands, New Zealand, and the Maldives to allow greater investment in their natural resources - reducing the overall impact of tourism on their environments, improving the quality of visitor experiences, and supporting community stewardship of these special places. Visitors and many

residents do not mind paying a green fee because they know it goes back to caring for the beautiful places and resources they have come to enjoy. For example, the Department's Division of State Parks executed a parking and entry fee increase for out of state visitors during the pandemic in 2020. This action, coupled with the return of the visitor industry, contributed to a substantial increase in special fund revenue to address decades of deferred repair and maintenance at State Parks across the State. The fee increase was modest and the out of state visitor is accustomed to paying fees at other municipal, State and National Parks. Additionally, when the visitor learns the parking and entry revenue is specifically reinvested in State Park management, they are supportive. The Department would like this and any other green fee proposals to emphasise the importance of maintaining these separate, previously established fees as critical to providing revenue and quality management at exceptional and heavily visited state parks.

In 2001, the Department conducted a study to determine Hawai'i's willingness to support increased funding for watershed protection. Respondents were presented with various means by which the increased funds could be raised (general funds, taxes, or fees). A majority supported the use of environment-related taxes (7.4 out of 10), or a visitor-related tax (8.0 out of 10). Palau adds a green fee to all airline passengers leaving the island state and adds the funds to an environmental management fund. Palau, New Zealand, and Maldives have not experienced a decline in visitors due to their green fees.

The establishment of a green fee is an important piece to closing the large gap between existing and needed funding for the management of Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources. Any green fee along with innovative financing mechanisms such as carbon offsets for reforestation, and improved forest, cultural sites, and marine management would move Hawai'i forward in addressing climate change and mitigating the impacts of Hawai'i's tourism economy. A green fee program would bolster the State's existing investments in natural and cultural resource management, protect public trust resources, and help fill Hawai'i's conservation funding gap. Increased funding via a green fee will also provide much needed match and allow agencies to apply for federal grant opportunities.

The Departments requests the following amendments:

1) In the final language, the Department respectfully requests that funds for new staff will be provided to the Department, outside of the Department's Executive Budget request, to ensure effective implementation of the visitor green fee program, such as two (2) FTE Program Specialists, one (1) Office Assistant, one (1) Clerk V, and one (1) Accountant. If current Department staff have to take on additional responsibilities to implement the visitor green fee program, the new visitor green fee program, and/or existing programs will suffer.

2) Project applications may be submitted by any state agency, county, and qualified nonprofit organization, and may propose to conduct activities on state lands and using natural resources in the public trust. The Department strongly cautions that in some proposals, the cost and liability to the State could outweigh the benefits, and some project applicants may not have fully vetted their projects with all the affected departments that may have plans for certain lands and natural resources which serve another State priority. Therefore, the Department respectfully requests the replacement of the language in Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 171-G(c) with the following language:

The department shall use best efforts to provide grant recipients with access to any state lands or natural resources necessary to effectuate the project for which the grant is awarded.

3) To increase transparency in the process of project ranking, making recommendations to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR), and providing funding, the Department recommends that the original bill's language creating a volunteer commission be added. The volunteer commission would be

advisory and would rank project applications and make recommendations to the BLNR. The BLNR meetings are public and comply with the sunshine law ensuring that the public has the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed projects and the volunteer commission's recommendations. This process will ensure informed decision making by the BLNR.

4) Fee collection at State Parks provide an income stream and are a part of a robust Operational Expenditure Plans (OEP) developed by the Division of State Parks. Over time, with a consistent tourist patronage and programed special fund ceiling increases, these separate fees will allow State Parks to reduce reliance on general funds and reinvest in underserviced park units. The ten park units that are monetized with these fees are all heavily patronized by out-of-state visitors and the Department believes that additional fee charges are warranted. Therefore the Department requests that SECTION 3 be deleted in its entirety from this bill, as it conflicts with the language immediately preceding it (Page 15, lines 6-13). This is a critical amendment that the Department strongly urges this Committee to adopt.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure with suggested amendments.



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Josh Green, M.D.
Governor

John De Fries
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

Tuesday, March 14, 2023
10:00 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 423 & Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL NO. 304 SD2
RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the Committee on Tourism,

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) appreciates the opportunity to offer comments in support of the intent of SB304 SD2, to collect fees to fund the protection and increased resilience of Hawai'i's natural and outdoor recreational resources.

The ethic of mālama – care and stewardship – is the core of our visitor education efforts. HTA's work is framed by four interacting strategic pillars: Natural Resources, Hawaiian Culture, Community, and Branding – the last of which is dependent upon the strength of the first three.

Hawai'i's environment is a treasure, and it is our collective kuleana to protect it for the generations to come. Fulfilling that responsibility takes funding. We agree with the intent of this legislation as it is in alignment with our Strategic Plan priorities in the Natural Resources pillar, as well as action items in our community-generated Destination Management Action Plans.

We have consistently been supportive of site-specific user fees as our preferred model, and no matter the model of collection, we advocate the reinvestment of those collections into improving the experience for kama'āina and visitors alike at public parks and trails.

We support the intent of SB304 SD2. We stand ready to assist in educating visitor industry stakeholders and visitors, and we defer to our colleagues at the Department of Land and Natural Resources on matters related to the implementation of this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide these comments.



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION
COMMISSION
POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Co-Chairs:
Chair, DLNR
Director, OPSD

Commissioners:
Chair, Senate AEN
Chair, Senate WTL
Chair, House EEP
Chair, House WAL
Chairperson, HTA
Chairperson, DOA
CEO, OHA
Chairperson, DHHL
Director, DBEDT
Director, DOT
Director, DOH
Chairperson, DOE
Director, C+C DPP
Director, Maui DP
Director, Hawai'i DP
Director, Kaua'i DP
The Adjutant General
Manager, CZM

**Testimony of
Leah Laramee
Coordinator, Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission**

**Before the House Committee on
TOURISM**

**Tuesday, March 14, 2023
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 423, Via Videoconference**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 304, SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES**

Senate Bill 304, Senate Draft 2 proposes to establish the Visitor Impact Fee Program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department), through which the department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area. The measure will establish and appropriate moneys into and out of the Visitor Impact Fee Special Fund. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this measure.**

The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission consists of a multi-jurisdictional effort between 20 different departments, committees, and counties. The green fee is an important mechanism which will fund the expansion of conservation actions across the state that would greatly increase the resilience of natural lands which are key to economic, food, water, health and climate resiliency. Natural lands such as forests, watersheds and our reefs are vital for the state to reach our climate and food security goals. Hawai'i's forests are our only carbon sink. Half of Hawaii's forests have already been lost. If we are to be carbon net negative by 2045 as mandated by Act 15 (2018) we will need to protect our existing forests to protect the carbon stored in them and expand the forest footprint to capture additional carbon.

Our native forests are also needed for water security. Impacts of climate change such as droughts and rain bombs are already occurring. Without vegetation and forest cover, most of our islands' rainfall would quickly run off unused into the ocean. Instead, the forest buffers the impact of heavy rains. Even without rain, Hawaii's native forests can absorb moisture from passing clouds that condense on the thick vegetation. Intercepting cloud drip increases water capture by as much as 30% of rainfall, and increases groundwater re-supply by 10-15%.

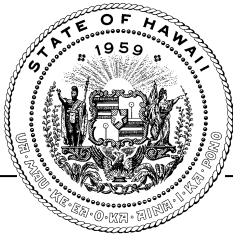
Coral reefs provide habitat for our nearshore fisheries, protect coasts from waves and storms, and support tourism and fishing industries worth billions of dollars. Coral reefs are also

fundamental to the fabric of local communities, providing a source of food, materials and traditional activities. In a recent report by USGS, Hawaii's coral reefs were valued at \$863 million per year.

Wetlands help purify our water. During major rain events that due to climate change are expected to increase in frequency and intensity, a wetland can trap and allow pollutants and toxins to settle before they reach the ocean. In the same way they can help us control sediment and store flood water. Wetland habitats that also absorb carbon and can act as buffers to sea level rise.

Historically natural lands have been underinvested in. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022 report highlights the importance of nature as a climate solution. Three of the five most effective strategies for mitigating carbon emissions are all natural climate solutions. The enactment of the green fee would be a game changer for the state, not only for our natural and cultural environment but for the survival of the people of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SCOTT J. GLENN
DIRECTOR

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Statement of
SCOTT GLENN, Director

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

Tuesday, March 14, 2023, 10:00AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 423

in consideration of
SB 304, SD 2
RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES.

Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** SB 304, SD1, which establishes the Visitor Impact Fee Program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources, through which the department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area. Establishes, and appropriates moneys into and out of, the Visitor Impact Fee Special Fund.

The OPSD has partnered with the Hawai'i Tourism Authority and the Department of Land and Natural Resources on destination management and sustainable tourism policies. The OPSD supports site-specific user fees as the preferred model and supports the reinvestment of those collections into improving the experience for kama'āina and visitors alike at public parks and trails.

This legislation is in alignment with the recommendations of the State of Hawai'i's decennial climate and sustainability strategic action plan—the [Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan: Charting a Course for the Decade of Action \(2020-2030\)](#). Specifically, reducing the environmental footprint of the tourism industry is a major strategy to promote a sustainable economic recovery for the State of Hawai'i.

1. “Launch a collaborative tourism-based environmentally-sustainability program with natural resource partners to mitigate visitor impacts and support responsible tourism initiatives.” (Recommended Action #57, Page 99)
2. “Enable Hawai'i tourism to contribute to the regeneration of Hawai'i's natural beauty, resources, and unique culture.” (Recommended Action #62, Page 99)

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide these comments.



Maui Hotel & Lodging
ASSOCIATION

Testimony of
Lisa H. Paulson
Executive Director
Maui Hotel & Lodging Association

House Committee on Tourism
Senate Bill 304 SD2: Relating to Visitor Impact Fees

March 14, 2023, 10:00 am
Conference Room 423

The Maui Hotel & Lodging Association (MHLA) is the legislative arm of the visitor industry for Maui County. We represent over 180 property and allied business members and 22,000 employees. **MHLA supports Senate Bill 304 SD2**, which establishes the Visitor Impact Fee Program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources, through which the department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area. Establishes, and appropriates moneys into and out of, the Visitor Impact Fee Special Fund.

MHLA favors the use of impact fees in Senate Bill 304. We also want to encourage a greater nexus to the fees being charged and ensure that any impact fee remains separate from any general governmental fund and that these funds must be used to protect, rehabilitate, and improve the resource at which it was collected. This will guarantee that our natural resources will retain their beauty and health.

For these reasons stated above, **MHLA supports Senate Bill 304, SD2.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



March 11, 2023

Representative Sean Quinlan, Chair
Representative Natalia Hussey-Burdick, Vice Chair
House Tourism Committee
Hawaii State Legislature

Comments on SB304 SD2

Dear Chair Quinlan, Vice-Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the House Tourism Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB304 SD2.

Overall, the Kohala Coast Resort Association is in support of the state collecting visitor impact fees for the use of our state's natural resources, including state parks, beaches, trails, natural areas and other facilities, **but only if those fees are directly reinvested in those natural areas for maintenance, upkeep and preservation.**

Fees of \$10 per car and \$5 per person have been collected at a number of Hawaii Island state parks for years. But unfortunately, those parks have not directly benefited from those fees. We understand that Hapuna Beach State Park on the Kohala Coast has collected more than \$1.5 million in fees from visitors, but has still been plagued by issues with its water lines. Despite repeated requests from the industry, the community and elected officials, there is currently no potable water, nor working restroom facilities. The "temporary" luas that have been put in place have been there for more than 6 months. They bake in the sun and are an unsightly and odorous detraction from what should be one of Hawaii Island's crown jewels. A survey of the luas last Friday, before the weekend rush of visitors and residents, showed that 3 of the 5 had not been pumped recently and were over full capacity. We understand from a recent Civil Beat article that the County of Hawaii will be helping with a temporary water solution over the next few months, but that the state will take another one or two years for a permanent solution. This is unacceptable!

We believe that the House Tourism Committee should take a deeper dive into the revenues and expenditures from **previously established visitor fee programs** before moving this bill forward and committing to new ones. A dashboard on how all of the fees are being used should also be readily available and accessible to the public, so we can be apprised of the status of key projects. It is often difficult to receive an update, or even a return phone call from state departments and divisions, and the burden of managing the overflow of users – both residents and visitors, falls on the private sector.

In addition, the Kohala Coast Resort Association would like to see the Legislature provide a firm accounting on how revenues collected from visitors through other taxes are allocated across state services. We believe the \$40 million that our members paid into state and county TAT in 2022 should be appropriated to address visitor impacts.

