SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

DESIGNATING APRIL AS TREE AWARENESS MONTH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII.

WHEREAS, trees have been identified as an important tool to combat global climate change, reducing society's carbon footprint and helping communities become healthier, and

WHEREAS, trees contribute to the environment by cleaning the air, removing odors and pollutant gases, and filtering particulates out of the air, removing and storing carbon while releasing oxygen back into the air; and

WHEREAS, trees cool heat-absorbing streets and buildings up to ten degrees Fahrenheit by releasing water vapor into the air through their leaves, encouraging residents to walk thereby improving their health, and contributing to more vital communities and reducing UV-B exposure by almost fifty percent, thus providing protection to children from exposure to ultra violet rays on school campuses and playgrounds where children spend hours outdoors; and

WHEREAS, well documented studies confirm the positive effects of trees on health and productivity, including patients recovering faster from surgery, lowering blood pressure, office workers performing better with views of trees out their windows, as well as students having higher test scores and graduation rates with trees outside their school windows, aiding in concentration by reducing mental fatigue; and

WHEREAS, trees in our island state are a crucial part of sustainable living as well as important to our agricultural economy through harvested fruit and wood, providing green jobs and opportunities for small business; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture reported street trees to be "the single largest benefit" to
property values, well planted trees can raise property values, and that trees planted along streets, sidewalks, and parking lots can help to absorb heat energy, dust, mask concrete walls, and unsightly views, muffle sound from freeways and create eye soothing canopy of green, slow traffic, give civic pride and identity to neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, in our tourism based economy, the beauty of the surroundings is vitally important; and

WHEREAS, studies show that the more trees and landscaping a business district has, the more business will flow in. Trees not only contribute beauty but cool areas where tourists walk, in addition, hiking, the now popular forest bathing; and

WHEREAS, state and community organizations have endeavored to foster knowledge and awareness of trees, Trees for Honolulu's Future, Healthy Climate Communities, Smart Trees Pacific and Outdoor Circle, Dr. Camilo Mora of the Mora Lab Carbon Neutrality Project of the University of Hawaii and the Department of Land and Natural Resources which states "trees literally hold our island state together, helping define our island sense of place, that special connection between our diverse cultures and the environment, the land and its people"; and

WHEREAS, according to Dr. Camilo Mora of Mora Lab of the Geography and Environment Department at the University of Hawaii heads the Carbon Neutrality Project. Arbor Day is one day to help raise awareness of trees and a month would raise much greater awareness and adequately recognize the multitude of benefits and importance trees have, particularly an island state which depends on more heavily on sustainability and tourism; and

WHEREAS, the public should be encouraged to learn more about the value of trees and designating April as Tree Awareness Month would be an appropriate way to honor trees and recognize the multitude of benefits of trees for while also providing community building, educational and economic opportunities throughout the previously listed events; now, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2020, the House of
Representatives concurring, that April shall be designated as
Tree Awareness Month; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Chair of
Board of Land and Natural Resources, and Mayors of all counties.

OFFERED BY: [Signature]