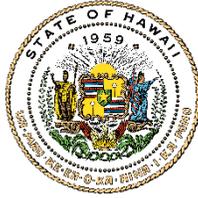


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
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 Committees on
WATER & LAND
and
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Tuesday, February 11, 2025
10:00 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 411 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 85
RELATING TO THE LAND CONSERVATION FUND

House Bill 85 proposes to remove the \$5.1 million cap on the distribution of conveyance tax collections to the Land Conservation Fund. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports the proposed measure.** Enacting this bill is a key, long-overdue step in restoring a sufficient revenue stream for the Land Conservation Fund and fulfilling the intent and purpose of Act 156 (SLH 2005) "to establish permanent adequate funding for land conservation."

The \$9 million FY2025 operating budget for LNR102 (Legacy Land Conservation Program) includes \$6.7 million for land acquisition grants plus \$1.5 million for debt service on the bond issue that funded the state's acquisition of property interests at Turtle Bay. Absent an enhanced revenue stream for the Land Conservation Fund, a \$9 million operating budget cannot be sustained. In future years, less than \$3.2 million per year will be available for land acquisition grants.

The Legacy Land Conservation Commission recently recommended that \$6.7 million in available FY2025 funds be allocated among five high-scoring applications for land acquisition grants that represent a total request of over \$14 million from the Land Conservation Fund, with an estimated match of over \$36.6 million from various federal, county, and private sources. However, while the two top-scoring applications are poised to receive 100% of the amount requested, the other

three applications, including one of the department's important landscape scale conservation initiatives, will likely receive much smaller portions of the amounts requested.

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

Michelle M. Galimba
Council District 6
Portion N. S. Kona/Ka'ū /Volcano



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HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

Strong Support for HB85 (Relating to the Land Conservation Fund)

Aloha Committee Chairs Hashem and Lowen, and Committee Members:

Please support restoring an increased level funding for the Land Conservation Fund. The Land Conservation Fund is an important mechanism to support our local communities and grass-roots non-profits to protect our most important natural resources and beloved wahi pana. This funding helps to protect our coastal waters and mauka watersheds, maintain community access, protect cultural resources, and preserve open and green space.

With increased land values throughout the state the current limit on funding severely limits the Land Conservation Fund capacity to support our communities as they address many of the most important issues facing our state with the help of the Land Conservation Fund.

Sincerely,



Testimony Before The
House Committee on Water and Land (WAL)
IN SUPPORT OF HB85
February 11, 2024, 10:00AM, Room 411 & Videoconference

We are Olan Leimomi Fisher and Kevin Chang, Kua'āina Advocate and Executive Director, respectively, testifying on behalf of [Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). "Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo" stands for "grassroots growing through shared responsibility," and our acronym "KUA" means "backbone." **Our mission is to connect and empower communities to improve their quality of life through the collective care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage, serving as a "backbone organization" that supports creative and community driven solutions to problems stemming from environmental degradation.** Hawai'i's biocultural resources continue to be negatively impacted by political, economic, and social changes, and the increasing dangers of climate change make fostering and empowering resilient communities acutely critical.

Currently KUA supports three statewide networks of: (1) over 40 mālama 'āina (caring for our 'āina or "that which feeds") community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together); (2) over 60 loko i'a (fishpond aquaculture systems unique to Hawai'i) and wai 'ōpae (anchialine pool systems) sites in varying stages of restoration and development, with numerous caretakers, stakeholders, and volunteers known as the Hui Mālama Loko I'a ("caretakers of fishponds"); and (3) the Limu Hui made up of over 50 loea (traditional experts) and practitioners in all things "limu" or locally-grown "seaweed." **Our shared vision is to once again experience what our kūpuna (ancestors) referred to as 'ĀINA MOMONA – abundant and healthy ecological systems that sustain our community resilience and well-being.**

KUA supports HB85 as an incremental step towards 'āina momona.