The Kohala Coast Resort Association's members employ 5,000 people, supporting 20,000 residents, at their hotels, timeshares, restaurants, retail shops, golf courses and spas along Hawaii Island's Kohala Coast. In 2022 alone, KCRA members paid \$40 million in state and county TAT, and \$40 million in state and county GET.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SB304 SD2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie P. Donoho". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephanie Donoho, Administrative Director

PO Box 6991, Kamuela, HI 96743 * (808) 747-5762 * kohalacoastresortasn@gmail.com * www.kohalacoastresorts.com



**Coalition Letter in Support of Hawai'i Green Fee
Committee on Tourism
Support of SB304
March 8, 2023**

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the Committee,

The coalition of organizations and small businesses listed below are writing in **strong support of SB304 with comments**, which would establish a visitor green program for Hawai'i with the following key elements: (1) Charge visitors a \$50 environmental license for the use of state-owned natural and cultural resources, (2) include a significant allocation toward nonprofit and local government implementing partners, and (3) includes a level of expertise and industry leader knowledge to guide the use of funds annual to maximize impact. These three elements will support a robust and effective program that fosters community and cross-sector support.

Our support for SB304 is contingent upon green fee resources being distributed across Hawai'i to support implementation partners and protect our coastlines, reefs, forests, and watersheds throughout our home. This coalition, which works on the frontlines of natural and cultural resource management across the State, applauds the leadership of this committee and introducers of this bill, and urges leadership to consider the crucial need for sustainable, broad-based funding to meet the immense challenges our environment faces, and offset the significant impact left by nearly 10 million visitors every single year. For example, a recent study confirmed that Hawai'i coral reefs attract visitors which then exacerbate their degradation. These resources are invaluable to the livelihoods of our local residents and integral drivers of our statewide economy as well as our visitor industry.

Recent poll results reveal 89% of voters believe we must increase investment in our land, water, wildlife, and natural resources. Hawai'i's total conservation funding gap has been estimated at \$360 million annually. This underinvestment is a liability to future generations and our way of life.

A visitor impact fee program presents an opportunity to finance the protection and restoration of these irreplaceable natural and cultural resources, create hundreds of jobs for local residents, meet the local needs of our home, and secure a healthy environment for future generations. **With an estimated 10 million visitors annually, a \$50 per visitor green fee could generate \$500 million in conservation revenue each year.**



The following green fee priorities will help our State offset visitor impact: supporting broad funding of our natural and cultural resources, uplifting community groups to implement solutions to offset visitor impacts, and increasing the health and resilience of places trafficked by residents and visitors.

These organizations and businesses support taking care of our environment through a visitor green fee so it can continue to nourish and care for us and future generations:

1. Conservation International
2. Kanu Hawai'i
3. Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (KUA)
4. Kupu
5. Surfrider Foundation Hawai'i
6. The Nature Conservancy
7. Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED)
8. Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i
9. Blue Planet Foundation
10. Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition
11. Hawai'i Forest & Trail
12. Trust for Public Land
13. Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA)
14. Hawai'i Youth Climate Coalition
15. Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations (WAI)
16. National Tropical Botanical Garden
17. Young Progressives Demanding Action
18. The Conservationist Collective
19. Pono Hawai'i Initiative
20. Wild Kids
21. Parley for the Oceans
22. Resources Legacy Fund
23. Malama Pupukeya-Waimea
24. Hawai'i Land Trust
25. Mālama Learning Center
26. Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Project
27. Kuleana Coral Restoration



28. Zero Waste Hawai'i Island
29. Travel2Change
30. Mālama Maunalua
31. Kailua Beach Adventures
32. Good Food Movement
33. Care About Climate
34. Protea Zero Waste Store
35. Kailua Beach Adventures
36. Agripelago
37. Native Ecosystem Services
38. Delphi Cinema
39. Keep it Simple Honolulu
40. North Shore Community Land Trust
41. Hawai'i Wildlife Fund
42. Kingdom Pathways
43. Kokonut Koalition
44. Excurinsure
45. Kokua Foundation

Mahalo for your commitment to protecting Hawai'i's priceless natural assets, and please reach out with any questions at aloha@hawaiigreenfee.org.



Testimony Before The
House Committee on Tourism
IN SUPPORT OF SB 304 HD2 Proposed
March 14, 2023, 10:00AM, Room 423

My name is Kevin Chang and I am the Executive Director of [Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). KUA works to empower grassroots rural and Native Hawaiian mālama 'āina groups -fishers, farmers, families- 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 I'a, and a growing group of over 60 Limu practitioners and supporters called the Limu Hui. Our vision of 'āina momona includes pathways to new economic and environmental regenerative opportunities for present and future generations.

KUA strongly supports the proposed SB 304 HD2 with suggestions as an incremental step on a pathway towards 'āina momona. This bill proposes an environmental license for tourists which would allocate moneys to natural resource management, establish a fund and commission to direct use of the fees collected transparently, and support our government and our community through grant programs to non-profits working to protect and restore Hawai'i's natural resources. We view the commission as significant in helping DLNR build capacity in its outreach and connection to uplifting communities through a culture of conservation. We suggest in the development of this bill that defines project priorities, as set forth in section 171-f (b) and (d) specifically include a fourth priority for initiatives that further public trust responsibilities to the Native Hawaiian community in regards to the perpetuation of their culture and relationship with the environment. Further we suggest the operative language regarding the dispersal of funds to community non-profits in 171-f (d) should be changed to "shall allocate moneys to provide grants" to ensure that our citizens, who live in and are most knowledgeable and subject to the environmental impacts of tourism are considered and resourced as part and parcel to solutions in environmental governance and management.

A recent survey on public support for the care of biocultural resources found that **95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations and 82% percent also support giving local communities a clear role in managing marine areas. Further 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources.** We believe SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

The preamble of this bill also uplifts the significance of the contribution that many state citizens, especially those in rural and Native Hawaiian communities across our state do beyond

the payment of taxes for environmental care. They engage in practices of direct environmental management and governance often in collaboration with our too long under-resourced DLNR. They engage in this work as a matter of kuleana, subsistence and civic responsibility driven by values and practices embodied in our constitution. It is appropriate that this resource pathway should specifically support and empower community capacity as an essential partner in environmental governance and management.

A primary function of KUA includes development of an 'auwai, a stream of resources, tools, bridges, relationships, and networks that help to cultivate and take our communities' work to greater levels of collective impact. A core catalyst for the flow in this 'auwai includes increasing the percentage of our economy -public and private- which helps manage and regenerate the condition of the environment that sustain us. Indeed, understanding growth in an environmental sector is becoming a priority as well as the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization, with input from KUA and a number of partners (DLNR, Kupu, TNC, KS, OHA etc.) now tracks natural resource workforce development as a key part of a "Green Economy."

Our young people today are calling for a rebalanced approach to living in an island subject to an overly extractive economic approach to life. They want a sector of our economy which rebalances overuse with better care and stops our perpetual state deferred environmental maintenance. They want an island culture that no longer takes for granted the environmental subsidies that allows us to thrive. Indeed, island communities which draw tourists from around the world are the canaries in the coal mine for being overrun with travelers and impacts by global climate change. This is why the preamble of the bill cites island communities like Galapagos, New Zealand and Palau as leaders in developing green fee programs. Hawai'i must join this hui.

Looking to the future, our communities are raising the kupa'āina who want jobs focused on mālama 'āina. Young people want to stay home and care for their home. In the conservation sector young people are calling for more conservation opportunities with livable wages. The overrun on applications that recently inundated and exceeded the capacity of the DOCARE Academy enrollment portal is a strong indicator. This despite the fact that they will still likely be underpaid. We appreciate the necessary, creative and collaborative approaches our state supports that build the capacity and skills of the next generation with intention, and in a way that benefits ongoing community efforts to support ecosystem regeneration.

The communities we work with are committed to ensuring the long-term health of our biocultural resources. They have depended on them for generations. We believe our environment, the foundation of our very existence, is about long-term investment and a vision of 'āina momona. To get there it requires among other things taking the steps toward greater self-sufficiency, development of a pipeline of new and more innovative career pathways, mindsets, relationships and resource flows for mālama 'āina. Passing this bill out of your committee will open an essential 'auwai toward reaching this vision.

Please pass this bill out of your committee and mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Aloha 'Āina Momona.

HUI MAKA'ĀINANA O MAKANA



The Hui Maka'āinana o Makana is a non-profit organization dedicated to perpetuating and teaching the skills, knowledge, and practices of our kūpuna (ancestors) through the interpretation, restoration, care, and protection of natural and cultural resources in within the Hā'ena State Park.

March 11, 2023

COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

Rep. Sean Quinlan, Chair

Rep. Natalia Hussey-Burdick, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, March 14, 2023

TIME: 10:00 AM

Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of SB304 SD2

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and members of the Committee on Tourism:

My name is Chipper Wichman and I am a resident of Hā'ena, Kaua'i, and have been involved in conservation of natural and cultural resources for almost 50 years. I am a founding Director of the Hui Maka'āinana o Makana (1998) and just retired as the President of the National Tropical Botanical Garden (headquartered in Kalāheo, Kaua'i) after working there 47 years.

I am testifying in strong support of SB 304 SD2 which would help offset visitor impacts through the establishment of a visitor green fee program. I have long advocated for establishing a green fee to help protect Hawaii's unique resources from the huge number of visitors that come to our islands.

They come to enjoy the unique culture of the islands and the extraordinary natural beauty and environment – but these very attributes of Hawai'i that bring visitors here year after year are being loved to death – it's time to give our visitors a chance to give back and be part of protecting Hawaii through establishing this modest Green Fee.

After years of discussing this concept, the time has come for our political leaders to act decisively put in place a new funding stream that will help protect our islands and our communities as well as assist our State mitigate climate change impacts and become more resilient.

In Hā'ena we have been able to implement true regenerative tourism through our partnership with State Parks and the visitors are excited to know that their money is being used to help take care of our 'āina and our community. I am sure that the vast majority of visitors paying a green fee when they enter our State will feel the same way.

SD 304 SD2 has the ability to replicate the success we have had in Hā'ena at a State-wide scale and address the funding gaps we currently are experiencing. Time is running out and we need to make serious investments now to protect our communities, and preserve our ecological and cultural resources for future generations – the visitor “green fee” envisioned in SD 304 SD2 is logical want to begin to address these urgent challenges!

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chipper Wichman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chipper Wichman, Board Secretary
Hui Maka'āinana o Makana

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 12:08:22 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Leong	Kupu	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Honorable Committee Members,

My name is John Leong, and I am the CEO and co-founder of Kupu. On behalf of Kupu, it's my pleasure to testify in strong support of S.B. 304 S.D. 2, Relating to Visitor Impact Fees.

As written, this bill could greatly improve Hawai'i's capacity to care for our environment and truly begin the hard work needed to restore our environment. As many testifiers have explained in previous hearings, Hawai'i suffers from a conservation deficit, meaning that as a state we significantly underspend and undermanage our precious natural resources, leaving our water, air, soil and seas vulnerable to harm. If we continue down this path, we will continue to reduce our access to clean air, drinkable water, swimmable oceans, and undermine our food security. Just as we have invested in important parts of our economy to grow the industries that currently thrive in Hawai'i, we must also invest in our environment to sustain the benefits it provides us.

As background, Kupu was founded in 2007 in Hawai'i, and has since grown into our state's largest youth-focused conservation nonprofit. Each year, hundreds of youth and young adults come through our programs to learn about careers in sustainability, and to have their first hands-on experience, internship, or job in conservation, sustainable agriculture, sustainable energy, or environmental education. Hawai'i's youth are knowledgeable and passionate about our environment, and with the right opportunity many would choose a career that focuses on restoring our islands or caring for our natural and cultural resources. SB 304 would support these youth by giving them greater opportunities in green jobs. This, in turn, will bolster our economy, not just by growing our sustainability sector, but by caring for the natural beauty and environment upon which many of our dominant industries rely.

Please pass SB 304. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

John Leong



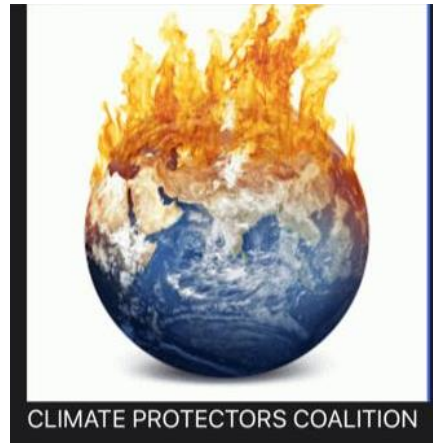
Aloha committee members,

My name is Arwen Revere and I'm a high school student from Kailua and a member of the environmental organization Wild Kids, whom I am representing today. Wild Kids is in strong support of SB304. We believe that this green initiative would be extremely beneficial in protecting our environment from the effects of tourism. Hawai'i's natural resources are vital to sustaining our way of life and and economy, including the tourism industry. Without Hawai'i's iconic natural resources such as our forests and beaches, tourism would drop dramatically. The impacts of visitors, climate change, and localized threats to our ecosystems are becoming extremely destructive. Having an innovative funding stream such as the one suggested in this bill would fund the critical conservation efforts that are needed to support Hawai'i's ecosystems. Wild Kids believes that we need sustainable tactics to protect the islands for future generations to enjoy. This includes the future of industries that depend on Hawai'i as a visitor destination. A visitor green fee program could provide methods to build environmental and economic resilience for our local communities.

Additionally, we would like to highlight the importance of these funds being accessible to non-profit organizations. Funding such as this is vital to the success of of conservation organization such as Wild Kids.

Thank you for hearing our testimony.

Arwen Revere, on behalf of Wild Kids



To: The Honorable Chair Sean Quinlan, Vice-chair Natalia Hussey-Burdick, and members of the House Committee on Tourism

From: The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing **SB304 SD2 RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES**

Hearing: Tuesday, March 14, 2023, 10:00 a.m. CR423

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice-chair Natalia Hussey-Burdick, and members of the House Committee on Tourism:

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i STRONGLY SUPPORT SB304 SD2.

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (HIROC) is a group of scientists, educators, filmmakers and environmental advocates who have been working since 2017 to protect Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean. HIROC is deeply concerned about protecting marine resource areas.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i seek to educate and engage the local community in climate change action, to help Hawai'i show the world the way back to a safe and stable climate. Large numbers of visitors flying to Hawaii generate a huge amount of greenhouse gases.

The large number of visitors to Hawaii creates a need for funding to protect and maintain our natural resources. It is appropriate that visitors to Hawai'i's natural resource areas contribute to their preservation and maintenance. It is fair to require visitors to those resource areas to purchase an annual "**conservation passport.**" \$50 seems a reasonable fee.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 8:20:16 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai women's caucus	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Let's build visitor stewardship, conserve our cultural and natural resources, and invest in our 'āina with a visitor green fee. And please guarantee that all collected fees go into a special fund that is used specifically for environmental protection and to help mitigate the climate crisis

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 3:50:39 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Bishop	Friends of Hanauma Bay	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB304.

Lisa Bishop

President

Friends of Hanauma Bay



Mālama
Learning
Center

Mālama Learning Center is a non-profit organization based in West O'ahu. Our mission is to inspire communities to care for Hawai'i by perpetuating conservation, culture, and sustainability through education.

The Honorable Representative Quinlan, Chair
The Honorable Representative Hussey-Burdick, Vice Chair
Honorable Members of the House Committee on Tourism

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 304 SD2
Relating to Visitor Impact Fees**

Hearing Date: March 14, 2023, 10:00 am Conference room 423

To the Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members:

Aloha Kākou. My name is Pauline Sato and I serve as the Executive Director of the Mālama Learning Center, a private, non-profit environmental education organization serving schools and communities in West O'ahu. I am testifying in strong support of SB 304 SD2. This bill would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to the State, Counties, and non-profit organizations to implement actions that work to restore our natural and cultural resources, which visitors from across the world come to experience.

More than 10 year ago, I had the good fortune of visiting the Republic of Palau and was immediately impressed with their innovative version of a green fee. Visitors certainly did not hesitate to go there because of a fee that was less than 5% of the cost of airfare alone. The green fee in Palau continues to help the government and non-profit organizations manage their natural and cultural resources – it is time that Hawai'i has its own green fee.

This measure is needed now as our natural and cultural resources bear the heavy weight of human impact – including that of visitors. Hawai'i is attractive to visitors for multiple reasons, including our islands' beaches, mountains, and natural areas, yet they are not asked to pay for the costs to manage and sustain resources at scales island-wide.

Recent scientific polling shows that Hawai'i residents are in undeniable support for a visitor green fee program. If we keep waiting to pass this bill and implement the modest fee, our natural and cultural resources will be degraded further, triggering a domino effect that will negatively impact our economy and way of life. For the sake of our children, let us be bold and determined to give them an environment that will nurture them as it has us.

I urge your respective committees to pass this bill and thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am hopeful that this is the year that Hawai'i gets its own green fee!

Aloha, Pauline M. Sato

Mālama Learning Center
P.O. Box 1662, Honolulu, Hawai'i 967806
www.malamalearningcenter.org



3/14/2023

TOU Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the House Committee on Tourism,

Position: Support SB304 SD2.

The Surfrider Foundation is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our ocean, waves, and beaches. Surfrider maintains a network of over 150 chapters and academic clubs nationwide, including 4 chapters in the Hawaiian Islands. The Surfrider Foundation focuses on many aspects of the environment such as coastal protection, plastic pollution, and water quality.

The Surfrider Foundation, Hawaii region, is testifying in **strong support of SB304 SD2** (hereafter "SB304"), which would establish a visitor green fee program administered by the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Our beaches, parks, reefs, forests, hiking trails, and other natural resources are paramount to sustaining our way of life and, similarly, our economic engine. These resources are intertwined with our visitor sector, as the tourism economy depends on Hawaii's iconic natural resources. However, our islands are facing escalating visitor impacts, climate change, and localized threats to our ecosystems. Hawaii currently only invests \$9 per tourist back in the environment, and less than 1% of the state budget goes towards conservation. We currently face an estimated conservation funding gap of \$360 million per year.

SB304 would establish an innovative funding stream to support the critical conservation efforts needed to maintain Hawaii as a healthy, sustainable region for future generations to enjoy, as well as a visitor destination. A transformational investment in Hawaii's natural resources through a visitor green fee program provides a pathway to build environmental and economic resilience for our local communities and our visitor industry. Green fee models have successfully been implemented at visitor destinations across the world, particularly in other island communities such as Palau, the British Virgin Islands, Maldives, Bali, El Nido, the Galapagos, Mentawais, and the Balearic Islands.¹

For the past few years, the Surfrider Foundation has been involved in Hawaii's green fee efforts. Building on the success of the natural resources allocation of the Honolulu Transient Accommodation Tax passing in 2021, we're excited to have the opportunity to testify. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony in support of SB304, submitted on the behalf of the Surfrider Foundation's 4 Chapters in Hawaii and all of our members who live in the state and visit to enjoy the many coastal recreational opportunities offered by all of the islands' coastlines.

Sincerely,

Camile Cleveland
Volunteer Policy Coordinator
Surfrider Foundation, O'ahu Chapter

¹ [GREEN PASSPORT - Innovative Financing Solutions for Conservation in Hawaii](#), Conservation International, 2019

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:29:47 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Penelope Dye	Hawaii Youth Climate Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304

House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Penelope (Perry) Dye and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset the impacts of the tourism industry through a visitor green fee program and distribute funds to implement solutions for the State and community programs which are working to restore our natural and cultural resources. I am 15 years old and from Manoa. I support this issue because I have lived in Hawaii nearly all my life and I believe that we need to take strong action to stop the environmental degradation happening due to climate change and the overuse of our natural resources through tourism. This bill will be a crucial step in ensuring that we have a healthy environment for generations to come.

Please know that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them. Hawaii is home to so many incredible endemic species, and the risk of extinction for many of them is only growing. The resources attained through this bill could go to the important preservation of these species, along with our reefs and forests.

We currently face critically endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is an important step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community which relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups--such as nonprofit organizations and the DLNR--to implement solutions and strengthen work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. As a member of HYCC, I believe that these

organizations could have so much power in changing the course of our future for the better. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session in order to begin the necessary restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and the urgency to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations cannot be ignored. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

I thank you for your consideration of this urgent and crucial issue.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Penelope (Perry) Dye

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy
Supporting SB 304 SD2, Relating to Visitor Impact Fees.**

**Committee on Tourism
March 14, 2023, 10:00 am
Conference Room 423 and via Videoconference**

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the Committee:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) strongly supports SB 304 SD2, Relating to Visitor Impact Fees, which establishes a visitor impact fee program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), through which the Department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area. It also establishes the visitor impact fee special fund to protect and manage natural resources.

SB 304 SD2 would establish an innovative funding stream to support the critical conservation efforts needed to maintain Hawai'i as a healthy, sustainable home for future generations, as well as a world-class visitor destination. Our natural resources sustain our way of life, feed our families, and drive our local economy. Although Hawai'i's natural beauty is a top tourist attraction and our resources provide many ecosystem services for tourists, conservation efforts receive less than 1% of the State's annual budget. A visitor impact fee could help close Hawai'i's conservation funding gap, which has been estimated at \$360 million annually. TNC supports ensuring this funding supports the broad array of conservation efforts that face impacts from and benefit tourists.

A January 2023 poll of Hawai'i residents showed strong public support for a visitor impact fee, with 63% of voters supporting a \$50 per-person annual visitor fee to protect and restore natural and cultural resources impacted by tourism and climate change. There was also strong support for an array of actions to make the islands more resilient; for example, over 70% support protecting and restoring coral reefs, removing and controlling invasive species, and protecting and restoring native species. Additionally, 88% agree that "tourists should pay their fair share to protect and manage natural, cultural, and recreation resources in Hawai'i," and a similar proportion (89%) agrees that "Hawai'i should increase its investment in protecting land, water, wildlife, and recreational resources."¹ All of these priorities can be supported through a visitor impact fee and fund as established in SB 304 SD2.

We also support the Environmental Legacy Commission established under the introduced version of the bill. It will provide important input from a wide variety of stakeholders in the visitor impact fee and fund, and transparency and accountability in how the funding is spent. We ask the Committee to consider adding these sections back into the legislation.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Duncan MacNaughton Jean E. Rolles Crystal K. Rose Nathan E. Smith

Founders: Samuel A. Cooke Herbert C. Cornuelle

Hawai'i's visitors directly affect and benefit natural resources, whether they visit these resources or not – such as steady supplies of fresh water from forests, and shoreline protection from reefs – and should directly contribute to their conservation as well. Additionally, we are facing pressures from climate change, including increased flooding, coastal erosion, sea level rise, coral bleaching, loss of native forest, rising temperatures, and increased threats of extinction for endangered species. DLNR and organizations like TNC are working to protect and restore our islands' critical natural resources. Additional funding is needed to increase the pace and scale of these conservation efforts to offset the growing impacts from visitors and climate change. The visitor impact fee and special fund established in SB 304 SD2 would allow for more sustained funding to scale efforts and address our conservation needs while supporting the development of green jobs to conserve and manage our natural resources without increasing fees or taxes on residents.

A transformational investment in Hawai'i's natural resources through a visitor impact fee program and special fund is necessary to build environmental and economic resilience for our local communities and our visitor industry. By investing in our environment today and into the future, we can ensure that residents and visitors are able to enjoy our incomparable natural environment and island lifestyle for generations to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support SB 304 SD2.

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i and Palmyra is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 40,000 acres in 13 nature preserves and work in over 50 coastal communities to help protect and restore the nearshore reefs and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnerships with government, private parties, and communities to protect forests and coral reefs for their ecological values and for the many benefits they provide to people.

¹ Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently completed a survey of Hawai'i voters to assess their views on a range of environmental issues, including support for a \$50 fee collected from visitors to be used to protect and restore land, water, wildlife, and cultural resources that are impacted by tourism (sometimes referred to as a "green fee"). From Jan. 8-19, 2023, FM3 completed 864 online and telephone (landline and wireless) interviews with Hawai'i voters. The margin of sampling error for the study is +/-3.5% at the 95% confidence level; margins of error for population subgroups within the sample will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100%. The study was funded by The Nature Conservancy, Resources Legacy Fund, and Trust for Public Land. A memo summarizing poll results is available upon request.



March 14, 2023

Representative Sean Quinlan
Chair, Committee on Tourism

Representative Natalia Hussey-Burdick
Vice Chair, Committee on Tourism

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 304, SD 2 Relating to Visitor Impact Fees

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Resources Legacy Fund (RLF), we are writing in support SB 304, SD2 which establishes a visitor impact fee program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources, through which the department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, beach, forest, trail, or other natural area.

Recent polling confirms that:

- 63% of Hawai'i voters support a \$50 per-person annual visitor fee to protect and restore natural and cultural resources impacted by tourism and climate change.
- 88% of voters believe that tourists should pay their fair share to protect and manage natural, cultural, and recreation resources in Hawai'i; and
- 89% agree that Hawai'i should increase its investment in protecting land, water, wildlife and recreational resources.

Voters want to see these funds invested across multiple priorities, including:

- Protecting and restoring coral reefs
- Protecting and preserving beaches and coasts
- Removing and controlling invasive species
- Restoring wetland and coastal areas and reefs that provide protection from floods and sea level rise
- Restoring wetland and coastal areas and reefs that provide wildlife habitat; and
- Protecting and restoring native species

The state has created programs, but to date failed to sufficiently fund these priorities through state management and/or community-based stewardship of these places. Until now, the state has neither provided nor identified adequate funding to protect against the real and increasing impacts of climate change, including increasing flooding, coastal erosion, and sea-level rise. A visitor impact fee offers a net-positive investment solution not only for the environment and the visitors who come to Hawai'i to enjoy it, but for the economy, as well.

We see an imperative to generate sustained and dedicated funding -- at least \$300 million annually -- sufficient to meet the needs of our state's natural and cultural resources. Most importantly, we support funding the right mix of natural and cultural resource projects, community stewardship, and a Commission to make funding recommendations to the Board of Land and Natural Resources to help ensure effective implementation of priority programs and projects.

This bill will enable the State of Hawai'i to meet these ongoing and increasing needs and provide a durable funding source that will enable the state to invest hundreds of millions of dollars to protect and restore our natural resources for present and future generations, while creating jobs for Hawai'i residents to care for these resources.

SB 304, SD2 provides a transformative opportunity to protect Hawai'i's magnificent natural resources for present and future generations. We respectfully urge you to approve this important legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 304, SD2.

Sincerely,
Jocelyn Garovoy Herbert
Senior Program Officer, Resources Legacy Fund



TO Interested Parties

FROM Dave Metz, Miranda Everitt, and Denny Han
FM3 Research

RE: Hawai'i Voters Support for a Tourism Impact Fee

DATE February 16, 2023

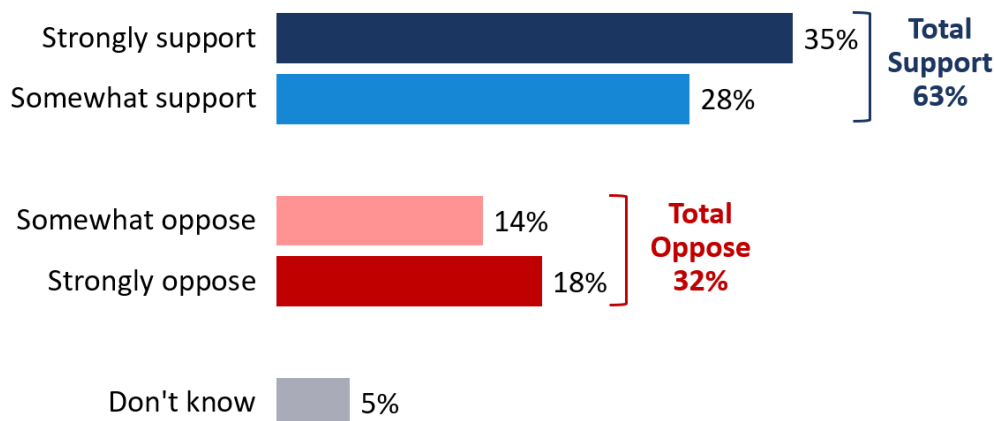
Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently completed a survey of 864 Hawai'i voters to assess views of a proposed \$50 annual visitor fee to fund conservation in the state.ⁱ The results show that Hawai'i voters overwhelmingly agree that visitors should pay their fair share to protect the state's environment. More specifically, **three in five support a visitor fee - with broad support across major demographic groups.**

Detailed findings are as follows:

- **Nearly two-thirds of voters support a \$50 per-person annual visitor fee to protect and restore natural and cultural resources impacted by tourism and climate change.** As shown in Figure 1, more than one-third (35%) say they "strongly" support the proposed policy.

Figure 1: Support for a Tourism Impact Fee Proposal

Some people have proposed establishing a \$50 per-person annual fee that visitors would pay to use state and county beaches, parks and trails in Hawai'i. Money raised would be used to protect and restore land, water and wildlife, and cultural resources that are impacted by tourism and climate change in Hawai'i.



Majority support for the proposal cuts across major partisan, geographic, and demographic lines, including:

- 72% of Democrats, 59% of independents, and 51% of Republicans;
 - 66% of small-town voters, 64% of rural voters, 63% of city voters, and 60% of suburban voters;
 - 61% of Native Hawaiian voters, 66% of Japanese American voters, 66% of Filipino American voters, and 63% of white voters;
 - 66% of women and 61% of men; and
 - 70% of voters ages 18-49, 60% of voters ages 50-64, and 55% of voters 65 and older.
- **Underlying support for this policy is a broadly-shared belief that tourists should help fund conservation.** Nine in ten (88%) agree with the statement "Tourists should pay their fair share to protect and manage natural, cultural, and recreation resources in Hawai'i." A similar proportion (89%) agrees in principle that "Hawai'i should increase its investment in protecting land, water, wildlife and recreational resources."
 - **Voters see a wide range of conservation as high priorities for investment.** As shown in Figure 2, more than seven in ten rate a wide range of projects as "very important" targets for investment from a tourism impact fee - led by protecting and restoring coral reefs.

Figure 2: Investment Priorities for a Tourism Impact Fee

I am going to read you a list of specific projects and services that could be funded with money from the proposed visitor fee. Please tell me how important each one is to you: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important

Potential Project	Extremely/ Very Important
Protecting and restoring coral reefs	77%
Protecting and preserving our beaches and coasts	77%
Removing and controlling invasive species	76%
Restoring wetland and coastal areas and reefs that provide protection against floods and sea-level rise	74%
Restoring wetland and coastal areas and reefs that provide wildlife habitat	73%
Protecting and restoring native species	73%

In conclusion, Hawai'i voters want to see increased investment in conservation, and to that end, **majorities across partisan and demographic lines support a proposed \$50 annual visitor fee to protect and restore tourism-impacted environmental resources.**

ⁱ **Methodology:** From January 8-19, 2023, FM3 completed 864 online and telephone (landline and wireless) interviews with Hawai'i voters. The margin of sampling error for the study is +/-3.5% at the 95% confidence level; margins of error for population subgroups within the sample will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100%.



TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND'S TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 304 SD2
House Committee on Tourism, State Capitol, Conf. Rm. 211
Tuesday, March 14, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

HAWAII
1164 Bishop St., Ste. 1512
Honolulu, HI 96813
tpl.org

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice-Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Committee Members –

Trust for Public Land (TPL) supports SB 304 SD12 which proposes to establish a visitor impact fee or fund, the revenues of which would be used to care for our precious natural and cultural resources impacted by tourism.

Although Hawai'i's natural and host culture attracts over 10 million visitors a year in non-pandemic times, the State's management and protection of cultural and natural resources is sorely underfunded -- receiving less than 1% of the state's annual budget. DLNR struggles to manage a tremendous kuleana – its Natural Area Reserves, Forest Reserves, parks, trails, historic sites and monuments, and unencumbered state land. Hawai'i suffers from a significant conservation funding gap [estimated at \\$360 million annually](#). Meanwhile – coral reefs are dying, trails are overcrowded, cultural sites are being damaged, parks are deteriorating, watersheds are threatened, and fish stocks are declining. Residents feel overwhelmed by the overuse of and damage to the special places they and their families once enjoyed, and to which many families have genealogical connections.

With an estimated 10 million tourists visiting our islands annually in non-pandemic times, a \$50 per person green fee could generate \$500 million in conservation revenue each year, creating local green jobs and protecting Hawai'i's irreplaceable natural and cultural resources, including the forested watersheds that generate the islands' only source of fresh drinking water and the reefs that protect more than \$830 million worth of coastal infrastructure each year, according to a [USGS report](#).

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify. I apologize that I will not be able to attend the hearing in person or virtually due to a scheduling conflict.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lea Hong".

Lea Hong
Associate Vice-President
Hawai'i State Director
Edmund C. Olson Trust Fellow
Trust for Public Land

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SB 304, SD2, RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES

MARCH 13, 2023 · HOUSE TOURISM COMMITTEE ·
CHAIR REP. SEAN QUINLAN

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: Imua Alliance supports SB 304, SD2, relating to visitor impact fees, which establishes the Visitor Impact Fee Program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources, through which the department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area; and establishes, and appropriates moneys into and out of, the Visitor Impact Fee Special Fund.

According to a report produced by the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, global sea levels could rise more than three feet by 2100, with more recent projections showing this occurring as early as 2060. In turn, over the next 30 to 70 years, approximately 6,500 structures and 19,800 people statewide will be exposed to chronic flooding.

Additionally, an estimated \$19 billion in economic loss would result from chronic flooding of land and structures located in exposure areas. Finally, approximately 38 miles of coastal roads and 550 cultural sites would be chronically flooded, on top of the 13 miles of beaches that have already been lost on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui to erosion fronting shoreline armoring, like seawalls.

Furthermore, according to research conducted by Michael B. Gerrard from Columbia Law School, modern-day slavery tends to increase after natural disasters or conflicts where large numbers of people are displaced from their homes. In the decades to come, says Gerrard, climate change

will very likely lead to a significant increase in the number of people who are displaced and, thus vulnerable, to human trafficking. While the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015 established objectives to limit global temperature increases and several international agreements are aimed at combating modern-day slavery, it is highly uncertain whether they will be adequate to cope with the scale of the problem that is likely to occur as a result of climate change.

As we work to reduce carbon emissions and stave off the worst consequences of climate change, we must begin preparing for the adverse impact of sea level rise on our shores. We are now quantifying the speed at which we must act. We cannot continue to develop the 25,800-acre statewide sea level rise exposure area—one-third of which is designated for urban use—without risking massive structural damage and, potentially, great loss of life.

Therefore, we should take steps to accelerate Hawai'i's efforts to address climate change and develop a clean economy, including by implementing "green fees" that ensure our state's visitors pay their fair share to sustain our 'āina. New Zealand, the Maldives, Cancun, and Venice, and numerous other countries have green fee programs for visitors, which vary from \$1 per night to a \$100 entrance fee for the purpose of environmental conservation. **Palau's per-tourist investment in its natural environment is \$92, New Zealand's is \$188, and the Galapagos Islands' is \$373. Hawai'i's is just \$9 per tourist,** according to a report from Conservation International's Green Passport initiative. We need to catch up. For the sake of our keiki, we cannot afford to wait to solidify strategies to preserve our island home for generations to come.

Kris Coffield · Executive Director, Imua Alliance · (808) 679-7454 · kris@imuaalliance.org

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

126 Queen Street, Suite 305

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: MISCELLANEOUS, Visitor Impact Fee

BILL NUMBER: SB 304 SD 2

INTRODUCED BY: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Establishes the Visitor Impact Fee Program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources, through which the department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area. Establishes, and appropriates moneys into and out of, the Visitor Impact Fee Special Fund

SYNOPSIS: Adds a new part to chapter 171, HRS, to define the program.

Under the program, visitors shall pay a visitor impact fee to obtain a license to use a state park, beach, state-owned forest, hiking trail on state-owned land, or other state-owned natural area. Visitor impact fees collected shall be deposited in the newly established visitor impact fee special fund. Revenues collected under the program shall be allocated to protect, restore, and manage natural and cultural resources.

Prohibits any visitor who is fifteen years of age or older to visit a state park, beach, state-owned forest, hiking trail on state-owned land, or other state-owned natural area without first obtaining an impact fee license. Violators shall be liable for a civil fine not to exceed \$____, but fines shall not begin until five years after the establishment of the program.

The initial visitor impact fee shall be \$50 per person and the license purchased shall be good for one year. DLNR may, once every five years, adjust the fee to account for inflation.

DLNR is to place signs at state parks, beaches, state-owned forests, trailheads on state-owned land, and other state-owned natural areas to inform visitors of the requirement to pay a visitor impact fee and obtain a license.

DLNR's disbursement of impact fee revenues out of the special fund may be used for one or more of the following purposes:

- (a) Direct expenses expended directly by state agencies for projects that help offset adverse environmental impacts caused by visitors, ensure that the State's natural resources are maintained for continued use by licensees, or both.
- (b) Expenses for the administration of the program, including the creation and implementation of a visitor impact fee strategic plan.
- (c) Grants to nonprofit organizations up to 50% of the annual fee revenue. Priority will be given to projects that satisfy at least one of the following:
 - (1) Develop nature-based solutions to environmental and climate issues that impact the State;

- (2) Provide significant protection, restoration, and enhancement of Hawaii's natural resources;
 - (3) Increase the resilience of state-owned natural resources trafficked by licensees; or
 - (4) Advance the State's ability to protect natural resources through the establishment, stability, and growth of an environmentally responsible workforce.
- (d) Grants to the counties up to 50% of the annual fee revenue. Priority will be given to projects that satisfy at least one of (c)(1)-(4).
- (e) Cost-matching funds for federal grants that satisfy at least one of (c)(1)-(4).
- (f) Enforcement of the impact fee license law.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2050.

