

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 House Committee on  
WATER, LAND & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, March 11, 2020  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 2692, SENATE DRAFT 2  
RELATING TO THE NA WAI EHA WATERSHED**

Senate Bill 2692, Senate Draft 2 proposes to provide an appropriation from the Land Conservation Fund towards state acquisition of lands at the heart of Maui's Nā Wai 'Ehā watershed. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this bill.**

Nā Wai 'Ehā represents significant ecological, cultural, and hydrological value to the island of Maui. Composed of breathtaking native forests, hidden valleys, and mountains reaching 5,000 feet tall, it provides habitat for over 45 endangered species. Nā Wai 'Ehā is the principal source of Maui's drinking water. Currently in private ownership, the lands of Nā Wai 'Ehā have been offered for sale, presenting a rare opportunity to place those valued lands into the public trust to ensure that their unique resources are appropriately managed in perpetuity for their public benefits.

The Department is coordinating with federal and county partners to enable the purchase of the mauka conservation lands for placement into the State forest reserve system, while securing into the public trust, under county ownership, the water systems and easements that lie downslope of the conservation lands. Exact acreage of the acquisition cannot be identified until the land has been surveyed. In addition, it is our understanding that the County of Maui is seeking to secure through its budget process the funds needed to purchase the water system and easements.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
FIRST DEPUTY

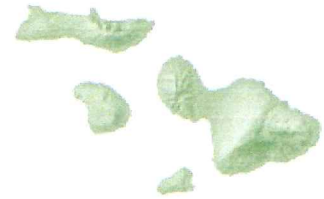
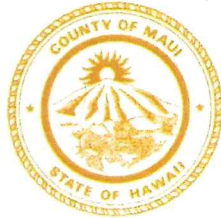
**M. KALEO MANUEL**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

MICHAEL P. VICTORINO  
Mayor

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.  
Director

HELENE KAU  
Deputy Director



DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793

March 9, 2020

**Testimony of the County of Maui Department of Water Supply  
In Consideration of S.B. 2692 relating to Na Wai Eha Watershed**

**Before the Senate Committee on  
WATER, LAND AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, March 11, 2020**

**9:00 AM**

**State Capitol, Senate Conference Room 325**

The County of Maui supports the proposed Bill S.B. No. 2692 to appropriate funds for acquisition of the Na Wai Eha watershed in Wailuku, Maui. This critical watershed provides about 70% of the drinking water for the island of Maui through the Maui County Department of Water Supply (MDWS) public water system. This mostly forested watershed contains a pristine native ohia forest and is home to 45 endangered plant and wildlife species. The landowner has already sold over 4,000 acres to private entities. The proposed state acquisition will ensure protection of these important ecosystems as well as the region's historical, cultural and natural values.

Over the last two decades, MDWS has invested over \$6.5M in grant funds through watershed protection partnerships to control invasive plant and animal species within the Na Wai Eha watershed and Mauna Kahalawai. Intact native forests are the hydrologic engine that sustains groundwater recharge, stream flow and our drinking water supply. State control of these critical watersheds would ensure adequately funded and consistent watershed management. Na Wai Eha is also a strong candidate to receive federal funding through the Forest Legacy Program to further enhance this acquisition.

Thank you for your consideration of our viewpoint on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey T. Pearson".

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.  
Director of Water Supply

**SB-2692-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 9:31:44 AM

Testimony for WLH on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dwamato	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2692-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 11:37:03 AM

Testimony for WLH on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rayne	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2692-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 9:44:12 PM

Testimony for WLH on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Don Aweau	Individual	Support	No

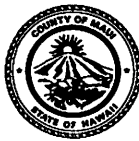
Comments:

Council Chair  
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair  
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore  
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers  
Riki Hokama  
Kelly Takaya King  
Michael J. Molina  
Tamara Paltin  
Shane M. Sinenci  
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura



Director of Council Services  
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

March 10, 2020

**LATE**

TO: The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
House Committee on Water, Land, & Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Alice L. Lee   
Council Chair

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 11, 2020; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2692, SD 2, RELATING TO THE NA WAI EHA WATERSHED**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** to this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to acquire the Na Wai Eha watershed using land conservation funds.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. The Na Wai Eha watershed, composed of native koa, ohia, and luma forests, hidden valleys, and mountains reaching 5,000 feet, the habitat for over 45 endangered species, and the principal source of Maui's drinking water, is a tremendous environmental asset to the County of Maui.
2. Acquisition of the watershed will provide for its protection and promote new stewardship opportunities.
3. This measure will preserve and protect 11,020 acres of this critical watershed for public recreation, cultural gathering, and endangered species in perpetuity.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.

**SB-2692-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 7:45:01 AM

Testimony for WLH on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Highly valuable lands which should be added to the public trust inventory through acquisition.