This bill proposes to strengthen the buying power of the Legacy Land Conservation Program by removing the cap on the maximum dollar amount of annual conveyance tax revenue deposited into the Land Conservation Fund each fiscal year, restoring the intended ten percent each year.

A primary function of KUA includes support for the development of an 'auwai, or a system of resources, tools, bridges, relationships, and networks that cultivate and elevate our communities' efforts to greater levels of collective impact in the care of our biocultural resources. One of these resource pathways has been the Legacy Lands Fund which allows for the acquisition of protection of lands that community groups can own outright, co-steward, or manage in collaboration with our state. **Allowing for more partnerships with community leaders and our state government to flourish benefits not only the intent and purpose of our Hawai'i State Constitution, but also uplifts future generations of responsible Hawai'i stewards.** Many of our network members have acquired (or have begun the process to acquire) land to serve as co-stewards or conservation easement monitors/managers, and a growing

number of our communities have visions to one day own or co-manage resources with our state. As such, **we expect and hope for more community co-stewards over time seeking the support of the Legacy Land Conservation Program (LLCP).**

The resourceful and bright community members that KUA works with and supports are committed to ensuring the long-term health of our biocultural resources that they have cared for and depended on for generations – committing their lives to mālama i ka ‘āina o Hawai‘i, hugely benefiting everyone in our state and local governments. **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 taking the steps necessary for greater self-sufficiency, development of a pipeline of new and more innovative career pathways, mindsets, relationships, and resources for mālama ‘āina efforts. The LLCP program is one such pathway and an ‘auwai “resource flow” that helps communities invest in the long-term vision of caring for our ‘āina – “that which feeds” and supports our collective future. Passing this bill out of your committee is a start on a pathway toward reaching this vision.

Mahalo for this opportunity to support this important measure. Please **PASS** HB85.

Aloha ‘Āina Momona no nā kau ā kau.

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 11:56:10 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Blake McNaughton	Makahaloa Fishing Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

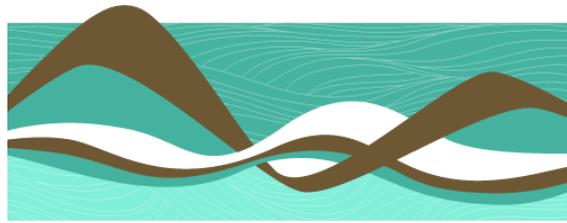
Aloha Kākou,

I writing to express support of HB85. As president of Makahaloa Fishing Association, I am continually witnessing the selling off and developing of ‘āina that is critical to the survival of Hawai‘i and it’s people. We represent over 140 ‘ohana from Hilo Palikū on the Island of Hawai‘i. Our members feed their ‘ohana from the streams, oceans, and forests of North Hilo but this relationship is being threatened by the sale of property to new residents who promptly fence or gate their property often over public trails. To that end our Association has been fighting to protect our rural way of life by nomminating and sheparding the puchase of ‘āina essential to our community. We were recently awarded \$1,000,000 to our efforts to preserve Kawainui estuary. However this award, although amazing, is a sixth of the asking price. We now need to raise the rest if we want to prevent this land from turning into a "private beach" as advertised. These funds will be put to good use by an upstanding commission through a vetted and transparent process. THE TIME IS NOW. Please vote to support this bill.

Mahalo for considering this testimony

Blake McNaughton

Makahaloa Fishing Association



HAWAI'I LAND TRUST

House Committee on Water & Land
House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Date: February 11, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Place: CR 411 & via videoconference

Re: SUPPORT – HB85, Relating to The Land Conservation Fund

Aloha e Luna Ho'omalua Hashem, Luna Ho'omalua Lowen, Hope Luna Ho'omalua Lamosao, Hope Luna Ho'omalua Perruso a me nā Lālā o nā Kōmike:

Hawai'i Land Trust **SUPPORTS** HB85, which restores the amount of conveyance tax revenues allocated to the Land Conservation Fund to ten percent of conveyance taxes collected each fiscal year. This measure provides much-needed resources to protect Hawai'i's most valuable lands and resources while ensuring a sustainable and resilient future for our islands.

The Land Conservation Fund has long been instrumental in conserving lands critical to watershed protection, cultural preservation, habitat conservation, and agriculture. However, inadequate funding has limited its capacity to meet these pressing needs. HB 85 addresses this gap by establishing a consistent and reliable funding stream to support the acquisition, preservation, and management of lands that benefit Hawai'i's people and ecosystems.

Reliable funding for the Land Conservation Fund strengthens the State's ability to invest in its natural capital, from safeguarding vital ecosystems and cultural resources to supporting local communities in building a resilient future. These investments ripple through our communities, enhancing health, wellness, and economic opportunities, while protecting the open spaces and resources that make Hawai'i unique.

'I ola ka 'āina, i ola kākou nei. Healthy lands support thriving communities. HB 85 ensures that the Land Conservation Fund has the resources it needs to protect Hawai'i's natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

'Olu Campbell

President and Chief Executive Officer

February 11, 2025

The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair

House Committee on Water & Land

The Honorable Nicole E. Lowen, Chair

House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
State Capitol, Conference Room 411 & Videoconference

RE: House Bill 85, Relating to the Land Conservation Fund

HEARING: Tuesday, January 11, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Aloha Chair Hashem, Chair Lowen, and Members of the Joint Committees:

My name is Lyndsey Garcia, Director of Advocacy, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i and its over 10,000 members. HAR provides **comments** expressing concerns on House Bill 85, which restores the amount of conveyance tax revenues to be paid into the Land Conservation Fund to ten per cent of conveyance taxes collected each fiscal year.

The Conveyance Tax applies not only to residential property such as single-family homes and condominiums, but to the conveyance of multi-family rentals, land for residential subdivisions, mixed-income and multi-use properties, commercial properties, resort properties, and agricultural lands. It was originally created to fund the Bureau of Conveyances, but has increased over the years and evolved into a revenue source for the Land Conservation Fund, Rental Housing Revolving Fund, and general fund. Increasing the percentage for either special fund leads to a decline in revenue for the general fund.

Due to rising interest rates to address inflation, Hawaii's real estate market slowed resulting in a 27.22% decrease in single-family home sales and 29.15% decrease in condominium sales in 2023.¹ While single-family home sales saw a slight rise by the end of 2024 with a 7.03% increase, condominium sales remained down by 4.17%.² The market hasn't still fully recovered to pre-rising interest rate levels. The challenge with linking funding to the Conveyance Tax is that when the real estate market is down, there may not be enough funds to pay for the programs it supports. The Conveyance Tax is then often targeted for increase to cover these programs; however, when the market is up, there are excess funds over and above the programs' needs. This becomes a cyclical

¹ Hawai'i REALTORS®. (2023). *Statewide Real Estate Statistics*. www.hawaiiirealtors.com/files?url=/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/December-2023-Statewide-Statistics_REV.pdf

² Hawai'i REALTORS®. (2023). *Statewide Real Estate Statistics*. www.hawaiiirealtors.com/files?url=/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/December-2024-Statewide-Statistics.pdf



 808-733-7060

 1259 A'ala Street, Suite 300
Honolulu, HI 96817

 808-737-4977

issue, and the Conveyance Tax is never lowered even in an up market, thereby contributing to the ever-increasing cost of housing in our state.

While the Land Conservation Fund is valuable, a more reliable funding alternative is for the Land Conservation Fund to seek appropriations through the regular budgetary process.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.





Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Anabella Bruch
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Maureen Datta
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Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Clarence Baber
Kohala, Hawaii

Tony Vera
East Hawaii

Puna, Hawaii

Andrea Drayer
Ka'u, Hawaii

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawaii

Aloha Chairs Hashem & Lowen, Vice Chairs Lamosao & Perruso, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawaii Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports HB85.**

State Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) programs play a vital role in protecting agricultural lands from development and ensuring they remain dedicated to farming. In Hawaii, where the cost of land is notoriously high and development pressures are relentless, preserving agricultural lands through such programs is essential for the sustainability and resilience of local agriculture. The ability to limit non-agricultural development on these lands not only protects the environment but also strengthens our local food systems, ensuring that future generations have access to fresh, locally grown food. Therefore, investing in PACE programs is an investment in the future of agriculture and the well-being of our communities.

