

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

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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

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LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the Senate Committee on
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**Tuesday, January 28, 2025
3:00 PM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 225 and Via Videoconference

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 546
RELATING TO ARBORISTS**

Senate Bill 546 requires that the State ensure and enforce that all certified arborists in its employ, including contractors, adhere to best management practices. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources supports this measure.**

Requiring that Certified Arborists (employees and contractors) employed by the State follow the American National Standards Institute A300 Tree Care standards promotes sound tree care, which aids in the growth of healthy tree canopies and the benefits that confers. This requirement could serve as a model for other agencies to follow.

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

LATE

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Keeping Hawai'i clean,
green and beautiful
since 1912



January 27th, 2025

RE: Strong Support of SB546--Best Management Practices in Arboriculture in Hawaii

Dear Senators,

The Outdoor Circle strongly supports SB546 on "Best Management Practices" (BMP) for all tree management operations to be an official policy of the State of Hawaii, all of its auspices, including Departments, Agencies, Boards, and other sub-units, as well as all work contracted by the State and its organs for all work to be performed on any state lands, any lands controlled by the state.

Best practices are not a new or novel idea for any field, and are designed not only to protect and preserve beautiful living state resources, but also to ultimately save the state monies from poorly-planned and executed tree maintenance work.

Certified arborists have been asked to bid on State contracts that specifically violate professional standards of care and best practices, such that if they perform the work as called for, their professional certification and ethical standards are compromised. This is an intolerable situation to ask professionals to knowingly violate their own industry standards, as required by State of Hawaii agents, who may knowingly or unknowingly be producing procurement of services that violate best practices. While this may seem like isolated instances, unfortunately, it is not.

The following quote is from Kevin Eckert last year, who is a Board Certified Master Arborist and Tree Risk Assessment Qualified Instructor, as well as the recent past president of the Western Chapter of the ISA (International Society of Arboriculture), of which the Aloha Arborists Association is a constituent member:

"Unless they involve qualified, competent, professional arborists, I don't know of any State agency that consistently follows the recognized BMP. It seems that frequently, the local supervisor determines what is done based on their preferences without consideration, and sometimes in conscious violation, of BMPs....

I agree that it would be easier and more effective to adopt these across the board, as long as there is adequate support and a strong enforcement mechanism that is applied."

Mr. Eckert and others who are leaders in the field, and all relevant professional organizations, have some professional BMP sample template recommendations for the State of Hawaii and all of its organs moving forward with best management practices. This is especially important when the scope of work is written into contracts, which is the only way that this can be enforced. These recommendations follow clear, simple national/international guidelines that have been around for decades and comport with ANSI A-300, ISA, and similar international standards.

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As Mr. Eckert notes:

"The use of appropriately qualified personnel ensures a level of technical expertise, understanding and skill to conduct work satisfactorilyProper tree care is a long-term investment that can lead to substantial current and future benefits. Properly managed and maintained trees reduce tree-related risk, enhance aesthetics and add significant value to the environment, quality of life, and amenity value of the property. Pruning or removing trees, especially large trees, can be dangerous work if not performed by properly equipped, trained, and skilled workers."

This is a straightforward practice that simply requires a policy that is enacted and enforced. There is no need to reinvent the wheel here, but simply adopt standards that are universally-recognized.

For this year, this bill makes recommended changes to the last year's SCR/SR on the same subject in the title and in two clauses to reflect the testimony of DLNR Director Dawn Chang from 2024 to clarify that *all agencies and properties* under the State of Hawaii's control, as well as all contractors should be covered, as well as state workers, and that we specify a standard in the bill to be ANSI A-300, which is recognized nationally.

In summary, the need for Hawaii to have a policy that is uniform, consistent, and enforced is essential for the care of our State's arboricultural resources. There should be no controversy or difficulties in understanding the need for these BMPs, and we appreciate all efforts to improve the quality of care as mandated by the state in this area. Accordingly, we strongly support SB546 and hope that you will as well.

Thank you for your service to elevate the care for our state's natural resources to keep Hawaii green and beautiful.



Winston Welch
Executive Director

LATE



Written Testimony before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Tuesday, January 28, 2025 (3:00 pm), Room 225

RE: SB 546 RELATING TO ARBORISTS.

Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Gabbard, Members of the Committee on Governmental Operations:

Trees for Honolulu's Future ("TFHF") is a nonprofit organization with a vision for a tree-filled island that preserves and enhances our quality of life, especially in the face of climate change.

We strongly support the above-referenced Bill, which requires the State to ensure and enforce that all certified arborists in its employ, including contractors, adhere to best management practices.

Trees are infrastructure and as such they should be cared for by specialists as much as any other trade working on electrical, plumbing, or other infrastructure. As the Bill's preamble aptly describes, trees are valuable, and hardworking assets that provide myriad benefits to people and the environment. The adage of "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" holds here. Having qualified, certified arborists who adhere to best management practices as prescribed by national standards is the soundest, and most cost effective way, to protect trees.

We urge passage of this bill onto the Committee on Ways & Means and ultimately to crossover to the House.