STAFF COMMENTS: This fee may be subject to challenge as unconstitutional. The Privileges and Immunities Clause of the U.S. Constitution requires that “The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.” Although it has been held that a state may treat out-of-state residents differently in some situations, such as in granting licenses for recreational hunting, *Baldwin v. Fish & Game Commission of Montana*, 436 U.S. 371 (1978), the Court indicated that the result may be different when the nonresident is not given access to any part of the State to which they may seek to travel. *Id.* at 388. This is because the Court has recognized that the Constitution protects the right of citizens of the United States to travel freely throughout the land.

“We are all citizens of the United States,” the Court stated in *Crandall v. Nevada*, 75 U.S. 35 (1867), “and as members of the same community must have the right to pass and repass through every part of it without interruption, as freely as in our own states. And a tax imposed by a state for entering its territories or harbors is inconsistent with the rights which belong to citizens of other states as members of the Union and with the objects which that Union was intended to attain. Such a power in the states could produce nothing but discord and mutual irritation, and they very clearly do not possess it.”

Other recent cases in the federal system have sustained the power of government to charge a user fee whose proceeds are dedicated to protect and preserve the natural attraction for which the user fee was charged (Hanauma Bay, for example). And the Hawaii Supreme Court in *State v. Medeiros*, 89 Haw. 361, 973 P.2d 736 (1999), held that the following test would be applied to distinguish between a user fee and a tax: “whether the charge (1) applies to the direct beneficiary of a particular service, (2) is allocated directly to defraying the costs of providing the service, and (3) is reasonably proportionate to the benefit received.” 89 Haw. at 367, 973 P.2d at 742.

Applying this test, the proposed visitor impact fee looks more like a tax. Although the impact fee is collected in a special fund, it is collected from visitors regardless of how many natural attractions the visitor visits. The uses to which the money in the fund can be put are broad and varied, and are not limited to the care and upkeep of natural attractions visited by tourists.

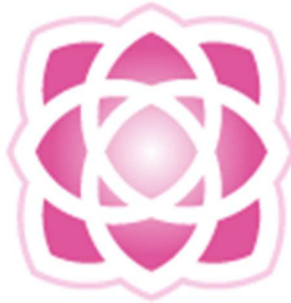
For these reasons we are concerned that the State is without power to limit access of visitors to places where residents are allowed.

Re: SB 304 SD2

Page 3

We also note some incongruities in the definition of “resident” offered in the bill. The bill calls a person a resident if that person filed a Hawaii tax return; nonresidents file Hawaii tax returns too. The bill also allows a person to be classified as a resident if they have a utility bill or similar document showing a Hawaii address; the Hawaii address could be that of a second or third home.

Digested: 3/11/2023



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
TOURISM
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 423
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2023 AT 10:00 A.M.

To The Honorable Sean Quinlan, Chair
The Honorable Natalia Hussey-Burdick, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Tourism

SUPPORT FOR SB304 SD2 RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES

The Maui Chamber of Commerce would like testify in **support for SB304** which establishes a visitor impact fee program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources, through which the department will collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area.

The Chamber supports these fees as they are not fees imposed on residents for their use of our natural resources and it is imposed on only the visitors who use those resources. We appreciate that the model in this bill would include all state beaches, parks, hiking trails, etc. for 1 year so visitors can use their license across the state while island hopping and also use it on multiple visits throughout that year.

The Chamber would like the legislature to consider that there are families that visit the state and it may be desirable to have some sort of family discounted fee.

For these reasons, we **support SB304 SD2**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela Tumpap".

Pamela Tumpap
President



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM
A S S O C I A T I O N

Testimony of
Mufi Hannemann
President & CEO
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association

House Committee on Tourism
Senate Bill 304
March 14, 2023

Chair Quinlan and members of the Committee, mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, the state's oldest and largest private sector visitor industry organization.

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association—nearly 700 members strong, representing more than 50,000 hotel rooms and nearly 40,000 lodging workers—have strongly advocated for the establishment of impact fees at high-traffic sites that are especially impacted by visitors. Our position on this issue remains unchanged; we support impact fees that are collected at specific sites so long as the monies generated are used to maintain and improve the site at which they were collected.

HLTA supports the current draft of Senate Bill 304, SD2, and would emphasize the importance of clear, unequivocal language that impact fees collected by the State will be kept separate from any general fund. This will undoubtedly help to achieve the measure's stated goal of transparency and accountability.

For these reasons, HLTA supports Senate Bill 304, SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to offer this testimony.



March 14, 2023

10 a.m.

Conference Room 423 and via videoconference

To: House Committee on Tourism

Rep. Sean Quinlan, Chair

Rep. Natalia Hussey-Burdick, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Joe Kent, Executive Vice President

RE: SB304 SD2 — RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES

Comments Only

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer comments on [SB304 SD2](#), which would establish a \$50 license to be paid by any non-resident aged 15 or older in order to visit a state park, beach, forest, hiking trail or other natural area owned by the state.

We have grave concerns about several aspects of this bill, ranging from its legality to its applicability and enforcement.

In addition, we believe that this proposal may have unforeseen consequences for small businesses in the state and for the economy as a whole.

Finally, we have questions about the allocation of the revenues from the fee and whether the program would properly benefit Hawaii residents.

We hope you will consider the following issues as you deliberate on this measure:

>> Constitutionality: There is reason to doubt whether this program would pass constitutional muster. The U.S. Supreme Court frowns upon any law that would restrict the right to travel

freely between states and has ruled against disparate resident/nonresident tax schemes under both the Privileges and Immunities Clause and the Equal Protection Clause.¹

While different resident user fees such as hunting licenses or park entry fees have been upheld, the licensing scheme proposed here is far broader in scope and more akin to a tax than a user fee.

Given that the rationale for the fee is the impact of visitors upon the natural environment, the state cannot plausibly claim that there is a rational basis for treating the impact of tourists as more injurious to Hawaii's ecosystem than full-time residents. Thus, unless residents were also charged for a similar license, the entire scheme risks being overturned on a legal challenge.

>> Applicability: Though presented as a fee that will only be paid by tourists, this bill underlines the fundamental difficulty of delineating who is "local" and who is a visitor.

Under the bill, anyone who can provide a valid state ID, valid Hawaii school ID, an income tax statement from the previous year or some form of official documentation from a government agency, financial institute, insurance agency or utility agency would count as a resident for the purpose of the license.

Thus, anyone who has been forced to move to the mainland for more than a year or so is now a "visitor" and subject to the fee. This could lead to some very strange results.

Under this bill, Oprah Winfrey is a resident because she can produce a utility bill, but Iam Tongi, the "American Idol" contestant whose family was "priced out of paradise," is a visitor.

A billionaire who pays taxes in Hawaii as well as other states is a "resident," but a local family who had to move to Nevada to make ends meet will have to pay hundreds of dollars if they want to come home for grandma's birthday party at the beach.

Moreover, the bill makes no mention of members of the military stationed in Hawaii. Will they be exempted from the fee or will the state require licenses from raw enlistees who are not here by choice?

¹ See, e.g., *Crandall v. Nevada*, 75 U.S. 35 (1867); *Austin v. New Hampshire*, 420 U.S. 656 (1975) (invalidating a "commuter income tax" applying only to nonresidents); and *Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. v. Ward*, 470 U.S. 869 (1985) (invalidating a law that taxed out-of-state insurance companies at a higher rate than in-state companies).

>> Administration and enforcement: There would be considerable logistical hurdles involved in administering this fee so that it would not be automatically applied to any non-resident who enters the state, regardless of whether they intend to use any public park or beach. After all, someone who is only passing through or only attending meetings in a hotel would not need to pay the license fee. If they were charged anyway, this would make it a fee to enter the state, which would certainly be invalidated by a court.

This problem leads to serious questions of how the license would be enforced, especially in areas with no point of entry where visitors could show the license. The penalties section of the bill clearly indicates the intent to include an enforcement mechanism, but it is unclear how this will be accomplished. Will government officials patrol Hawaii's state parks and beaches, demanding licenses from anyone who appears to be a tourist? This could quickly devolve into a civil rights issue.

In the end, administration and enforcement could end up costing the state significant resources in both labor and funding. It is unclear from this bill whether enough research has been done on the full cost of this program.

>> Economic impact: This bill assumes that a visitor impact fee would not negatively affect tourism. However, if the average family visiting Hawaii had to add a \$200 license fee to their vacation budget, it is likely that they will try to compensate for that expense. Hawaii's independent restaurants, retail establishments, tour companies and other small businesses depend on visitor spending for their survival. Though it might not affect transportation or lodging, this license fee could cut into visitor spending in ways that are most likely to harm small, local businesses.

Hawaii already has some of the world's highest tourism taxes,² and this is effectively another tax on tourism. As such, we can expect it to ripple through that industry in ways that might not worry larger companies, but could have a real impact on Hawaii's economy anyway.

>> Resident benefits: Though pitched as a way to address the impact of visitors on our state, this licensing fee is more properly described as a funding source for environmental grants.

The revenues for this bill are not being used to fix roads, renovate the airports or even improve sanitation. The "visitor impact" to be addressed by this bill is not specific to visitors, but rather includes a broad range of objectives related to climate change, natural resources and the

² Alison Fox, "[These Cities — Including 3 in the U.S. — Have the Most Expensive Tourist Taxes in the World. Study Shows,](#)" Travel + Leisure, Aug. 12, 2022.

environment. These might be worthy goals, but one must ask why a new source of funding must be created for them and why those revenues are not being used for a purpose with more immediate benefits to residents — such as infrastructure improvements, education, affordable housing or tax cuts.

In sum, this “visitor impact fee” program appears arbitrary, unfair, fiscally questionable and unconstitutional.

If Hawaii wishes to pull more money out of tourists to address the visitor impact on our state, the Legislature can always consider another increase in the transient accommodations tax. That would at least be easier to administer and would allow for more discussion regarding how those funds should be used.

As envisioned in this bill, the visitor’s license runs contrary to the spirit of aloha.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Joe Kent
Executive vice president
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 8:10:32 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly Shay	Laukahi: The Hawaii Plant Conservation Network	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Kimberly Shay and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State.

Aloha, my name is Kimberly Shay. I am from Honolulu, O‘ahu. While I worry about the multitude of impacts on all native species and ecosystems in Hawai‘i, I’d like to elevate the need to protect Hawai‘i’s native and endemic plants. Hawai‘i’s native plants make up ~44% of the nation’s endangered species list and 260 species and subspecies have 50 individuals or less in the wild ([PEPP list 2023](#)). Approximately 90% of our native plants are endemic to Hawai‘i, in that they are only found in Hawai‘i. Nowhere else in the world has such a high endemism rate in their flora. Once these plants are gone, that’s it. We’ve lost that part of our watershed, our ecosystem, our quality of life, and the ties to our biocultural identity. They are in a dire situation facing a multitude of threats from invasive species, climate change, fire, habitat degradation, and development. Native plants are the foundation to restoring Hawai‘i’s natural resources, ecosystems, and other native species. I believe we have the opportunity in front of us to support the work needed to rescue our native plants in Hawai‘i and build the foundation for healthy ecosystems, for our generation and future generations.

I’d like to see plant conservation organizations that are saving Hawai‘i’s endemic plants get additional support from the green fee. There are many organizations that care for our plants. This list is not exhaustive. I hope to highlight that there is a large and dedicated community working to save Hawai‘i’s unique flora.

Laukahi: The Hawai‘i Plant Conservation Network who coordinates conservation activity across the state, the state and federal agencies (DOFAW-DLNR, PEPP, USFWS, Forest Service, National Park Service), the many botanical gardens in our state with plant conservation missions (Lyon Arboretum, National Tropical Botanical Garden, Maui Nui Botanical Garden, Honolulu Botanical Gardens, Waimea Valley Botanical Garden, Amy Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden), the universities and research institutions bridging our gaps in knowledge (University of Hawai‘i campus system, Leeward Community College, Bishop Museum), and land managers that are

committed to protecting and restoring plants on their lands (DOFAW-DLNR, Army Natural Resource Program of O‘ahu, The Nature Conservancy, Kualoa Ranch, Waikoloa Dry Forest Institute, and the Hawai‘i Associate of Watershed Partnerships)

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai‘i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai‘i throughout the state.

I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai‘i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo nui for your time, attention, and dedication to protecting the natural resources of Hawai‘i. The urgency of this has never been greater.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Kimberly Shay

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2023 3:57:07 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carissa Cabrera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB304 with comments, which would create a visitor green fee program to finance the conservation of our natural and cultural resources. There are not many measures that provide this level of impact that would span generations. We have an opportunity to take bold, innovative action that protects our home, economy, and way of life while protecting our cultural and natural resources. **I urge the committee to protect the parameters in SB304 that would fund our coral reefs, watersheds, forests, and community organizations that are implementing solutions alongside DLNR.** It is imperative that funding remains accessible to these resources, resources utilized by visitors across the State, or we will lose the opportunity to save them.

