

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on  
WATER AND LAND**

**Monday, March 18, 2019  
2:50 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 225**

**In consideration of  
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 124/SENATE RESOLUTION 93  
URGING THE GOVERNOR, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF  
LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A TREE  
PLANTING PROGRAM.**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 124/Senate Resolution 93 urges the Governor, in coordination with the Department of Land and Natural Resources, to establish and implement a tree planting program. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of these measures and provides the following comments.**

The Department has several private landowner assistance programs available for land managers interested in improving and restoring their forested or formerly forested lands. Each of these programs, including the Forest Stewardship Program, Natural Area Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Urban and Community Forestry Program, and the Watershed Partnerships can support tree planting projects on private lands. Although these programs provide the framework for encouraging and supporting tree planting projects, with 66% of Hawaii's forest lands managed by private landowners, there is not sufficient funding in any of these programs to meet the demand or need for tree planting support.

Additionally, the Department has the ability to conduct and a need for tree planting across the public lands that it manages (equal to almost one-half of the land area in Hawai'i). For example, the Division of Forestry and Wildlife has identified over 180,000 acres just within the Forest Reserve System that would benefit from additional tree planting to improve watershed health and that would sequester carbon dioxide (equal to approximately 5 million to 7 million trees) should funding be made available.

**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**M. KALEO MANUEL**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
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LAND  
STATE PARKS

Forest ecosystems not only provide the water that sustains our lives in the islands, they also prevent soil erosion that damages our coral reefs and sequester and store remarkable amounts of carbon dioxide. In fact, forest management and restoration is a powerful tool in mitigating climate change. Recent scientific estimates by the United States Geological Survey suggest that an additional four million metric tons of carbon, equal to 89% of Hawaii's annual ground transportation emissions, could be sequestered and stored by reforesting current non-native grass and shrub-lands under the jurisdiction of the Department.

The Department and partners have documented a five percent loss in urban tree canopy in a five year period on O'ahu, our most populous island. This equates to a removal of over 76,000 trees. The Department strongly supports actions, such as this one, to reverse this trend statewide. Trees in urban and rural areas encourage safer streets (by slowing traffic), reduce urban heat island effect, improve stormwater runoff and erosion, improve air quality, and sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these measures.

## O'AHU ISLAND PARKS CONSERVANCY

Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Monday, March 18, 2019, Hearing  
Senate Conference Room 225  
2:50 PM

**LATE**

### **Senate Concurrent Resolution 124 and Senate Resolution 93**

Urging the Governor in Coordination with the  
Department of Land and Natural Resources, to  
Establish and Implement a Tree Planting Program

Aloha Chair Kahele, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

Senate Concurrent Resolution 124 and Senate Resolution 93 are important advisories in view of climate change and sea level rise. State planning guidelines and partnerships are also needed to identify the optimum areas in which to implement this effort, including Hawai'i's scenic and recreational shoreline resources, green open spaces and natural areas, historic and cultural landscapes, and scenic resources as critical environmental areas to identify.

Acting on these advisories will also help to maintain and improve the quality of life and physical environment for all Hawai'i's communities with the linkage of existing shoreline resources that include the alignment and green connection of public parks, recreational open green spaces, and scenic greenways.

To accomplish the challenging task of planting a system of trees statewide, it is suggested that the State Office of Planning assist the Department of Land and Natural resources together with other state and city agencies and departments, to meet this significant objective.

In addition, the precedent model for this already exists in the embodiment of the Lei of Green parks and green spaces from Diamond Head to Aloha Tower, with planned greenway connections soon to be implemented to accommodate many more trees for this purpose. Notably, the Hawaii Community Development Authority adopted the Lei of Green as a prominent planning principle in the 2011 Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan.

It is therefore recommended that SCR 124 and SR 93 encourage state and city partnerships in this purposeful tree-planting endeavor by using and completing the Lei of Green as a precedent model for island-wide and statewide expansion to meet the State's green infrastructure and carbon neutrality goals by 2045.

We applaud the State Senate's introduction and the Water and Land Committee's consideration of SCR 124 and SR 93 as important, forward-focused Resolutions, for which we respectfully offer the attached additional recommendations.

Mahalo nui loa,  
Michelle Spalding Matson  
President, O'ahu Island Parks Conservancy

URGING THE GOVERNOR, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A TREE PLANTING PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, Act 15, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018, establishes a goal of achieving carbon neutrality in the State by 2045; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii has lost nearly half of its native forest cover since western contact, and forests continue to be reduced by invasive species and wildfires;

WHEREAS, the benefits of planting trees in mass reforestation efforts and urban landscaping include carbon sequestration; nutrient cycling; watershed filtration; enhanced groundwater recharge; diminished water loss from evaporation and transpiration; reduced erosion, runoff, and airborne pollution; nitrogen and phosphorous leaching removal; flood control; urban heat mitigation with increased shade; wildlife habitat preservation; and the creation and expansion of recreational and culturally important areas; and

