



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/23/2024

Time: 01:00 PM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 1969, HD1 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Establishes the shade tree program in the Department of Education to support educational activities and encourage propagation of native shade trees for planting in department schools. Appropriates funds for the program and to establish an arborist position. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) respectfully provides comments on HB 1969, HD1.

The Department recognizes the importance of increasing tree canopies on public school grounds. The additional full-time arborist could provide much needed support to manage the Department's existing tree responsibilities as well as any proposed new trees. Existing tree responsibilities include managing the overgrowth of weed vegetation in undeveloped areas, streams, and other difficult terrain that are located on the Department's property. Pursuant to Section 302A-1316, Hawaii Revised Statutes, individual schools can no longer use their funds to maintain these difficult areas.

Fast-growing trees such as Albizia are especially problematic, but other weed trees like ironwood, opiuma, and African tulip also overtake school grounds and threaten adjacent school areas. The additional full-time arborist could help with the management of these types of trees.

When determining the appropriateness of planting shade trees on school campuses

there are additional factors that should be considered:

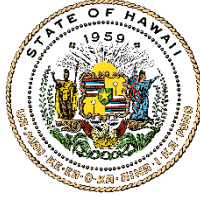
- The pruning and all other aspects of maintenance for shade trees;
- Shade trees may require chemical pest control which the Department generally doesn't allow on campus; and
- The planting of shade trees should not be on or near underground utilities (e.g., water lines, sewer lines, etc.) as the tree roots will compromise these lines.

The Department recognizes the educational and cultural importance of the propagation of native shade trees and is committed to improving opportunities in agriculture and natural resources for students throughout the state. While the Department appreciates the funding and position provided by this measure, this program is not part of the priorities identified in the Department's Board-approved budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1969, HD1.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO
ACTING 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

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Friday, February 23, 2024
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1969 HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

House Bill 1969 House Draft 1 establishes the shade tree program in the Department of Education (DOE) to support educational activities and encourage propagation of native shade trees and fruit trees for planting in DOE schools. Additionally, the bill appropriates funds for the program and would establish an arborist position. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this measure.**

In addition to a full-time arborist to increase the capacity of DOE to manage the existing and new trees, the Department suggests funds also be secured to support their maintenance. Trees are infrastructure and like all infrastructure also require maintenance to endure; however, unlike other types of infrastructure, trees provide a 3:1 return on investment through the services they provide (e.g., cooling buildings, absorbing stormwater, filtering air and water, providing a rich learning environment). Since the 1990s, the DLNR Division of Forestry and Wildlife's Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program has supported DOE schools with grants to green their campuses. A recent review of DOE grant recipients revealed that the strong efforts by individual principals, teachers, and students to plant and grow shade and fruit trees needs institutionalized support to be sustainable. Trees require long term care to yield all their potential benefits.

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



To: The House Committee on Finance (FIN)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Friday, February 23, 2024, 1pm

In strong support of HB1969 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the FIN Committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii **strongly supports HB1969 HD1** which establishes the shade and fruit tree program in the department of education to support educational activities and encourage propagation of native shade trees and fruit trees for planting in department schools.

As more and more we face the impacts of climate change, including hotter temperatures, it is important to plan and implement actions that will help mitigate these harmful effects. One such effective measure will be to increase tree canopies, particularly in urban areas and on school campuses.

HB1969 HD1 will have multiple benefits, including lowering the temperature on campuses through shade, contributing to clean air, and campus beautification. Trees also play an essential role both in mitigating climate-warming greenhouse gases, as well as supporting and improving the quality of life in our living spaces. Moreover, planting trees, especially fruit trees, on campuses can provide generations of students with environmental education opportunities and a source of organic fruit.

Students need to be able to play, gather, and learn outside while attending school. Trees, especially fruit trees, contribute to healthier and more beautiful campuses and communities. Efforts to reduce our environmental footprint and improve quality of life are a win-win for everyone and need to be supported.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this very important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



Written Testimony before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Friday, February 23, 2024

1:00 pm Conference Room 308

RE: HB1969 HD1 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Chair Yamshita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, Members of the House Committee on Finance:

Trees for Honolulu's Future ("TFHF") is a nonprofit organization with a vision for a tree-filled island that preserves and enhances our quality of life, especially in the face of climate change.

We strongly support the above-referenced Bill, which establishes (and funds and adds critical staff!) a shade tree program in the DOE to support educational activities and encourage propagation of native shade trees for planting in public schools.

This Bill's preamble does a terrific job in making the case for trees and specifically for trees in our schools. It links the actions to student learning. We also appreciate the Bill's effort to involve students in ongoing care of trees. The end result is a trifecta of positivity: good for Hawai'i's environment; great for students; and a nature-based solution to help ameliorate the impact of climate change. TFHF has done work in this space and with various schools and would be happy to be involved when, and as, appropriate.

We urge this Committee to pass the Bill and send it to the full House for passage and transmittal to the State Senate.

