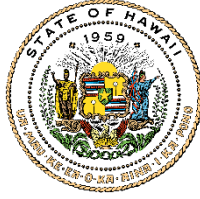


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
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**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA**

DIVISION OF AQUATIC RESOURCES
1151 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 330
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

**Testimony of
DAWN N.S. CHANG
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
WATER & LAND**

**Thursday, April 11, 2024
9:00 AM**

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Conference Room 430, State Capitol

**In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 67
URGING THE LEGISLATURE TO PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND RESTORE LIMU
KALA**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 67 proposes to preserve, protect, and restore limu kala to the full extent of the Legislature's ability. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

In 2023, the State Legislature passed House Bill 819 (Act 230) which designated limu kala as the official limu of the State of Hawai'i. The Department supported the Legislature's efforts for that designation, and the Department continues to support further efforts to preserve, protect, and restore limu kala.

This measure acknowledges and promotes the critical role that limu plays in our natural environment and in sustaining the people of Hawai'i. Limu kala has numerous uses and significant cultural importance. The Department realizes the decline of desirable limu species, including limu kala, throughout the State. The presence of native limu is an indicator of a healthy marine ecosystem. Many species of limu, including limu kala, need a brackish environment and therefore grow in abundance where there is mauka-makai water connectivity of kahawai (streams) or punawai (springs) to muliwai (river mouths or estuaries) to kai (ocean). Therefore, preserving, protecting, and restoring limu kala, a limu that grows where fresh and ocean water mix, honors the interdependence and connectivity of Hawai'i's environment.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

DAWN N.S. CHANG
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LAND
STATE PARKS



Testimony Before The
House Committee on Water & Land (WAL)
COMMENTS ON SCR67
April 11, 9:00AM, Room 430 & Via Zoom

We are Malia Heimuli and Olan Leimomi Fisher, Limu Hui Coordinator and Kua'āina Advocate, respectively, of [Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). "Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo" stands for "grassroots growing through shared responsibility," and our acronym "KUA" means "backbone." **Our mission is to connect and empower communities to improve their quality of life through the collective care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage, serving as a "backbone organization" that supports creative and community-driven solutions to problems stemming from environmental degradation.** Hawai'i's biocultural resources continue to be negatively impacted by political, economic, and social changes, and the increasing dangers of climate change make fostering and empowering resilient communities acutely critical.

Currently KUA supports three major networks of: (1) almost 40 mālama 'āina (caring for our 'āina or "that which feeds") community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together); (2) over 60 loko i'a (fishpond aquaculture systems unique to Hawai'i) and wai 'ōpae (anchialine pool systems) sites in varying stages of restoration and development, with numerous caretakers, stakeholders, and volunteers known as the Hui Mālama Loko I'a ("caretakers of fishponds"); and (3) the Limu Hui made up of over 50 loea (traditional experts) and practitioners in all things "limu" or locally-grown "seaweed." **Our shared vision is to once again experience what our kūpuna (ancestors) referred to as 'ĀINA MOMONA – abundant and healthy ecological systems that sustain our community resilience and well-being.**

KUA provides the following COMMENTS on SCR67, which we feel has potential to increase 'āina momona for Hawai'i nei.

One of the founding kūpuna of our first network E Alu Pū, Henry Chang Wo Jr., a recognized loea limu, grew up in 'Ewa Beach and personally witnessed the decline of limu there. He worked to create a Limu Management Area (LMA) in 'Ewa, a place legally designated for traditional limu gathering. Uncle Henry taught us that one of the main causes of the decline in limu is the loss of groundwater that once flowed abundantly along the shoreline of 'Ewa. As the flow of groundwater decreased, limu abundance decreased. One of Uncle Henry's famous sayings was "**No limu, no fish.**" Although Uncle Henry passed away in 2015, he left a lasting legacy which includes the Limu Hui, the 'Ewa LMA, and the challenging, yet solvable, mission to bring limu back to 'Ewa the way that it once was. KUA works to perpetuate his legacy and support the people who carry on the practice of caring for limu across Hawai'i. This resolution, if our suggested amendments are incorporated, has the potential to be a part of Uncle Henry's legacy, and we only wish he was still here to testify himself – but we continue to 'auamo (carry) his lessons with every step we take toward bringing back 'āina momona to our beloved 'āina.