WHEREAS, planting more large canopy shade trees within State and county parks, established green open spaces, and along public streets and existing and planned connecting greenways will mitigate increasing temperatures and benefit the public health and welfare; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuing need for coordination among the respective state and city agencies and levels of government to ensure the long-intended connection and continued extension of the Lei of Green as an interconnected system originally implemented from Diamond Head to Aloha Tower; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Governor, in coordination with the Department of Land and Natural Resources assisted by the State Office of Planning, is urged to establish and implement a tree planting program that provides for the planting in Hawaii of at least one million native trees per year over the next four years to benefit present and future generations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Lei of Green shoreline parks, established green open spaces, waterside greenways and shoreline promenades should serve as the precedent model to

benefit the public health with fresh open air recreation while significantly serving to address climate change that portends increasing temperatures and sea level rise; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and Natural Resources, the Hawaii Community Development Authority, the State Department of Transportation Harbors Division and the City and County of Honolulu are urged to work in partnership to complete the Lei of Green from Diamond Head to Aloha Tower as the working model for island-wide and state-wide expansion over a determined period of time; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor and Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, the Director of the State Office of Planning, the Director of the State Department of Transportation and Deputy Director of the Harbors Division; the Chairpersons of the Hawaii Community Development Authority and the Aloha Tower Development Corporation, and the Mayor and City Council of the City and County of Honolulu.

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Helping to keep Hawai'i  
clean, green, and beautiful  
since 1912



RE: Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Senate Concurrent Resolutions 124 and 93  
Monday, March 18, 2019 Hearing  
Senate Conference Room 225, 2:50 pm

Dear Chair Kahele and Committee Members,

The Outdoor Circle has long-championed and actively planted trees for over a century across the Hawaiian Islands through the efforts of its many branches located statewide. The benefits of trees are well-known and elucidated in these resolutions. As pointed out, Hawai'i has lost over half its native forest and this loss continues. Urban tree canopy coverage also continues to fall, hovering around 20% with losses each year.

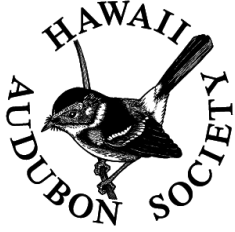
Unless a massive, sustained and well-funded and carried out effort is put into place by local, county, state, federal and private landowners, we will continue this trend. Senate Concurrent Resolutions 124 and 93 are antidotes to this trend and are well-supported by The Outdoor Circle.

Additionally, we completely support the concept of the Lei Of Green parks and green spaces from Diamond Head to Aloha tower as a model for the rest of the state and urge that recommended language submitted by the Oahu Island Parks Conservancy be adopted in the Concurrent Resolutions 124 and 93.

It is only through the coordinated, sustained and great will power of our governmental bodies, combined with those in the nonprofit and private sector that these goals can be achieved, and the linking of green spaces as embodied in the Lei of Green is just one of many important aspects that must be adopted and implemented in order for us to keep our islands beautiful, green, and livable.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue and your consideration,

Winston Welch  
Executive Director



*For the Protection of Hawaii's Native Wildlife*  
**HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY**

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THE SENATE  
THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2019

COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

**LATE**

Monday, March 18, 2019  
2:50 p.m., Conference Room 225 State Capitol

SR 93 & SCR 124

URGING THE GOVERNOR, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND & NATURAL RESOURCES, TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

Chair Kahele , Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the committee, my name is Linda Paul and I am testifying in favor of SR 93 & SCR 124 as a volunteer, President of and in behalf of the approximately 1800 members of the Hawaii Audubon Society. Together with the amendments proposed by the O`ahu Island Parks Conservancy, this bill will help restore and conserve a green corridor of trees and open space along a portion of Oahu's magnificent southern shoreline from Diamond Head to Aloha Tower, a shoreline that nurtures our urban community and attracts the life blood of our economy: visitors from around the world.

The Hawaii Audubon Society works hard to conserve a portion of that "lei of green" by restoring and maintaining an acre of native dryland forest along Oahu's southern coast just east of Diamond Head so that it can support a colony of native wedgetail shearwaters in the midst of a residential area. This Resolution will encourage efforts to conserve and protect from urban sprawl a natural greenway along the shore west of Diamond Head all the way to Aloha Tower. Please pass SR 93 & SCR 124 with the amendments proposed by the O`ahu Island Parks Conservancy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Linda M. B. Paul  
President of the Hawaii Audubon Society  
808-262-6859

**SCR-124**

Submitted on: 3/15/2019 2:49:18 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/18/2019 2:50:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ted Bohlen          | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

## Comments:

Planting a million trees per year would not only make Hawaii more beautiful, but it would reduce polluted runoff and help with climate change. Please pass!



**SCR-124**

Submitted on: 3/16/2019 10:31:39 AM

Testimony for WTL on 3/18/2019 2:50:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Regina Gregory      | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**SCR-124**

Submitted on: 3/15/2019 4:13:07 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/18/2019 2:50:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Erica Scott         | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**LATE**

**SCR-124**

Submitted on: 3/18/2019 1:21:56 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/18/2019 2:50:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| John Whalen         | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: