

LATE



NATIONAL TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN
Chartered by Congress to Create a National Resource in Conservation, Research, and Education

Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator J. Kalani English, Vice Chair
Hearing Date: Tuesday, April 20, 2010
Hearing Time: 10:45 am
Conference Room: 225
Measure: HCR 216

TESTIMONY OF CHIPPER WICHMAN
ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

SUBJECT: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR-216

As the Chief Executive Officer and Director of the National Tropical Botanical Garden (“NTBG”), a 501(c)(3) publicly supported charitable organization chartered by the US Congress to protect our nation’s tropical plant diversity, I want to express my strong support for HCR-216. I have been personally involved in meetings with our congressional delegation in Washington DC and with top people in the Department of State related to bringing the IUCN’s World Conservation Congress to Hawaii in 2016. While we have many hurdles to overcome on this important journey none are insurmountable. This resolution is a critical step in the process as it clearly expresses a desire by our State Legislature to see this prestigious event hosted here in the State of Hawaii. This statement of support is an important message we can take with us when we go back to DC in June of this year for continued meetings with the State Department.

I can not over emphasize the many benefits to our state that would accrue from bringing the WCC here in 2016 – not the least of which is it will put Hawaii on the world stage for conservation issues related to the preservation of our indigenous host culture and unique native biodiversity. The economic benefits of hosting a congress are also significant and the Hawaii Tourism Authority believes this could be a key event in re-branding Hawaii as a world-class meeting destination.

In conclusion, NTBG requests your strong support for HCR 216.

Mahalo,

Chipper Wichman
CEO and Director