We continue to advocate for more recognition and positive outcomes from HB819 (Act 230, 2023) designating Limu Kala as the official state limu. Recognizing the significant sociocultural dimensions of Limu Kala elevates the importance of the resources, people, and culture that make Hawai'i so special and important for biodiversity efforts both locally and worldwide. Act 230 (2023) also uplifts the work and passion of generations of kūpuna like Uncle Henry, who worked tirelessly to perpetuate Native Hawaiian practices and beliefs that bind us all to these islands. Any declines in Native Hawaiian limu populations, as well as increases in invasive limu across Hawai'i, underscore the larger and more holistic issues such as over development too close to shorelines, irresponsible runoff management, and water quality affected by many factors including untreated sewage. These issues require large scale solutions that would also make way for greater health, wellbeing, and happiness for us all, including limu. **A clear purpose for Act 230 (2023) was to provide more opportunities for awareness, education, and conservation in Hawai'i for not only Limu Kala, but all Native Hawaiian limu in Hawai'i, considering the vast environmental benefits and cultural significance of these living treasures.**

Although we appreciate the positive intentions of the resolution at hand, **we believe that SCR67 would be much more effective if it were to broadly urge the legislature to preserve, protect, and restore all Native Hawaiian limu.** As such, we strongly suggest that, with the exception of the first "WHEREAS" clause, all mentions of "limu kala" be replaced with "Native Hawaiian limu." This would also include the title of the resolution. If such amendments are accepted, KUA will gladly extend full support for SCR67 as a vehicle to increasing 'āina momona in Hawai'i and around the world.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide our comments. **Aloha 'Āina Momona, E Ola Limu!**



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April 10, 2024

To: Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and the House Committee on Water & Land

Re: **COMMENTS and amendments for SCR67**

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and the House Committee on Water & Land,

We respectfully offer **COMMENTS and amendments for SCR67** which urges the Legislature to preserve, protect, and restore limu kala.

We appreciate the sentiment of this resolution, however, by only including limu kala, we are missing an opportunity to acknowledge the fact that ALL Native Hawaiian limu are critically important to healthy marine ecosystems, ALL Native Hawaiian limu species support food security, and ALL Native Hawaiian limu species help to combat the negative effects of climate change.

While limu kala does absolutely contribute to healthy reefs and biodiversity, it does not grow in all conditions on all shorelines, and it is seasonal.

We recommend the following amendments:

- Change the title to "URGING THE LEGISLATURE TO PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND RESTORE NATIVE HAWAIIAN LIMU"
- With the exception of the first whereas, change all "limu kala" to "Native Hawaiian Limu"

Our marine resources are fragile and it is up to all of us to ensure their abundance is protected and maintained for future generations.

If the above amendments were implemented into SCR67, MPW would be in support.

Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea (MPW) is a grassroots, community non-profit that actively works to care for, educate about, and protect our fragile, near-shore marine ecosystems. Our mission is "working to replenish and sustain the natural and cultural resources of the Pūpūkea and Waimea ahupua'a for present and future generations through active community stewardship, education, and partnerships."

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony,

Jenny Yagodich

Jenny Yagodich
Director of Educational Programs &
Makai Watch Coordinator

SCR-67

Submitted on: 4/10/2024 8:48:51 AM

Testimony for WAL on 4/11/2024 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Uilani Naipo	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to support such a resolution if it were not limited to only limu kala, but to preserve, protect, and restore all Native Hawaiian limu. All Native Hawaiian limu are culturally significant and are indicators for healthy nearshore marine ecosystems. Please consider this amendment.

U'ilani Naipo

Miloli'i CBSFA Administrator