With aloha,

Carissa Cabrera

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2023 4:20:52 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this Bill.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2023 4:38:57 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Savannah Crosby	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support the Hawaii Green Fee bill. If tourists are coming here to enjoy the natural resources then they should help pay to preserve them.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2023 4:55:56 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Meier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is John Meier and I am submitting written testimony in **strong support of SB304** which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources.

I am a resident of Maui and spend two days a week hiking our trails. I see firsthand the large number of visitors using the trails in our forest reserve system.

I also see firsthand that the Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife does not have the resources and staff to manage and restore our forest reserves. Creating this program will be a big step forward in providing the resources needed to protect our natural resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

John Meier

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/10/2023 5:22:41 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Virginia Tincher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Members of the Committee on Tourism,

I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration of the places that make our island home beautiful as soon as possible. We also need to send visitors a message. Contributing to health of our unique environment is worth a fee.

I've seen first hand how effective a green fee can be. When our family visited the Galapagos Islands, we paid \$100 each as a green fee and saw first hand how much can be done to preserve and protect. It is an amazing place to experience. The land and animals were protected and local residents were trained as guides. We learned it wasn't always this way. It took government commitment and contributions from visitors to build a strong culture of preservation and care and a protected environment.

The success of this program must include buy-in from tourists, residents, the tourism industry, and conservation experts, and is contingent upon effective outreach and transparency of the program. We must have a diverse set of stakeholders from relevant sectors contributing to the decision-making process for this level of funding. **For this reason, I would like this measure to keep the Environmental Legacy Commission, made up of members from diverse areas of expertise.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Virginia Tincher

Aina Haina, Oahu

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 7:38:21 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pi'ikea Miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Quinlan and Members of the Committee on Tourism,

Along with a majority of the public I strongly support SB 304. The time for action is now. Our environment is continually degraded by the hordes of tourists who come to our shores, to the detriment of local people. This problem doesn't need to be studied it needs to be addressed through decisive action and funding. Please pass SB 304!

Mahalo,

Pi'ikea Miller

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 1:12:43 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

In support of SD2. Thank you.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 3:04:24 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doorae Shin	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Doorae Shin and I am the community organizer for the Hawai'i Green Fee coalition. I am testifying in **strong support of SB304**.

After working with this coalition of organizations and community members for the last couple of years, it has become clear that now is the time for the Hawai'i Green Fee. We have the backing of the Governor, who campaigned on creating a visitor impact fee, and we have worked with dozens of community organizations, spoken to dozens of legislators, and polled the community about their support for this concept. The support is widespread and the need to act is urgent.

We are now facing impacts of the climate crisis, where Hawai'i's ecosystems, economy, and communities face severe vulnerabilities. From natural disasters to coastal erosion and loss of biodiversity, Hawai'i needs to be prepared and work hard to restore, maintain, and preserve our natural and cultural resources. As one of the leading visitor destinations in the world, our special places, including our trails, beaches, parks, and more, need financial resources to ensure they are being taken care of and preserved for this and future generations.

I am happy to take questions about our efforts to pass the Hawai'i Green Fee, and we thank you for considering this bill.

Mahalo,
Doorae Shin

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/11/2023 4:44:06 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Hixon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I urge support of SB304 because I believe it will help Hawaii's coral reefs, which have long been my research expertise as a professor of marine biology. Please consider the immense value of our reefs, their threatened status, and the value of the Green Fee in restoring our reefs (all statements back-up by peer-reviewed scientific publications):

- The ecological, economic, cultural, and recreational value of coral reefs in Hawaii exceeds \$33 billion.
- A valuation assessment quantified the benefits of coral reefs at \$360 million per year for Hawaii's economy.
- Oahu's coral reef status is considered "impaired," with the highest climate risk score and lowest fish score of the archipelagic assessment. Since Oahu is home to nearly 1 million residents and received six million visitors in 2019, the pressure of human density is disproportionately affecting corals and reef ecosystems compared to other islands.
- The primary threats to coral reefs in Hawai'i include ocean warming and acidification, as well as land-based pollution and coastal development, both of which are exacerbated by the tourism industry. Additionally, overfishing of fishes that eat seaweeds allows algae to overgrow corals.

Green Fee revenue would support reef conservation and restoration efforts to sustain areas trafficked by tourists. I urge you to pass this bill. Mahalo.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 9:08:27 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeanne Herbert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am a resident of Hawai'i and I support SB304. It is time for our visitors to partner with our residents in protecting our natural resources. Hawai'i taxpayers bear the burden of the costs to maintain our watersheds, our oceans and our 'aina. This is not fair when the visitor population is more than 9x the number of residents every year.

I do object to the start date of 7/1/50. Seriously? Twenty three years from now? That is unacceptable. That would represent twenty three more years of underfunded natural resource management. A two year start date would be more reasonable.

We need this bill to help provide funding for our natural resources, which are severely underfunded by at least 350 Million per year.

Mahalo,
Jeanne Herbert

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 9:25:35 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isidoro Rodriguez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the implementation of a green fee on all visitors to Hawaii and think it is insane that it has taken this long for such a thing to be considered. Hawaii is a sacred place. People should pay a green fee for the privilege of experiencing its wonders in order to preserve and protect them. It is the absolute least that could be done to help balance the scales when considering the effects of global tourism on its landscapes, waters, animals, peoples, etc. Make it law immediately.

Testimony in Support of SB304
House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Dyson Chee and I am submitting written testimony in **strong support of SB304** which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources **across the State**. As a youth living in Ala Moana, our environment, especially the ocean, has been an integral part of my family's history on O'ahu, and it is something that I hope to be able to protect for not just current generations, but for future generations to come.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them. With the green fee, I hope that our reefs, forests, and beaches can get the funding that they desperately need in order to be kept vibrant.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community that relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. Despite being a college youth dealing with school full-time, I am firmly committed to volunteering my time with local nonprofits that are dedicated yet overworked while protecting the very things a green fee would help to fund. These nonprofits and their volunteers form the heart of what allows many of our natural resources to continue to provide the recreation, food, and protection that we all enjoy. Yet, they are fighting an uphill battle that is getting worse in the face of increasing stressors such as climate change. **I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration of our home as soon as possible.**

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony, and I sincerely hope that you will vote to pass a green fee that will do justice for our community and the place we call home.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,
Dyson Chee

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 10:23:49 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalae Lopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Kala'e Lopes and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State. I am born and raised Waimanalo, but currently reside in Mililani. This issue is important to me because I have a background in environmental science and conservation work. Conservationists and Scientists constantly need to compete for funds on projects that are essential to Hawaii's future. With this fee implemented, more funding will be available for these important issues to be addressed.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them. I would like to see Hawaii's reefs and wetland areas cared for.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Kalae Lopes

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 11:13:14 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rosemary Bearden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Rosemary Bearden and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State. I live on Hawai'i Island and protecting Hawai'i's beautiful and unique ecosystems is one of the most important issues in our state for me.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them. I would especially like to see our coral reefs and the critical habitat for our endemic plants and birds protected and conserved with these funds.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Rosemary Bearden

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 12:18:42 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kyhl A Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Kyhl Austin and I live in Mō‘ili‘ili, O‘ahu. I am submitting written testimony in **strong support** of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State. I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa studying native invertebrate diversity and conservation for my dissertation. Hawai‘i is the extinction capital of the world, invasive species capital of the world, and endangered species capital -- a distinction we should all be **aware of** and **ashamed of**. One step we can take to rectify these problems is to invest more in conservation and community programs/involvement.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai‘i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them. Generated revenue from such a program should especially prioritize protecting endangered species, removing invasive species (including feral cats), and educational programs for the public.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai‘i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. For example, one non-profit I volunteer regularly with, Protect & Preserve Hawai'i, does outstanding work in Pia Valley on O'ahu removing invasive species, planting native plants, and educational and cultural outreach. I **urge** the committee to **pass** a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Kyhl Austin,

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 12:19:26 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Atkinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Scott Atkinson and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State.

Hawaii's long-term economic, social and cultural success depends on a healthy environment and tragically threats continue to grow. The funds that will be mobilized by this bill are essential to Hawaii's long-term prosperity.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are helping to protect the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale up work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state.

I urge the committee to pass this bill, which is critical to our future as a state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Scott R. Atkinson

Hawaii resident

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 12:38:51 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 1:24:32 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Giselle Kananiokakai Guerrero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304

House Committee on Tourism

Aloha e Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Kananiokakai Guerrero and I am submitting written testimony in **strong support of SB304** which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources **across the State. I am from Mākaha, O'ahu and have a bachelors degree in Animal Ecology. I have spent the past 4 years vigorously learning the importance of preserving and protecting native ecosystems for the flora and fauna that live in such habitats AND the benefits we gain form them as human beings. As environmental scientist we are aware and educated on the importance of preservation and conservation, all of the data is present which supports the need for conservation. But, the main issue that we face is lack of funding to financially support conservation efforts. With SB304 this will allow us to gain the funding that is needed for conservation without taxing the residents of Hawai'i. As we all are aware many Hawai'i residents are struggling financially with inflation. But our visitors who have the financial ability to come on vacation to our home are obviously not struggling financially and have the capability of paying the small green fee so they may access our beautiful home while giving back to the land. Not only does this green fee give visitors a greater responsibility to care for our land that they're guests of but financially aids the conservation, preservation and restoration of the beauty of Hawai'i that brings visitors here in the first place. Along with bringing awareness to our visitors to the dire need of conservation and preservation of Hawaiian ecosystems as we are the extinction capital of the world.**

An important factor to note with this bill is that we NEED educated, responsible scientists and conservationists to ensure that funding from the green fee properly goes to

conservation and restoration. We DO NOT need politicians uneducated in environmental science to be allocating funds as we have access to educated scientists who specialise in the field of conservation and environmental science who have the knowledge and experience to adequately allocate funding in an effective matter for conservation.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them. **We need to focus our efforts on eradicating invasive species and protecting our environment from further threats. On the invasive species front I believe we should focus on removal of strawberry guava from our forests, combating the avian influenza that is being spread through mosquitoes and humanely removing/culling feral cats and/or criminalising the feeding and protecting of feral cats as they are one of the worst invasive terrestrial mammals we have on O'ahu. I also believe we should focus on protecting our reef ecosystems as reefs provide shelter and nutrients for many marine species. A large threat we have to our reef ecosystems is nutrient pollution that comes from fertiliser runoff from agriculture which fuels algal growth that smothers reefs, finding a way to prevent this would be extremely beneficial to our reef ecosystems.**

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. **I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.**

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear

pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for taking the time to read and understand my testimony and the importance of SB304 to provide funding so we may protect and preserve the beautiful place we call home.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Kananiokakai Guerrero

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 2:18:48 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiloi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Tiloi Alapa and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai‘i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai‘i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai‘i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai‘i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,
Tiloi Alapa

Testimony in Support of SB304 House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Noriko O'Shea and I am submitting written testimony in **strong support of SB304** which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources **across the State**. I grew up on O'ahu and currently live in DC attending school. My fond memories of our precious 'aina have been increasingly devalued as tourism's impacts are exacerbated with every travel season. My wealthy peers at school view Hawai'i as nothing but their playground, to vacation and do whatever they please. A visitor green fee would provide at least *some* positive feedback from the inevitable tourism.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them. As we saw over the course of the pandemic closures and reopening of tourism, wildlife flourishes when it can take care of itself, when left alone. Endangered species and our waters require resources to protect from the threat of overuse.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. **I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.**

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo nui loa for considering this bill, and for taking active steps to preserve Hawai'i's sacredness for its own future. Passing a visitor green fee ASAP will see insurmountable benefits, especially as we approach the summer.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,
Noriko O'Shea

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 4:15:08 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alex Filardo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB304, a Hawai'i Impact Fee. Hawai'i's economy is fueled by the tourism industry and it is time that tourism directly gives back to our state-wide natural resources. It is extremely important that the funding goes directly back to the community-led organizations that work day-in and day-out to protect these resources. Additionally, this funding must go back to the entire state, not just select parks and resource regions.

Mahalo for your support.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 4:17:01 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makela Riordan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this!

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 5:15:55 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alzira Fernandes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304

House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Alzira Fernandes and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State. I am a current Master's of Landscape Architecture student at UH Mānoa. I am pursuing this career in order to mitigate the negative impacts of disappearing coastlines and habitats across the Hawaiian Islands, and this bill could certainly aid in this effort.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal

community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Thank you very much for understanding the urgency for support of SB304.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Alzira Fernandes

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 7:51:29 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucas Costner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304

House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Lucas Costner and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State. I am a resident of Honolulu, and would love to see the measure passed.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in

immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Lucas Costner

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 7:55:14 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tricia Dang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill for all the reasons stated. This has been a long time coming and we cannot wait any longer to put this fee into action. Hawaii and our natural environment need the funds to support improvements, mitigate damage, and educated visitors.