Mahalo,

Daniel Dinell, President

HONOLULU is HOT TREES are COOL

Visit us: www.TreesForHonolulu.org Contact us: info@TreesForHonolulu.org Voice/Fax/Text: 808-707-6353

P.O. Box 12051, Honolulu, Hawaii 96828



HIPHI Board

Misty Pacheco, DrPH
Chair
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

JoAnn Tsark, MPH
Secretary
John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Native Hawaiian Research Office

Debbie Erskine
Treasurer
ARCH-MEPS Consulting LLC, Owner

Keshia Adolpho, LCSW
Na'au Healing Center

Camonia Graham - Tutt, PhD
University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu

Carissa Holley, MEd
Hale Makua Health Services

Jennifer José Lo, MD
Hawai'i Pacific Health

Dina Shek, JD
Medical-Legal Partnership
For Children in Hawai'i

Garret Sugai
HMSA

Kathleen Roche, MS, RN, CENP
Kaiser Permanente

May Okihiro, MD, MS
John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Department of Pediatrics

Titiimaea Ta'ase, JD
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public
Defender

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol Free
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective

Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024

To: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Members of the Finance Committee

Re: Strong Support for HB1969 Relating to the Department of
Education

Mtg: Friday, February 23, 2024

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) works to advance policy and systems change to reduce disparities and improve the health of Hawai'i residents. HIPHI is home to and testifies here on behalf of The Hawai'i Farm to School Hui,¹ which collectively represents over 40 organizations from across the islands.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute appreciates the opportunity to provide Support for HB1969, which establishes and funds a shade tree program for the Department of Education (DOE) and funds an arborist position in the department.

This bill institutionalizes programs that have already existed for many years. Approximately 80% of DOE schools have a school garden of some variety. Many of these gardens include trees that can be used for shade, food, and education. Often schools have had to turn to outside funding programs and depended upon single teachers to plant and maintain agricultural trees on campus.

The Farm to School Hui recommends that the scope of this bill be broadened, to include a variety of trees, not just shade trees.

For several years the Farm to School Hui and HIPHI, along with other organizations, have coordinated the Food Trees for Schools program. This program has provided funding and technical assistance for roughly 20 schools to plant well over 100 trees across the state. These orchards have become living classrooms used for purposes as diverse as Counseling Sessions, biology classes, and community events. The trees also provide shade, helping to cool campuses and support physical activity. Furthermore, if trees are planted near sidewalks, they cool walkways and provide a more welcoming environment for pedestrians.

Perhaps most importantly, increased nutritional education and knowledge of locally grown and raised foods for consumption by Hawai'i's students will positively impact the health of our keiki and the development of Hawai'i sustainable food systems.

Under Act 175, the DOE is required to purchase locally grown food as 30% of total procurement by 2030 and 50% by 2050. More food trees on school campuses will not just help reach this goal, it will help students and their families understand why this goal is important.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of HB1969.

Mahalo,



Dennis Chase
Hawai'i Farm to School Hui Program Manager
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

ⁱ Founded in 2010, the **Hawai'i Farm to School Hui** is a statewide network comprising five island-level networks, community organizations, schools, state agencies, and other food systems stakeholders with a collective mission to strengthen Hawaii's farm to school movement. The three pillars of successful farm to school programs are 1) school gardens and on-campus farms, 2) education, and 3) school food improvements through local procurement.



Food+ Policy Internship 2024

food@purplemaia.org

February 22, 2024

Subject: *HB1969 - Relating to the Department of Education*

Aloha Chair Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa, and the House Committee of Finance,

Mahalo distinguished legislators for taking the time to review this testimony being submitted **IN SUPPORT** of **HB1969** which would establish the shade tree program in the Department of Education, aimed at supporting educational activities and promoting the propagation of native shade trees for planting in department schools. It also appropriates funds for the program and for establishing an arborist position.

According to Hawaii Public Radio, 2019 was one the hottest year on record with temperatures reaching over 100 degrees in some places on the Oahu (Harlow, 2020). In the same article, former Mayor Kirk Caldwell reported that increasing tree canopy would make a significant difference and help cool communities. As the trees planted from this program grow and mature, their shade would provide cover for students, teachers, and other school faculty from the rising temperatures our planet is experiencing and creates a social and educational space where anyone can appreciate nature as well as enjoy the trees much needed cooling effects.

Having a dedicated arborist is key since that person will be trained and equipped with planning and handling any challenges faced. It would also add a layer of education by creating space for knowledge exchange between the arborist and teachers or schools to teach about the trees more effectively. Additionally, the arborist can report back on tree growth and have a working relationship with the schools. Through this working relationship, they will be able to provide a critical perspective and insight to how the program can move forward in achieving its goals.

