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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

LATE

February 13, 2023
1:20 PM
State Capitol, Room

S.B. 421
RELATING TO CARBON OFFSETS

Senate Committees on Transportation and Culture and the Arts and Agriculture and Environment

The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports** the intent of S.B. 421 but offers comments on S.B. 421 which establishes a process for the DOT to assist persons traveling by air to or from airports in Hawaii in the purchase of carbon offsets.

The DOT requests S.B. 421 provide further guidelines regarding carbon providers, specifically, 1) Is the intent to have carbon providers be Hawaii centric or can they be global, and 2) Do carbon providers need to be non-profit organizations?

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



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
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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 Senate Committees on
TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
&
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 421
RELATING TO CARBON OFFSETS**

Senate Bill 421 Establishes procedures for the Department of Transportation to assist and enable a person to voluntarily purchase a verified carbon offset for carbon dioxide emissions resulting from the person's air travel to or from an airport in the State. **The Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this bill.**

The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission consists of a multi-jurisdictional effort between 20 different departments, committees, and counties. Given its geography, air travel is a necessity of life in the Hawaiian islands, whether interisland, interstate or international. According to the state's latest Greenhouse Gas Emission Report, Hawaii is on track to meet its emissions goals. However, since this accounting does not include emissions from air travel, which are a significant component of overall transportation emissions in Hawaii, as Hawaii progresses towards its goal to sequester more carbon than it produces by 2045, a carbon offset program will undoubtedly be a crucial component of mitigation. Senate Bill 421 attempts to address some of the emissions from air travel. The Commission, in keeping with promoting ambitious strategies for climate change, would encourage the consideration of offsets for all air travel.

The Commission respectfully suggests that the Department of Transportation work with the Department of Land and Natural Resources on the program to ensure local credits are taken into consideration.

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

SB-421

Submitted on: 2/11/2023 5:16:00 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/13/2023 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Testifying for Climate Protectors Hawaii	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The idea of carbon offsets is attractive, but unfortunately the reality is disappointing. Companies, including many of the largest carbon polluters such as airlines, are using carbon offsets without verifying that the carbon sequestration measures actually are being implemented. The well-intentioned idea of carbon offsets is being abused to "greenwash" corporate brands and as a "feel good" measure for air travelers.

The uncomfortable reality is that air travel is currently TERRIBLE for the climate, with or without purchasing offsets. The climate impact of aviation is not just from carbon emissions from fossil fuels; water vapor in aircraft exhaust accounts for the largest share of greenhouse gases from aviation. One flight to/from a continent to/from Hawaii uses up an individual's carbon budget for a year! Buying carbon offsets does not change this unpleasant reality.

DOT should not participate in facilitating offsets that are currently a charade. Please defer this bill!

Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawaii (by Ted Bohlen)



Environmental Caucus of
The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Energy & Climate Action Committee

Monday, February 13, 2023, 1:20 pm

Senate Committees on Transportation and Culture & Arts and on Agriculture and the Environment

SENATE BILL 421 – RELATING TO CARBON OFFSETS

Position: Strong Opposition

Me ke Aloha, Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice-Chairs Inouye and Richards, and members of the Senate Committees on Transportation and Culture & Arts and on Agriculture and the Environment:

SB421 proposes that the Department of Transportation assist the purchase of carbon offsets for carbon emissions resulting from air travel to or from Hawaii.

The Energy & Climate Action Committee strongly opposes postponing the curtailing of greenhouse gas emissions and draws attention to two major studies on this matter. The most obvious is the now ubiquitous world-wide Code Red declared by the world's climate scientists for reducing by half the current level of greenhouse gas emissions, to avoid losing the possibility of regaining any control over the climate change, which is now at the cusp of spinning out of control. No one can disregard this, as we have already seen the cost in billions of dollars, thousands of lives, and tremendous destruction of physical and natural environments, as the result of runaway mega-wildfires, more frequent and ferocious hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods, heat waves and drought. Nonetheless, we continue to increase greenhouse gas emissions, even at the pace of constructing clean renewable energy sources, and the global annual average temperature continues to rise toward the point of no return.

In this light, carbon offsets are literally unthinkable, because they assume we have plenty of time for "offsets" to equalize emissions. The truth is that greenhouse gases accumulate in the upper atmosphere for 300-1,000 years, while the only drawdown sources we have are being clear-cut, not only reducing that drawdown but triggering additional soil carbon emissions, and thirdly are being burned with worse emissions than coal, and at an unprecedented rate. Desperately needed replacement forests take perhaps 50 years to break even on the carbon cycle before doing any drawdown. To call these "offsets" is clearly a complete misunderstanding of reality and a fool's errand.

Second, a significant scientific study often referenced by the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) on air travel emissions reveals that transpacific air routes at high elevation compound the impacts of the emissions in the troposphere, speeding the climate effects of these transmissions beyond those of great concern on the ground. These even include water vapor, which is harmless in the lower atmosphere but magnifies the climate warming properties of other contaminants at high altitude. The greenhouse gas emissions generated by flights to and from Hawaii equal twice the total ground emissions produced here in Hawaii. This study found that an allowable annual per-capita "carbon emission budget" for each human on Earth, in order to maintain the desired ceiling on emissions, is blown through in one round trip for each traveler to Hawaii from visiting countries.