Hawaii's Legacy Land Conservation Program (LLCP) is tasked in HRS §173A-2.6 with acquiring and protecting unique and productive agricultural lands, among other key priorities, which are crucial to supporting Hawaii's agricultural industry. Despite this mandate, a [recent report by the American Farmland Trust](#), using January 2024 data, found that **since its inception in 2005, the LLCP has purchased only four agricultural easements covering 2646 acres**. Compared to other states with similar PACE programs, **Hawaii lags significantly behind in preserving its agricultural lands**. This discrepancy highlights a pressing need for more effective funding and outreach strategies to foster agricultural conservation in the islands.

Securing sufficient funding is of paramount importance to effectively support and expand PACE efforts across Hawaii. Increased financial resources would enable the LLCP to compete more aggressively for valuable agricultural land, helping to ensure that these lands are used to bolster the local farming economy rather than succumb to the encroaching threat of urban development. Maryland's robust and longstanding PACE program serves as an illustrative example, where a consistent and dependable funding stream has allowed the state to protect over 300,000 acres of farmland through 2662 easements. Put another way, **Maryland has protected as many farms as Hawaii has protected acres**. Their efforts demonstrate how strategic investment in agricultural easements can yield substantial long-term benefits.

Restoring the percentage of conveyance tax revenues allocated to the Land Conservation Fund to ten percent, as proposed in HB85, is a necessary step toward fortifying Hawaii's commitment to agricultural land conservation. By increasing the financial resources available for land conservation initiatives, this bill will enable Hawaii to more effectively prioritize and secure lands that are critically important to the local farming industry. This in turn will help meet the state's

Fawn Helekahi-Burns
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy
Moloka'i

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

India Clark
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i

obligations under the LLCP mandate, ultimately benefiting the agricultural community and the entire state by preserving land for food production.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: CONVEYANCE; Land Conservation Fund Earmarks

BILL NUMBER: HB 85

INTRODUCED BY: POEPOE, BELATTI, CHUN, GRANDINETTI, IWAMOTO, KAHALOA, KAPELA, KILA, KUSCH, MARTEN, PERRUSO, SOUZA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Restores the amount of conveyance tax revenues to be paid into the Land Conservation Fund to ten per cent of conveyance taxes collected each fiscal year.

SYNOPSIS: Amends section 247-7(1),HRS, to remove the \$5,100,000 maximum earmark of the conveyance tax to the land conservation fund. Retains the 10% earmark to the land conservation fund.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025.

STAFF COMMENTS: This measure increases the earmarking of conveyance tax revenue to the land conservation fund.

With any earmarking of revenues, the legislature will be preapproving each of the initiatives fed by the tax earmark, so expenses from the funds largely avoid legislative scrutiny, and the effectiveness of the programs funded becomes harder to ascertain. It is also difficult to determine whether too little or too much revenue has been diverted from other priorities in the state budget.

Digested: 2/10/2025

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 5:05:23 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beth Robinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Beth Robinson. I reside in North Kohala on Hawai‘i Island. Although I currently serve as a Legacy Land Conservation Commissioner, I am testifying as an individual, as I have for many years when bills are introduced that would restore full funding for the Legacy Land Conservation Program.

I am writing in strong support of HB85.

In 2018 I was named Director of Conservation and Legacy Lands for Hawai‘i Life Real Estate. As a locally owned and operated brokerage, we recognize that we have a kuleana to protect lands that should never be developed, lands that have important conservation values. I first attended meetings of the Legacy Land Conservation Commission that same year, supporting the County of Hawai‘i and other Kohala community members in their application for matching funds for a County acquisition of coastal lands with ecological and cultural importance.

