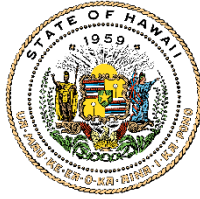


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

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

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**Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
WATER & LAND**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2024  
9:30 AM**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 415 and Via Videoconference**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 214  
AND  
HOUSE RESOLUTION 194  
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO  
COLLABORATE WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS;  
LANDOWNERS; AND STAKEHOLDERS TO PROTECT, RESTORE, AND MANAGE  
THE WEST MAUI WETLANDS AND WETLANDS STATEWIDE**

House Concurrent Resolution 214 and House Resolution 194 request the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) collaborate with Federal, State, and County governments, landowners, and stakeholders to protect, restore, and manage the West Maui wetlands and wetlands statewide. **The Department supports these measures.**

Hawai'i's wetlands provide critical habitat for many endemic bird and plant species, support subsistence food practices, and protect coral reefs and nearshore fisheries from sediment runoff. Coastal wetlands also serve as critical first lines of defense for sea level rise and storm surge inundation and for capturing sediment and runoff pollution from rainfall flood events. While coastal wetlands were once abundant features of Hawai'i's coastlines, over 30% have been lost to development and stream diversion. Wetland protection and restoration will improve degraded ahupua'a, restore green spaces, protect against wildfires, minimize climate impacts, increase community resilience, support the cultivation of healthy traditional food crops, and provide essential habitat for the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

This measure aligns with the Department's mission to protect, manage, and restore natural and cultural resources in collaboration with the people of Hawai'i. The Department commits to assisting in this effort by collaborating with other jurisdictional entities on a statewide effort to restore wetlands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of these measures.

**HCR-214**

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 8:17:24 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ted Bohlen	Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!



The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra  
923 Nu'uuanu Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96817

Tel (808) 537-4508  
Fax (808) 545-2019  
nature.org/HawaiiPalmyra

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy  
Support for House Concurrent Resolution 214; House Resolution 194  
Committee on Water and Land  
March 19, 2024, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 430 & Videoconference**

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) **supports** HCR 214/HR 194, requesting the Department of Land and Natural Resources to collaborate with federal, state and county governments, landowners, and stakeholders to protect, restore, and manage the West Maui wetlands and wetlands statewide.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources alone does not have the resources to adequately address the challenges created by the wildfires. Watershed restoration, invasive species management, climate change adaptation, water management, soil management, protection of biodiversity and other forms of mālama 'āina are all critical to protecting, restoring and managing West Maui wetlands and wetlands across the state. In addition, wetlands management and wildfire prevention efforts require a strong and prepared workforce to achieve our shared goals.

Hawai'i has a strong and successful history of partnership between public agencies, private sector organizations including non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders to meet the needs of our environment and community. Hawai'i needs the combined expertise and personnel found through collaborations to ensure that we can increase wildfire preparedness, mitigation, prevention and recovery to assist the department in deploying solutions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HCR 214/HR 194.

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