Finally, as the global average temperature keeps rising, the functioning of leaf stomata to draw in carbon dioxide and give us oxygen is compromised – it becomes less efficient, for less drawdown. We are cutting off our long-term recovery with every day's additional emissions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to address this matter.

/s/ Charley Ice & Ted Bohlen, Co-Chairs, Energy and Climate Action Committee
Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party



To: The Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts (TCA)
and
The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)
From: Sherry Pollack, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Monday, February 13, 2023, 1:20pm

In strong opposition to SB421

Aloha Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye and Richards, and Committee members,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org **strongly opposes SB421**

SB421 states the legislature finds that climate change is the most pressing issue of our time. 350Hawaii fully agrees. The planet faces an existential climate crisis and we must act now.

This bill also states the legislature recognizes that air travelers are “increasingly aware” of the climate change implications of their travel and notes that ease of purchasing offsets may have the effect of enhancing the desirability of travel to Hawaii. However, while carbon offset schemes claim to compensate for emissions with no cost to the climate – they don’t actually do that. They are simply an accounting trick.

According to the UN IPCC report, if we are serious about averting catastrophic planetary changes, we need to reduce emissions by 45 percent by 2030. Trees planted today can’t grow fast enough to achieve this goal. So even if the purchased offset is ‘verified,’ a newly planted tree can take as many as 20 years to capture the amount of CO2 that a carbon offset scheme promises. And during those decades we have to hope that this tree will survive the droughts, wildfires, and tree diseases that are occurring because of the global warming humans continue to cause by our on-going greenhouse gas emissions.

Moreover, new research shows that the Earth’s overheated climate will alter forests at a global scale. The study suggests that by 2040 forests will take up only half as much CO2 from the atmosphere as they do now, if global temperatures keep rising at the present pace, and that trees will start to exhale more CO2 than they can take in through photosynthesis.

It is important to also note that Indigenous rights organizations have labeled carbon offsets as “a further act of colonization,” stating that carbon offsets are a false solution to climate change, and that these carbon offset schemes create many negative impacts on the rights and livelihoods of women, Indigenous peoples and local communities.

Bottomline, carbon offsets are a distraction from the real solution to climate change, which is to reduce our carbon emissions. Offsetting simply allows companies like airlines to avoid taking meaningful action

on their carbon emissions and to continue with their unsustainable behavior while shifting their responsibility for the climate onto the consumer. These carbon offsets then allow individuals to feel better about polluting without actually doing anything about those emissions.

If we're serious about tackling climate change, there is only one answer to the problem: reducing our emissions. And that will mean moving away from a tourist economy to one that is more diversified and resilient.

Polluting industries have helped to "fuel" the denial that has enabled blocking any meaningful action to confront global warming. As a result, we have lost precious time and are now in the midst of a climate crisis. We cannot afford to waste more time on PR schemes. Our only recourse now is to act swiftly and boldly to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions lest we steal our children's future. We must continue to do our part to avoid the most devastating impacts of climate change.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

SB-421

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 7:12:08 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/13/2023 1:20:00 PM

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

Comments:

I oppose this Bill.

SB-421

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 6:55:24 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/13/2023 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Todd Rentz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please provide peer reviewed studies regarding this climate change agenda that will support this bill.

SB-421

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 11:18:54 AM

Testimony for TCA on 2/13/2023 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Thompson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am strongly opposed to this bill. Why would anyone want to volunteer to pay carbon credits? We do not need any further taxes or oversight.

Instead, innovation should be encouraged and rewarded. Numerous patents have been suppressed long enough and electric vehicles and additional charging stations are not going to solve anything and will create a land fill nightmare. Here is just one example of many options to get away from emissions and would allow our economy to flourish.

<https://patents.justia.com/inventor/stanley-meyer>

C02 emissions and global warming is based on junk science that has been promoted by the United Nations and World Economic Forum in order to implement Agenda 2030 which intends to further enslave humanity and widen the gap between the haves and have nots under the guise of "sustainability goals". Former executive director who worked at the UN for two decades, Calin Georgescu of Romania has testified that the UN is controlled by criminals who use it to enrich themselves, and enslave humanity. <https://stopworldcontrol.com/unevent/>

It is widely known C02 feeds plants which in turn produce Oxygen, everyone learned this in school decades ago. The basis for these carbon credit system is unfounded and a draconian power grab by the oligarchs.

Mahalo for your service,

Donna Thompson

SB-421

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 8:44:53 PM

Testimony for TCA on 2/13/2023 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tawn Keeney	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony regarding SB421

Please look carefully at who is testifying against this bill. I think you will find that most of the members of the Democratic Party Environmental Caucus are against this bill. I think you will find that 350Hawaii is against it. The notion that by creating Carbon Offsets the Global Warming from greenhouse gas emissions is being diminished significantly has been discredited. Carbon offsets have mostly been used as a greenwashing mechanism. The notion that now we will use only 'verified' carbon offsets is of no value. These offsets have been 'verified' since the beginning of the carbon offset scheme a decade ago. This is merely a method to allow individuals to assuage their guilt and keep on flying and companies to keep pouring carbon into the skies and government to do nothing about global warming that would damage their economies. Nobody believes that Carbon Offsets are a good thing anymore.

Tawn Keeney MD