It was heartbreaking to watch as outstanding projects throughout Hawai‘i, projects that met all the criteria named in the Statute, could not be funded due to the cap on the amount of conveyance tax revenues going to the conservation fund. The situation has not improved over the past seven years, despite the massive increase in property values and consequently in conveyance tax revenues.

It is entirely appropriate for conveyance taxes paid on market real estate transactions to be used to protect lands with important environmental, cultural and agricultural values -in perpetuity. Once these properties sell on the open market, they are lost forever.

Please vote to restore the full funding at 10% with no annual cap.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Beth Thoma Robinson R(B)

Director – Conservation and Legacy Lands

Hawai‘i Life

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 10:02:51 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB85 to provide adequate funding for the land conservation fund.

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 12:24:12 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

As someone who has participated in the Legacy Land process as part of a community organization that has received funding and protected and now manages precious coastal lands in Hana, I totally support this bill. It has never made sense to me to set up the LLCP with the conveyance tax funding, and then for the legislature to put an arbitrary cap on how much of that funding can be used each year. Every year there are more very worthwhile, important and well-qualified applications than there is funding to go around. Every year the commissioners have to make hard choices and leave worthy projects unfunded or incompletely funded, risking land that could otherwise be protected. The commissioners, with the support of the commission staff, do a very thorough process of due diligence to review the applications. They have the subject matter expertise and direct knowledge of the applications to make the best choices about how funding should be spent. Please trust them to do their jobs, and remove the arbitrary cap that limits the amount of funds they have to work with.

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 7:35:47 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edward Johnston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We must support the efforts of DLNR Legacy Land for the good of Hawai'i's future.

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:37:07 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
C. Kauai Lucas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs Hashem and Lowen, Vice Chairs Lamosao and Perruso, and Committee Members

The wisdom originally demonstrated in enacting the Legacy Land Conservation Program funded by 10 % of conveyance tax revenue has been lost through a series of ever-lower funding caps: **the fund is now at all-time low of \$5.1million per year.**

Since 2019 I've had the privilege of serving as a Commissioner on the LLCC. **Few programs can claim the collateral benefits to communities and natural resources across Hawai'i, dollar-for-dollar.** This claim also comes from witnessing the power an award can have on a community, as a board member of a 2017 awardee: Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center.

It was intensely frustrating on a Legacy land site visit in December 2024, to look out from a Ka'u hillside, across forest devastated by rapid ohia death, with a clear property line for the damage.

The healthy native forest and productive agricultural lands on The Nature Conservancy owned parcel, and on the other side of the pig-proof fence, grey, **dead 'ōhi'a lehua trees devastated by ROD on State owned land not actively controlled for ROD-spreading pigs.** The grey, barren tree crowns appear like a deadly mist over the forest. This damage is a direct result of **inadequate land stewardship.**

Since the State does not have the resources to manage on its own, let's capitalize on the catalytic power of Legacy Land Conservation funds to coalesce conservation, agriculture, and cultural stewardship groups to tackle managing critical 'āina.

This year several spectacular projects came forth, **one in Kealakekua Bay, which would take on the problem 53,000 visitors a year hiking a difficult 4 mile trail with no facilities like parking, water and bathrooms.** They asked for \$1 from LLCP of the \$1.4 total purchase price, but we could only give them a portion of it because there were other *equally urgent* projects.

The LLCP has proved it works, let's leverage the purchasing power of this very modest set aside to galvanize community-led stewardship, as well as acquiring additional critical lands for DLNR/DOWFA

me ka ha'a ha'a,

Kaui Lucas

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:02:26 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beryl Blaich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha to each of you, members of the House Committees of Water and Land and Energy and Environmental Protection,

This simple bill perfectly states the important, indeed critical, purposes of the Legacy Lands Conservation Program. The program has had less funding to offer over many years while the need and for the program has increased. The heritage status of compelling lands seeking partial support for permanent conservation and management has risen. Communities are involved in active management of the lands seeking funds, but land values have steadily escalated, and places are truly threatened by sale to developers.

Please act to restore the amount of conveyance tax revenues to be paid into the land conservation fund to ten percent of conveyance taxes collected each fiscal year

With respect and appreciation for your work,

Beryl Blaich

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:18:36 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phaethon Keeney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Esteemed Legislators,

Please SUPPORT House Bill 85 that would remove the cap on tax revenue to the Land Conservation Fund, please restore funding to this much needed and beloved 'āina preservation program as every cent counts to make a difference!

Our community applied for this funding this year via this program and were blessed to have received funds for the beautiful and productive stream, waterfalls & estuary of Kawainui on the Hilo coast of the Big Island to be stewarded by the County of Hawaii, Makahanaloa Fishing Association, and broader Pepe'ekeo/Hilo/Hāmākua Coast community. Mahalo mahalo mahalo for this amazing program to preserve and protect important ecological & historic gems for the state. But so many great & deserving projects across the state also applied and it was most evident what a hard time the commission had in spreading funds across the state in a fair yet effective manner to achieve applicants goals. The program was only able to fund a portion of our request, as each of the other well deserving projects, and while this lends critical validity to our project and is a MAJOR step forward in the search for funds to protect these lands from private development, it still leaves a long way to go as we race against private offers on the open real estate market. So much work goes into activating community to steward lands and commit to projects like this, I can only imagine the pressure other community groups feel in the race to preserve treasured 'āina and against outside pressures that build greater year after year, this is an uphill battle for sure. This is such an important program that makes lasting impacts for the health and well-being of our communities, allowing hands on interaction with shared community spaces providing sustenance, historic connection, and natural appreciation for locals and visitors alike, please vote yes to fully fund the State Legacy Lands program.

Mahalo nui loa,

Phaethon Keeney

Honokaa Hawaii

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 1:38:06 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanoe Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB85

Hearing Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 10:00 AM

House Committees on Water & Land (WAL) and Energy & Environmental Protection (EEP)

Aloha Chair(s) Hashem and Cochran, Vice Chair(s) Morikawa and Kahaloe, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Kanoe Wilson, and I am testifying in strong support of HB85, which seeks to remove the \$5.1 million cap on the annual conveyance tax revenue deposited into the Land Conservation Fund. As a member of the State of Hawai‘i Legacy Land Conservation Commission, I recognize the critical importance of this fund in protecting our most cherished lands, ensuring a resilient future for Hawai‘i's people, and upholding our kuleana to mālama ‘āina.

The Legacy Land Conservation Program plays a pivotal role in preserving lands that provide public access, protect natural and cultural resources, safeguard watersheds, and support sustainable agriculture. By restoring the funds allocation to ten percent of annual conveyance tax revenues, HB85 will provide a reliable funding stream to meet the growing demand for conservation projects and ensure that future generations inherit an island home that reflects our shared values of stewardship and sustainability.

Hawai‘i's natural and cultural landscapes face increasing pressures from climate change, urban development, and land-use conflicts. The Legacy Land Conservation Program has a proven track record of leveraging state funds with federal and private investments to protect lands of irreplaceable significance. However, the existing \$5.1 million cap has constrained the program's ability to fully meet the need for conservation funding. By passing HB85, the Legislature will restore a more equitable distribution of conveyance tax revenues to support the long-term protection of Hawai‘i's lands and waters.

I urge the committees to pass HB85 to strengthen Hawai‘i's commitment to land conservation, environmental resilience, and cultural preservation. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Kanoe Wilson

[Your Affiliation, if applicable]

[Your Contact Information]

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:24:10 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
helen raine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of this bill which is vital to the future protection of Hawaiian landscapes that support our endemic wildlife and allow space for climate resilient communities.

HB-85

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 7:22:33 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laa Poepoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support. it's a good bill that provides a default 'give back' where folks are otherwise uncertain about how our taxes are being spent. thank you