

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



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

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**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Wednesday, May 13, 2020
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016**

**In consideration of
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 769
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE
ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY COMMITTEE, GUBERNATORIAL
NOMINEE, KAWIKA WINTER, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2023**

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) expresses its support for Governor's Message 769 on the confirmation of Dr. Kawika Winter as a gubernatorial appointed member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee (ESRC).

Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 195D, the ESRC advises the Board of Land and Natural Resources and the Department on matters relating to endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species. The seven-member ESRC makes recommendations based on a full review of the best available scientific and other reliable data with consideration of the cumulative impacts of the proposed action on the recovery potential of impacted species.

HRS Chapter 195D-25 establishes an ESRC seat to be filled by a person possessing a background in native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices. The Department supports the nomination of Dr. Kawika Winter for this position for a second term. Dr. Winter is the Reserve Manager of He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve and holds faculty and affiliate faculty positions at the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology and Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Previously Dr. Winter was the Director at Limahuli Garden and Preserve on Kaua'i for a decade and served on the Hawaiian Conservation Alliance Steering Committee and in the E Alu Pū Network. His extensive background in both Hawaiian ecology and cultural history continue to make him an ideal appointee to this seat on the ESRC.

The Department supports and recommends Dr. Winter's confirmation for the ESRC.

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
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS



GM769

**SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE ENDANGERED SPECIES
RECOVERY COMMITTEE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, KĀWIKAWIKA WINTER, FOR A TERM TO
EXPIRE 06-30-2023**

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

May 13, 2020

1:00 p.m.

Room 016

The Administration of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) will recommend to the Board of Trustees a position of **SUPPORT** for GM769, which appoints Kāwika B. Winter to serve as a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee (ESRC).

The ESRC provides technical advice on the protection and recovery of Hawai‘i’s many endangered species and their respective habitats, which are of intrinsic importance to Native Hawaiian identity, culture, and practices, and are increasingly at risk of irreparable harm and extinction. To carry out its mission, the ESRC has historically and included in its membership individuals with expertise in Western environmental science. Since 2014, the ESRC has also required at least one member to have a background in Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, in order to provide the ESRC with an additional and valuable perspective through which to vet recovery action proposals affecting species, habitats, and sites of cultural significance to Native Hawaiians. OHA supported this most recent membership requirement as a way to balance and enhance recovery action plans with Native Hawaiian traditional and customary knowledge, practices, and values.

It is OHA’s understanding that Dr. Winter has been selected to fill the required seat for an individual with a background in traditional and customary practices. OHA accordingly supports Dr. Winter’s appointment, based on his extensive education, experience, and expertise in traditional and customary resource management, as well as his personal investment in learning and perpetuating Native Hawaiian language and cultural practices. OHA believes that Dr. Winter’s background will be of great service to the ESRC and its work, and will directly further the vision underlying the creation of the cultural background position he is being nominated to fill.

Dr. Winter has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to the preservation and application of Native Hawaiian biocultural knowledge, and has extensive experience incorporating these traditional ‘āina relationships and understandings into successful resource management plans. For example, his many relevant accomplishments and endeavors include numerous publications, his nearly fifteen years of service with the National Tropical Botanical Garden’s Limahuli Garden and Preserve on Kaua‘i, his similarly longstanding support of culturally

grounded mālama ‘āina efforts such as those by the Hui Maka‘āinana o Makana and Kua‘āina Ulu ‘Auamo, and his current work with the Hawai‘i Institute of Marine Biology and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association’s National Estuarine Research Reserve program. OHA is confident that such education, experience, and expertise directly align with the mission of the ESRC, and with the vision underlying the inclusion of a cultural expert on the Committee.

In addition, OHA notes that Dr. Winter has also proven his commitment to Native Hawaiian cultural knowledge, language, and practices generally, as a student trained under various respected kumu and kūpuna including Kumu Hula John Ka‘imikaua, Uncle Eddie Kana‘ana‘a, and Kumu Levon Ohai. OHA believes that his cultural commitment and training will only further strengthen the value he would bring to the Committee as an advocate for Native Hawaiian cultural knowledge and perspectives.