My only concern is people's willingness to pay the fixed \$50/year using an honor system. If this was created to model the federal parks annual visitor pass, the federal parks provide PAYMENT FEE OPTIONS.... a daily rate (lower cost) or the annual pass rate (higher cost). To state in section 171-c a flat, fixed rate of \$50 means that the majority of people will shake their head and move on, continuing on with their hike or park visit and NOT PAY... meaning the Hawaii does not receive the revenue that the financial models estimate because it is likely perceived as too costly for many.

RATHER, modify the financial commitment: (1) create 2 fee options - a daily visitor or annual visitor; capturing the individuals who would otherwise not pay \$50 unless it was enforced or prevented access, (2) allow BLNR the option to modify the pay structure in a way that allows them to achieve the present value that was used to determine the flat \$50 rate. Stating a flat \$50 fee without the space to be flexible in how that is achieved is problematic and should not be the starting point, or (3) create the opportunity for it to be collected upon arrival. This is the rare place with 1 option for arrival, air. It should be mandatory upon arrival....

If you want to charge \$50, this has to be collected upon arrival....AT THE AIRPORT, so visitors have no choice, which is what they do in many areas such as Peru and Cambodia.

Thank you for your time. Fingers crossed, Hawaii.

Tricia Dang

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 9:00:28 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charlotte Frank	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Charlotte Frank and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304, which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State. As a resident on the island of Oahu and someone who spends a lot of time in the ocean, I've seen first hand the impact visitors have on our natural resources. Our coastal ecosystems are fragile. When corals are trampled on and kicked, when harmful sunscreens coats our reefs, when wildlife loses habitat, or when our dune systems are constantly threatened by rising seas due to climate change, passing a green fee shouldn't be an option, it is a necessity! Hiking trails are over run and eroding, beaches are littered with microplastics, waterways are full of bacteria from runoff, and natural and cultural systems are threatened by visitors. These escalating visitor impacts, climate change and intensifying threats to the State's ecosystems, there is an immediate need for innovative conservation financing solutions to ensure the sustainability of these systems.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here which include regions within State parks and outside them. I would like to see our reefs, forests, endangered species, waterways and beaches funded by this bill.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Thank you for accepting my testimony. It is imperative that we pass this measure for the sake of our ecosystems, our cultural resources, and our economy--now and for future generations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Charlotte Frank

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 9:06:27 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Conlon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and committee members,

As a concerned citizen working in conservation, I'm writing in strong support of SB304 to initiate a green fee program to offset the consequences of tourism on Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources. SB304 is necessary to ensuring tourists are paying for the protection and preservation of the places they visit across the islands. We need more funding to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and livelihoods dependent on these resources. It is imperative that we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents. SB304 provides a clear pathway to protecting and restoring Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo nui loa,

Elizabeth Conlon

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 9:31:56 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Diez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Daniel Diez and I am testifying in strong support of SB304. I feel this bill will better support the protection and restoration of Hawaii's greatest assets, our natural and cultural resources. As an active outdoorsman, this has a significant personal impact. Over the last 7 years as a Hawaii resident I've witnessed successes in the protection of native species (i.e. the Kuliouou ridge hike restoration) and this bill would extend greater resources to similar groups and projects. While residents support these efforts through our taxes, charitable donations, and volunteerism this bill would allow our guests to Hawaii to contribute towards maintaining the natural resources and culture they came to experience.

Expanding the funding for conservation efforts is not only the right thing to do, it's also economically beneficial. As Hawaii's culture and beauty attracts visitors from around the world, the contributions from this green fee would serve as a continued investment to bolster tourism.

The urgency to protect our land, oceans and wildlife has never been greater and enacting this green fee would provide significant support for local organizations taking on these initiatives. I believe it of the utmost importance that this bill is passed and I thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Dan

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 9:43:18 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bret Mossman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha chairperson and representatives of the committee,

Please approve this bill. Hawaii's watersheds, beaches, reefs, and native species have a critical need for increased investment and this bill will help heal decades of neglect and take from our natural resources.

Mahalo,

Bret Nainoa Mossman.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2023 11:45:36 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorraine Waianuhea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Lorraine Waianuhea and I am submitting written testimony in **strong support of SB304** which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State.

I am a resident of O‘ahu and have seen the destruction of Hawai‘i’s natural areas due to overuse and insufficient maintenance first hand. Damage to our trails, reefs and forests is not sustainable for residents or visitors, although visitors account for a large proportion of foot traffic and impact to these areas. As users of Hawai‘i’s natural resources, tourists should be required to give back to the management of those resources through a green fee program.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai‘i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

We currently face the extinctions of endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai‘i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai‘i throughout the state. Currently, non-profits on O‘ahu such as Protect and Preserve Hawai‘i, 808 Cleanups, and Mālama Maunaloa must in a way compete against each other for winning grants from the State, even though they all are mālama ‘āina organizations. A green fee would not change this funding structure but it would greatly increase the amount of funding available and allow more non-profits to continue the important work they do for our community. The money from a green fee should also fund more permanent jobs in trail

maintenance at the State level, so that trails in Hawai'i can be made safer to reduce the number of injuries, rescues, and deaths that occur.

I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Lorraine Waianuhe

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 7:38:30 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doreen Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304 House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Doreen Ho and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai‘i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai‘i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai‘i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Doreen Ho

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 8:05:16 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roy Morris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB304 SD2 as it is a step forward addressing visitors impacts to these island ecosystem's. Visitors should be more than willing to support these areas with a fee when visiting. I hope this bill is supported by a diverse audience that realizes the value of these Hawaiian natural areas.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 8:21:20 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Morin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and committee members,

I'm in support of SB304 SD2.

Thank you,
Noel Morin
Climate, Sustainability, and Resilience Advocate
Hilo, Hawaii

Testimony in Support of SB304 House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Jack Kittinger, and I am testifying as an individual in strong support of SB304, which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to conserve and restore our precious natural and cultural resources.

I have personally spear-headed an initiative focused on establishing a visitor green fee here in Hawai'i for more than 5 years. Working with a set of partners from the conservation and tourism sectors, we have assessed the key policy, legal, and financing elements for a Hawai'i-based visitor green fee program, helping inform proposals in this bill and others like it.

SB304 would establish a comprehensive visitor impact fee program that increases our conservation funding, creates green jobs in our communities, and preserves our natural resources for future generations. Further, the bill can enable our resource managers in DLNR and other agencies, to work together with community leaders and nonprofit organizations, to scale the important work we must do to meet the challenges of our "twin" biodiversity and climate crises.

Recent polling indicates that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources.

Through my work as a conservation professional for over 15 years, I've had the privilege to observe visitor green fee programs in other areas of the world. The success of these programs, including the support of the visitor themselves, is contingent on stakeholder engagement and transparency in order to foster trust and accountability. We must have a diverse set of stakeholders from relevant sectors contributing to the decision-making process for this level of funding. **For this reason, I support the inclusion of the Environmental Legacy Commission, made up of members from diverse areas of expertise.** While DLNR may alone hold the decision-making roles for the disbursement of visitor impact funding - with appropriate oversight from the legislature and executive branch - the Commission is a vital way to ensure that a broad constituency of voices help shape how this funding is deployed, for maximum impact. The legislature can put in place the right governance mechanisms for the Commission to ensure it functions in the most appropriate way, as an advisory group. I articulated this in a recent op-ed in Civil Beat:

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/02/green-fee-an-opportunity-to-invest-in-what-matters-most/>

I want to thank the committee for hearing this bill. The resources at stake are paramount to Hawai'i, and deeply intertwined with our way of life. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,
Dr. Jack Kittinger

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 8:42:14 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in **strong support of SB304** which is a much needed measure to offset tourist and visitor impacts, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources on our 'aina through a green fee program.

My name is Kimberly De Souza, I live in Kona on Hawai'i island and, especially over the past 10 years, I have seen coral reefs and natural ecosystems degraded by tourists who are happy to visit but don't seem to need to worry about the repercussions of their actions after they leave. I am taking the time to support this bill as I feel very strongly about how necessary it is.

Working in the conservation sector, it is evident that there is an extreme lack of funding for conservation and cultural programs (not just in Hawai'i but the entire world). Conservation groups are struggling to combat so many factors which are constantly threatening our native ecosystems on land and in the sea. A large part of these factors is tourism and while it is understandable that Hawai'i's economy relies heavily on tourism, it is inevitable that the public's perception of tourists is that of carelessness, it is easy to view tourists as people who come, take, and leave. This green fee will not only help change the public's perspectives about tourists but will also help to bolster and support conservation efforts across the state by providing the much needed additional funding.

This has become an increasingly important issue in Hawai'i which is already known as the extinction capital of the world and with sea level rise affecting our disappearing coastlines, we are going to need help in order to begin the much needed restoration of our home.

This measure is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, experience, and enjoy during their time here. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. The impacts of tourists on our natural and cultural resources is undeniable.

This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations, and beyond. This fee has been needed for many years now and I am extremely happy to see that it is finally being proposed and I am hoping it will pass unanimously.

I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify,

Kimberly De Souza

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 8:43:14 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elena-Marie Waianuhea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Elena-Marie Waianuhea and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State. I am a Native Hawaiian from the moku of Hilo on MokuoKeawe. I have seen time and time again the negative impacts that tourism often has on our environment and our native community. Often times, the tourists who come to Hawaii do not have the same islander perspective as us local people and do not treat Hawaii as if it were their home or even with the respect it deserves. The green fee would help to restore this imbalance that has persisted for generations in our islands and I think it would be an integral step in revitalizing the community's trust in ethical tourism, our environment, and people.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear

pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify and your consideration,

Elena-Marie Waianuhe

**Testimony in Support of SB304
House Committee on Tourism**

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Christen Mia Ebert and I am submitting written testimony in **strong support of SB304** which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources **across the State**. I live here on Oahu, in Laie. I am currently a university student studying Tourism and Hospitality Management. Getting SB304 passed is very important to me because it will prove that we respect and appreciate our 'āina, and are doing what we can to give back. I have taken both Hawaiian Studies classes, and Pacific Island classes. One thing I have learned is that as residents, we have a responsibility to be guardians of our ocean and land. On the islands, it underpins the culture, food, livelihoods, and natural economies. Mālama 'āina expresses our kuleana to care for the land and to properly manage the resources and gifts it provides. We can be stewards by taking the steps needed to ensure all endeavors to protect the land are funded and supported.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai'i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. **I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.**

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Our natural resources here in Hawai'i are unique and precious. As an employee in a Guest Services Department in the Tourism Industry, I know that our guests want to give back. This is the perfect opportunity.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,
Christen Mia Ebert

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:03:38 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Geyer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB1162 which would help ensure visitors pay their fair share towards the impact they have on Hawaii's environment. This would also result in more money being kept in Hawaii's economy, creating stable, good jobs, along with restoring and preserving the thing that most visitors come to Hawaii to see, the beautiful parks and trails and natural ecosystems. This is why a visitor green fee is long overdue, and especially given the additional challenges that climate change is starting to present, our natural resources will need additional support.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:15:12 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tiare lawrence	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support a green fee. On Maui we are constantly overwhelmed with tourism in our everyday lives. Charging visitors will help generate the funding needed to properly manage our resources responsibly. With climate change and sea level rise, the state must look at managed retreat and purchasing properties along the shore to maintain public access and to protect our beaches for future generations. These funds may help to support that effort.

Mahalo

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:32:41 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tahiti Ahsam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha no kakou,

My name is Tahiti Ahsam and I am writing this testimony in support of the "green fee" SB304 SD2. I am born and raised on the Island of Maui where I reside to this day and have seen the negative impacts caused by over tourism to the island's land, local communities and natural resources. Being a Hawaiian with such strong love and connection to the islands of Hawai'i, it pains me to see the damage that is caused by prioritizing the tourism industry and welcoming an overwhelming amount of visitors. Our natural resources of the Hawaiian Islands is something that, if damaged, can be unrepairable and lost forever.

Having had volunteer experience working with various farms and community organizations that put efforts into stewarding and restoring the land, I have seen that such organizations lack the proper funding and government support to continue on with their projects and stewardship efforts. It seems evident that the tourism industry brings in a large sum of money to the islands, yet community and state programs that strive to protect our land and natural resources don't get as much funding as they should to be successful in their endeavors.

Hawaii's natural resources, beaches, national parks, hiking trails, etc are marketed to tourists as selling points to come to the islands as a desirable vacation destination and has become such heavily visited areas. Being that this is so, these very vital places and resources should be prioritized and protected not just for the benefit of the tourism industry, but for those that reside here and are native to the land. With this being said, charging Hawaii visitors with the green fee will benefit the protection of Hawaii's land, natural resources, and local communities as a whole for the better.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:38:44 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elijah Ebert	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304

House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Elijah Ebert and I am a university student and Hawaii resident here in Oahu. I am submitting written testimony in strong support of bill SB304. If it were passed into law, this bill would help provide funds to restore Hawaii's lands all across the state. The land, sea, reefs, and forests clearly need our help. During my time here I have witnessed many impactful state and community programs working to restore and maintain the beauty of the Hawaiian Islands and its wildlife. There are so many passionate, talented individuals with a desire to give to the land and ensure it is still capable of giving when they pass stewardship on to their children. The biggest limiting factor for them is not their willingness or capabilities, but rather funding. This visitor green fee program is the best way to provide these people in programs with the funding necessary to have **multiple times the impact** that they have now. They are very talented at allocating funds in the best way possible. I believe these funds would be used extremely well.

I am a tour guide and operations supervisor in the tourism industry here in Hawaii. Many tours I have taken stretched multiple hours and were with individual parties. I have had the chance to spend one-on-one time with guests from all over the world. I've gotten to know them, built relationships with them, and kept in contact with many. Whatever love they had for the islands they had before coming increases dramatically while they're here. If done right, this visitor impact fee would give them a chance to have a meaningful positive impact on the islands and surrounding reefs and waters. Sustainable tourism uplifts everyone involved and this visitor impact fee would be a huge step forward in that direction.

We need to make this change now. The land that has been so good to us depends on it. If you pass this measure, much needed restoration will begin and generations will benefit in the years to come.

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to testify before the committee and do so with deep love for the people and land of Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Elijah James Ebert

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:40:34 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nyree Hulme	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304

House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Nyree and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State. I currently live in Honoka‘a on Hawai‘i island but have lived for more than 22 years in the state. During those years I have seen the increase in visitor traffic and have noticed the detrimental effects the increased traffic has had on some of the most beautiful places in our islands. In some cases the harm is caused by inconsiderate people and in other cases it is caused by infrastructure that is just not built for the current volume of visitors. I studied conservation and ecology at UH so I know how precious and unique our island flora and fauna are. We are a biodiversity hotspot and worthy of protection. We need to create a new kind of tourism that is founded on respect for the land and education about how to protect it while enjoying all that it has to offer.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai‘i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them. This money could go on to fund programs that mitigate the impact of the visitors and improve the infrastructure at our public parks. Most importantly the funds could go toward removing invasive species and restoring native ecosystems.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai‘i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Thank you for this step in the right direction. This bill is not perfect but we can not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. This begins the process of rectifying decades of harm caused by an industry that we rely so heavily on.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Nyree V Hulme

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:42:27 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catherine Orlans	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Under Hawai'i law, the State and its agencies are obligated to preserve and protect the exercise of traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights. I oppose bill as is because there is no exemption in the deifnition of resident vs. visitor for people of Native Hawaiian ancestry. If this bill passes, the state is failing to protect Native Hawaiian rights, by not adding in an exemption for visitors of Native Hawaiian ancestry.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:44:11 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Avtalya Glickman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Avtalya Glickman, I was born and raised on the island of Maui. Growing up on an island, we grow up with a deep connection to the land and environment. I have seen many changes over my life and I've only been alive 22 years. One of the biggest impacts I have seen over the years is overcrowding and overtourism.

We do so much to please the tourists, we build over precious, beautiful and diverse ecosystems, we build on beaches, we exploit natural resources like water, we take them to beautiful places that were once empty and are now crowded. In light of all of this, I believe this bill is a way for the tourists to give back to our island communities that have been overrun. For far too long our natural resources have been depleted, walked all over, and overexposed. For many who come here, they don't understand how important these places are to us. How the forest provides our water, how the reefs provide food and nutrients. Everything works together so that our lives on these islands can be supported. We can't keep taking and not giving back.

We have crammed so many people on this island for so long because the demand is so high. Everybody wants to come to Hawai'i but Hawai'i can only take so much. The green fee will not only bring in another avenue of income for environmental programs, but it will also help to raise awareness within the tourist communities about environmental importance and give them another view of our natural resources and how they play a role in our island communities.

I know that there is no way we can stop tourists from coming here, but this is a way for them to help us out a little instead of it always being a one way street.

Mahalo for taking mine and so many other testimonies into consideration.

Sincerely,

Avtalya Glickman

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:44:57 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB304 SD2, which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program, and distribute funds to implement solutions for state and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources. This measure is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here.

As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. The impacts of tourists on our natural and cultural resources is undeniable. A recent local study confirmed that Hawai'i coral reefs attract visitors which then exacerbate their degradation. This is true for our other resources as well.

As the endangered species capital of the world, as an island with disappearing coastlines to sea level rise, and as a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would generate the needed funding to meet our conservation, sustainability, and climate needs as a region, and provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i.

The success of this program must include buy-in from tourists, residents, the tourism industry, and conservation experts, and is contingent upon effective outreach and transparency of the program. We must have a diverse set of stakeholders from relevant sectors contributing to the decision-making process for this level of funding. For this reason, I would like this measure to keep the Environmental Legacy Commission, made up of members from diverse areas of expertise.

I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:57:07 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lukanicole Zavas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304 | House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Luka, and I am submitting written testimony in **strong support** of SB304. This bill would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State.

I am blessed to have grown up under the loving gaze of the Ko‘olau’s, in the ‘ili of ‘Āhuimanu on the mokupuni of O‘ahu. The people that reside within these islands, ma uka to ma kai, such as the plants, birds, rocks, and humans, have guided me along my journey to understanding what is needed to care for them properly. The native species of Hawai‘i have an equal claim to prospering on these islands - their ancestral home. We are at a tipping point for many species and landscapes; unfortunately, those whose mission is to care for Hawai‘i face funding shortages and cannot achieve their goals.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai‘i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors pay their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including regions within State parks and outside of them. The funds raised from this fee will boost our ability to care for the wetlands that support the ‘alae ‘ula, ‘alae ke‘oke‘o, and ‘ae‘o. In addition, restore and enhance the native forests for the manu that live within their branches - such as the ‘i‘iwi, ‘ākohekohe, ‘elapaio, and ‘akikiki.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors pay their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai‘i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community relying on healthy oceans and forests to survive, we must implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. This fee would support the restoration and enhancement efforts of organizations caring for the homes of our manu 'āina. The Liveable Hawai'i Kai Hui, Kaiaulu 'o Kahalu'u, Ka Ulu a Kalana, and the Watershed Partnerships, to name a few. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration for our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

We are at a tipping point. We must do something now to ramp up our conservation efforts - and the best way is to support those with an established pilina with the space. These communities need funding to hire hands, purchase equipment, and manage day-to-day expenses. Support passing SB304. Visitors to Hawai'i should kōkua in protecting Hawai'i, and the Green Fee is the best first step.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Lukanicole Zavas

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 10:40:39 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Madison Masek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB304 as a broad based visitor/tourist fee, which would support all organizations protecting Hawai'i's reefs, beaches, coast, and forests.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 11:12:40 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chaleia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Chaleia Tamashiro and I am Kānaka 'Ōiwi . Oahu is home for me and for many of us as Hawaiian people. This Green fee is the bare minimum of what the state should be doing for the livelihood of our island . All of the control is in the wrong hands . Abusing and using the island for only its monetarial advantages . It's pilaū to see our 'Āina used as a playground for the rich. Although traveling to Hawaii is very expensive, this fee will let people know how serious we are about conserving our beautiful islands . Tourists are not educated enough about Hawaii's history and cultural practices . Instead , it's used as a marketing tool to encourage more and more people to visit Hawaii, and eventually decide to move here; Contributing to the even bigger problem of gentrification. The Aloha we cultivated is engraved in our bones . The concept of Mālama 'Āina is so important to us of Hawaiian ancestry and for those who were born and raised here . Not enough people are coming together to change the fate of our island. So taxing visitors for their inconsideration will help a lot with the funding of making REAL DIFFERENCES within our community . Most times, visitors come here with the expectation of receiving nothing but the royal treatment . But they have to remember that this is not just paradise for their bucket list vacation , but a home of Native people who actually have a soul connection to their island . A home to people who's Ancestors have been fighting for their opportunity to continue to call this place home , for centuries . Till this day , we are exhausting ourselves just trying to send a message to those who don't know , that we kanaka are doing all we can to protect our cultural spaces. Unpaid . Doing the jobs of those who are in office , who's job it is to do what we are doing . We don't treat the 'Āina the same way the people in the mainland treat their land. We understand that the roots are much deeper , and we learned to value the only thing that provides everything for us instead of valuing \$ which in this day , can get us whatever we want . So if \$ is the only way we can make the world go round and take care of our resources , then \$ is what we need to ask of our visitors when they come here . Mahālo

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 12:10:53 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Green fee is popular. It makes visitors who use resources contribute.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 1:57:57 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kyleigh Kuball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB304

House Committee on Tourism

Aloha Chair Quinlan, Vice Chair Hussey-Burdick, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Kyleigh Kuball, and I am submitting written testimony in strong support of SB304 which would help offset visitor impacts through a visitor green fee program and distribute funds to implement solutions for State and community programs working to restore our natural and cultural resources across the State.

I live on O‘ahu, and this issue is important to me because while I am only in my 20s, I have seen a dramatic decline in that short time of the natural resources on this island. This is concerning given that without these resources, the islands will have no tourism, and the impacts of the loss of irrigation, freshwater, and corals are well studied (Ceasar & van Beukering 2004; Eversole 2014). If we can utilize the huge surge of tourism to fund the care of the watersheds, coral reefs, and forests, this will be a win for both the tourists that come to Hawai‘i for its beauty and those that live here and depend on the islands' resources. I am taking the time to support this measure because we need this funding.

It has been found that 95% of Hawai‘i voters believe it is our kuleana to care for the ocean for future generations, and 89% agree we must increase our investment in our lands, waters, wildlife, and natural and cultural resources. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, which include regions within State parks and outside of them.

I want to see our watersheds, coral reefs, and endangered species funded so that they can persist. In each ahupua‘a on O‘ahu, nonprofits and organizations exist to take care of the natural resources and tailor their approach to the needs of the ahupua‘a. We need to fund these organizations so that they can continue to maintain our natural resources and work with the communities to educate and take care of those resources. This way, workers for both state and nonprofits are not spread too thin but, by working together, have a large reach across the islands to make sure Hawai‘i will continue to provide for tourists and those who live here.

We currently face endangered species, disappearing coastlines, and dying coral reefs. SB304 is a critical step to ensuring visitors are paying their fair share for the places they use, visit, and experience during their time here, including these resources. As an island region, Hawai'i is in immediate need of additional resources to conserve and protect our ecosystems, native species, coastlines, and the community livelihoods that depend on these resources. As a coastal community who relies on healthy oceans and forests to survive, it is imperative we implement a visitor green fee program this year to protect these resources before it's too late.

This measure would provide a sustained funding source to enable our community groups, such as nonprofit organizations and DLNR, to implement solutions and scale work already being done to preserve Hawai'i throughout the state. I strongly support state and nonprofits working together to broaden the area of impact. Without collaboration, there is no way maintenance will be possible for our natural resources. This work needs to be present on every island and in every ahupua'a and watershed; there needs to be connectivity in natural resource management, otherwise only negative impacts will be seen. I urge the committee to pass a visitor green fee program this session, in order to begin the needed restoration of our home as soon as possible.

There is undeniable support for a visitor green fee program by residents, and this is the year to implement a solution of this scale to make a difference for future generations. This bill is a clear pathway to protecting, restoring, and enhancing Hawai'i for our local communities and the visitors we share it with, for future generations and beyond.

Thank you for taking the time to review this testimony. Please support SB304 and distribute funds among the state and community programs to protect and maintain our natural resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Kyleigh Kuball

Cesar, H. S., & van Beukering, P. (2004). Economic valuation of the coral reefs of Hawai'i. *Pacific Science*, 58(2), 231-242.

Eversole, D. (2014). Climate change impacts in Hawai'i: a summary of climate change and its impacts on Hawai'i's ecosystems and communities.

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 6:26:15 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Estigoy-Kahoonei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the charging of fees for visitors to help off set the impact that is left behind. We must protect the treasures and natural resoureces of these islands and if the visitor impact fee wil l help to restore some of the damages done by travelers then I fully support it. Applying a fee says that our land is valuable and visitors need to know that the cost to maintain paradise is far from free

SB-304-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 8:15:15 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/14/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brittni Brooks	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Hawaii needs to protect the irreplaceable ecosystem and wildlife. Hawaii is the endangered species capitol of the world. The coral reefs sustain all of life here in Hawaii. Please do everything possible to protect the reef, clearing out invasive plants, cleaning the plastic problem lining the highways, and protecting the declining native forest birds. I hope this money goes to building more fences to protect native plants and animals. I hope the money goes to informing tourists to respect the honu, monk seals, etc. I also support funding the cat sanctuary which should be modeled off of the sanctuary on Lana'i. Mahalo.