



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAII

MĀLAMA I KA HONUA. *Cherish the Earth.*

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND AND AGRICULTURE

Monday February 1, 2016 2:45PM Room 224

In Support **SB2356** Relating to Disposition of Tax Revenues

Aloha Chairman Gabbard and members of the Senate Water, Land & Agriculture Committee,

On behalf of our 12,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i strongly supports SB2356 to increase funds from the conveyance tax to the land conservation fund. This bill would provide essential funding for the restoration of our imperiled forests.

Healthy forests are essential to a healthy future in the Hawaiian Islands. The forests that provide our drinking water are just one example of "free services" that are provided by nature and consumed by the human economy--services that have immense economic value, but that go largely unrecognized and uncounted until they have been lost. Many of those services are indispensable to the people who exploit them, yet are not counted as real benefits, or as part of GNP. Without proper management, our forests will begin to fail and essential services like fresh drinking water will be lost.

Hawai'i's watersheds also contain some of the best native Hawaiian ecosystems on state-managed land. While programs to protect these areas struggle for budget appropriations annually, resource experts estimate that at least \$11 million is needed annually to maintain the integrity of the watersheds for our children and future generations.

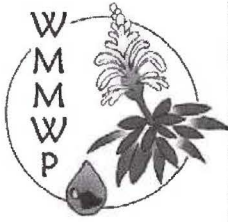
Our natural resource areas protect unique Hawaiian plants, animals, and ecosystems on 109,000 acres of public-trust lands. These areas include habitat for threatened and endangered species, and portions of essential watersheds that support our economy and way of life. Protection for these areas is seriously underfunded and understaffed. The result is increasing encroachment by invasive species, decrease in healthy habitat for native plants and animals, and the loss of the native essence of Hawai'i.

Because this bill proposes a source of reliable funding for the protection of our forests, we strongly urge this Committee to move this measure forward. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Mahalo,

Martha Townsend
Director

LATE



West Maui Mountains
Watershed Partnership
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**Watershed
Partners**

County of Maui

Dept. of Land &
Natural Resources

General Finance
Group, Inc.

Ka'anapali Land
Company, LLC

Kahoma Land, LLC

Kamehameha Schools

Makila Land Co., LLC

Maui County
Department of Water
Supply

Maui Land &
Pineapple
Company Inc

Wailuku Water Co.
LLC

The Nature
Conservancy

West Maui Mountains Watershed Partnership

January 31st, 2016

Supporting the Intent of S.B. 2356
Relating to Disposition of Tax Revenues
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture
Monday, February 1, 2015, 2:45PM, Room 224

Aloha Legislators,

The West Maui Mountains Watershed Partnership **Supports the Intent of S.B.2356** which seeks to provide stable funding for long-term critical natural resource management programs. Should these funds come from the reinstatement of the Natural Area Reserve fund, appropriations through the general fund or another reliable measure, watershed funding needs to be sustained and consistent.

In fiscal year 2016, statewide watershed protection received a total of \$3.2 million in funding through general funds allocations to support on the ground operations and C.I.P. investments in protection fencing. This represents a 60% decrease in funding levels as compared to 2014 and is unfortunately is more on par with funding years during the recession.

Only 10% of Hawaii's watersheds are currently protected and the rest are continuing to degrade without adequate management. Funds would allow for resource management to be increased, reverse the degradation of additional forest acres, and further secure the water resources that our state depends on for residential, agricultural and commercial use. Funding will also be leveraged with federal, county, or private grant sources to further stimulate local economies, bring in millions of outside dollars and provide jobs.

As a partnership, we understand that without adequate forest protection and continued support, we cannot depend on the water which nourishes Hawaii's interests. This bill proposes a sound investment in our forests. We hope that you can join us in lending your support for watershed protection and a more sustainable Hawaii.

Thoughtfully submitted with broad partner support and one abstention.

gabbard2 - Donna

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 01, 2016 2:44 PM
To: WLA Testimony
Cc: skaye@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2356 on Feb 1, 2016 14:45PM*

SB2356

Submitted on: 2/1/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 1, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Springer Kaye	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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