Sincerely,

Daniel Dinell
President

HONOLULU is HOT TREES are COOL

Visit us: www.TreesForHonolulu.org Contact us: info@TreesForHonolulu.org Voice/Fax/Text: 808-707-6353
P.O. Box 12051, Honolulu, Hawaii 96828



January 27, 2025

To: Hawai'i State Legislature

From: Kevin K. Eckert, ISA Board Certified Master Arborist WE-1785 BU
President & Chief Consulting Arborist, Arbor Global Hawai'i
President, Smart Trees Pacific
Immediate Past-President: Western Chapter International Society of Arboriculture

RE: Strong Support of SB546--Best Management Practices in Arboriculture in Hawaii

Dear Senators,

I strongly support SB546 on "Best Management Practices" (BMP) for all tree management operations to be an official policy of the State of Hawaii, all of its auspices, including Departments, Agencies, Boards, and other sub-units, as well as all work contracted by the State and its organs for all work to be performed on any state lands, and any lands controlled by the state.

My support is rooted in my standing as a professional arborist, consulting arborist, educator, trainer, researcher and expert witness, based in Hawaii, and practicing throughout the Pacific Islands, Australia, Asia and Mainland for the past 45 years.

Best management practices are promulgated and regularly reviewed and revised by subject matter experts based on extensive working experience with proven success. Conformance with these BMPs not only ensures positive results and achievement of tree management goals, but also reduces short and long-term costs and enhances public tree-related safety.

I have direct and recent experience where State agency bids for tree management projects have been released that include requirements that specifically violate professional standards of care and BMPs. In other instances, State of Hawaii agents, knowingly or unknowingly require violation of BMPs that frustrate management goals for the good of the public and may result in long-term public hazards.

In fact, ISA Certified Arborists are prohibited from conducting work that violates recognized ANSI standards and practices. Work that does not conform to recognized standards and practices is considered an ethical and professional violation that can result in the loss of their professional credential.

To effectively remedy this ongoing condition, it is recommended that the State of Hawaii formally adopt and vigorously enforce contract language that specifically requires conformance with the applicable, recognized industry standards and practices documented through the ANSI and associated BMPs.

The use of appropriately qualified personnel ensures a level of technical expertise, understanding and skill to conduct work satisfactorily as would be expected of any professional service. Proper tree care is a long-term investment that can lead to substantial current and future benefits. Properly managed

and maintained trees reduce tree-related risk, enhance aesthetics and add significant value to the environment, quality of life, and amenity value of the property. Pruning or removing trees, especially large trees, can be dangerous work if not performed by properly equipped, trained, and skilled workers.

This bill makes recommended changes to the last year's SCR/SR on the same subject in the title and in two clauses to reflect the testimony of DLNR Director Dawn Chang from 2024 to clarify that all agencies and properties under the State of Hawaii's control, all contractors, and state workers conducting arboricultural work should be covered. The recognized standard in the bill should be cited to be the most current version of the ANSI A-300 with associated BMPs, and ANSI Z133, which are recognized internationally.

In summary, the need for Hawaii to have a policy that is uniform, consistent, and enforced is essential for the care of our State's arboricultural assets. There should be no controversy or difficulties in understanding the need for these BMPs, and we appreciate all efforts to improve the quality of tree care as mandated by the state in this area. Accordingly, I strongly support SB546 and hope that you will as well.

Mahalo Nui Loa for your consideration and support for Hawai'i's trees,



Kevin K. Eckert
President & Chief Consulting Arborist, Arbor Global Hawai'i
President, Smart Trees Pacific
ISA Board Certified Master Arborist WE-1785 BU

LATE

SB-546

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 5:37:42 PM

Testimony for GVO on 1/28/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Seth Kamemoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our mature trees, especially in urban environments, are irreplaceable assets to our community, and should be treated with utmost care.

LATE

SB-546

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:09:11 PM

Testimony for GVO on 1/28/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Harding	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support SB546, Best Management Practices for the tree care industry, which will help ensure that uniform, consistent, and properly planned and executed tree maintenance work will be performed. This is essential for the long-term care of our State's arboricultural resources.

Sincerely,

Diane Harding

LATE

SB-546

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:57:02 PM

Testimony for GVO on 1/28/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janyce Mitchell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to enthusiastically support this bill. Trees are a vital community resource and should be treated as such. Putting in place best practices for arborculture would clearly help in preserving and supporting this resource.

I urge you to vote yes on this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

LATE

SB-546

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:09:32 AM

Testimony for GVO on 1/28/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Whitney Bosel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'd like to express my strong support for this common sense bill. This is something that will cost the state no money, and in fact save money in the long run, as trees are so beneficial to the health and well-being of our communities, and taking care of them properly ensures their health and benefits to all to their utmost. Best practices in all fields of those in the employ of the state ought to be the norm, and this bill is long overdue. Please pass this and safeguard our trees into the future. Improperly trimming trees damages them, makes them more likely to respond with rapid weaker growth (read: much more likely to grow brittle limbs quickly which can fall and injure people without warning, and actually need more immediate follow up trimming to manage), AND actually has been shown to affect people's stress response and mood. Make everyone happy and require best practices! Thank you.

LATE

SB-546

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:03:28 AM

Testimony for GVO on 1/28/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Sexton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislature-

I am visiting in Florida now, and realizing once again how wonderful the trees are in Honolulu. This bill from the Outdoor Circle, our unique non profit to look after our wonderful environment, should be a no brainer. Please pass it! Mahalo.