For all these reasons, OHA supports Dr. Winter’s appointment as consistent with and in direct furtherance of the vision underlying the inclusion of a culturally versed member on the ESRC. Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** GM769.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

By
Judith Lemus, PhD
Interim Director
Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology
And
Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

GM 769 – Consideration and confirmation to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee, Gubernatorial Nominee, KAWIKA WINTER

Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Ruderman, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) offers strong support in favor of the appointment of Kawika Winter, PhD to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee (ESRC). Dr. Winters currently serves as the Reserve Manager for the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve on O'ahu and a faculty member at the the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Dr. Winter is a multidisciplinary ecologist who has focused his research and professional career on large scale biocultural restoration of social-ecological systems in Hawai'i. He is recognized as one of the foremost authorities on Hawai'i's endangered terrestrial ecosystems. He is a current nongovernmental at-large member on the ESRC and with his re-appointment we firmly believe that his expertise and background will continue to be an asset for the State of Hawai'i.

GM-769

Submitted on: 5/8/2020 3:02:00 PM

Testimony for AEN on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

GM-769

Submitted on: 5/10/2020 4:02:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kevin Chang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Rudderman, and Committee Members,

I strongly support the nomination of Kawika Winter to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

I have known Kawika now for almost two decades and can attest to his passion for taking care of Hawai'i's natural resources not just as conservationist but as a social, economic and cultural imperative. The term he often uses is biocultural resources to encompass the idea that our natural environment is integral to our culture, our economy and survival on this planet.

I also know Kawika from his current role and leadership at the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve and before that for his role as the executive director of Limahuli Gardens and Preserve and support and participation in the Hui Maka'Ā inana o Makana. In those roles he has also built a career in academia, community building and on the ground practical experience concerned with many of the issues the Endangered Species Recovery Committee must address and be guided by.

Lastly, Kawika is a dear friend and a member of a now not-so-young vanguard of people who have moved from an idealism and time of cultural renewal and care of kupuna and the perpetuation of indigenous knowledge and practices toward a transformation of our economy to one that supports these values, community and environment in better symbiosis.

I strongly support your vote in favor of Kawika's confirmation to the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

PÅ«pÅ«kahi i holomua e ho'okanaka

Kevin Chang

GM-769

Submitted on: 5/11/2020 1:06:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 5/13/2020 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Loyal Mehrhoff	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the confirmation of KAWIKA WINTER to serve on the Endangered Species Recovery Committee. Kawika has shown himself to be an extremely active and diligent ESRC member who has extensive knowledge of Hawaii's endangered species. His contributions to the committee have been science-based, reasonable, and well thought out. The ESRC has benefited from his service and I sincerely hope that he is reappointed to the ESRC.

Thank you,

Loyal A. Mehrhoff

Aloha Senator Gabbard,

Mahalo for the opportunity to answer to your questions. My responses are below.

(1) Why do you wish to be a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee?

I wish to remain as a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee for another term because I have dedicated my life to conservation, and this is one of the best venues to ensure the survival of our endangered species.

(2) How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee

The roles and responsibilities of a member of the ESRC is to uphold HRS 195D. I am fully committed to that.

(3) Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, or knowledge that would aid in your decision-making ability as a member of the Endangered Species Recovery Committee.

I have already completed a two-year term on the ESRC, and I have been re-nominated for another term. I have fully executed my role as a member for my first term, and I am ready to do that again. My career in conservation speaks to my ability to do this.

(4) What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?

I hope to ensure that HRS 195D is upheld in all habitat conservation plans and safe harbor agreements.

(5) Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Endangered Species Recovery Committee?

I have integrity, and I will conduct myself with such at all times. I have dedicated my life to the conservation and recovery of endangered species. I have the professional experience to know what works in the conservation and recovery of endangered species.

(6) Name one previous experience that would make you stand out. How would this benefit the Endangered Species Recovery Committee

For 13 years I was the Director of Limahuli Garden and Preserve on Kaua'i, and in that capacity I managed in the second-most biodiverse valley in the State. I managed conservation programs

and mitigation projects focused on the recovery of endangered species, and I have a long list of successes in that effort. I am also actively conducting research into the recovery of endangered species in Hawai'i.

(7) Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Endangered Species Recovery Committee? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?

I do not see any possible conflicts of interest. If any were to come up, I would fully disclose them and abide by the recommendations of the ethics department.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kawika Winter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kawika Winter, Ph.D.