This fruit and native shade tree program is essential in our educational system. Growing food is a science that is encouraged to be taught in schools, which is evident in the Farm to School initiative and through the native shade and fruit tree bill. By including native shade and fruit trees into the curriculum, you are exchanging knowledge that can later be passed on to the parents. But this program is more than it's learning components or its aesthetics, though it would

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2024, the cohort of interns are undergrads and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



Food+ Policy Internship 2024

food@purplemaia.org

increase property values, but also for the ecosystem services the trees can provide. Planting more trees in general will aid in carbon sequestering and prevent soil erosion. There is also the added opportunity to preserve native trees. Bringing this program to life will encourage the healthy ecosystems we need to encourage life in these areas.

We urge the committee to pass HB1969. We would like to thank Chair Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa, and the House Committee of Finance for considering the comments herein.

Mahalo,
Janine Mariano & Hawaii Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

References:

Harlow, C. (2020, February 21). *O'ahu experienced hottest year on record in 2019*. O'ahu Experienced Hottest Year On Record In 2019. Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/local-news/2020-02-20/o-ahu-experienced-hottest-year-on-record-in-2019>

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2024, the cohort of interns are undergrads and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

HB-1969-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 5:37:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica dos Santos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Resepcted Legislators,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for HB1969, which aims to establish and fund a shade and fruit tree program within the Department of Education in the state of Hawaii, as well as to create an arborist position within the department. As a concerned citizen deeply invested in the well-being of our community and environment, I firmly believe that this legislation is a crucial step towards fostering a healthier, greener, and more sustainable future for our state.

The benefits of trees, particularly shade and fruit trees, are manifold and undeniable. Not only do they enhance the aesthetic appeal of our surroundings, but they also play a pivotal role in mitigating the adverse effects of climate change, improving air quality, conserving energy, and promoting biodiversity. Furthermore, the presence of trees has been shown to have a positive impact on mental health, academic performance, and overall quality of life, especially for students and educators within educational institutions.

By establishing a shade and fruit tree program within the Department of Education, HB1969 will not only provide invaluable educational opportunities for students to learn about the importance of trees and environmental stewardship but also create tangible benefits for schools and communities across the state. Access to shaded areas and fresh fruits will contribute to the physical and mental well-being of students, while also fostering a deeper connection to nature and instilling lifelong habits of sustainability.

Moreover, the creation of an arborist position within the Department of Education will ensure the effective management, maintenance, and care of trees within school grounds, thereby maximizing their ecological, economic, and social benefits. A dedicated arborist will be instrumental in conducting tree assessments, implementing tree planting initiatives, providing technical expertise, and engaging with stakeholders to support the long-term success of the shade and fruit tree program.

In conclusion, HB1969 represents a visionary investment in the health, resilience, and prosperity of Hawaii's communities and ecosystems. By supporting this legislation, we have an unprecedented opportunity to empower our youth, strengthen our schools, and cultivate a more sustainable future for generations to come. I urge you to wholeheartedly endorse and prioritize the passage of HB1969 for the collective well-being of our state.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or assistance.

Sincerely,

Jessica dos Santos

HB-1969-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2024 8:10:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Lynch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Legislators

I write my testimony today in support of HB1969 for several reasons. The need for schools to have shade and fruit trees are important to the students and staff as well as the environment. Also ensuring that a qualified staff member (s) designated task has equal importance. As you know fruit and shade trees create a better atmosphere and areas for people to congregate in nature as well as natural habitat for various plants and organisms. Mahalo for your vote in passing this bill.

HB-1969-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2024 1:13:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cailyn Schmidt	Farm to School Hui	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a coordinator for the Food Trees for Schools program of the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui, I am in strong support of HB1969 to help establish shade at public schools across the state. Often schools have had to turn to outside funding programs and depended upon single teachers to plant and maintain agricultural trees on campus. Having a healthy environment at school is an environmental justice issue, and one that every child in Hawai'i deserves. Establishing a shade tree program in the Department of Education and created a second arborist position in the department would ensure that children and youth across the state have access to a healthy environment on their school campus. According to research, shade trees help to cool campuses, help students focus and feel better, support physical activity and even improve test score rates. What is more, increased nutritional education and knowledge of locally grown and raised foods for consumption by Hawai'i's students will positively impact the health of our keiki and the development of Hawai'i sustainable food systems.

Approximately 80% of DOE schools have a school garden, including trees that can be used for shade, food and education. The Farm to School Hui also recommends that the scope of this bill be broadened to include a variety of trees, not just shade trees.

This bill would intititutionalize a program that already exists for the benefit of Hawaii's youth and create resilient school systems in the face of climate change.

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because my kumu once told me the beauty of how Hawaii used to look before we started to live here. I also think that if we have more native plants it would make the school's look nicer, get the kids to participate more in cultural activities, and raise the awareness of our native plants/trees. The importance of planting these native trees/plants is that it would increasingly help with healthier soil, prevent erosion, and etc.

Sincerely, Alexander

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because native plants are important and can benefit your campus. It can benefit your campus because it contributes to clean air and can make your campus beautiful. Also it can benefit the keiki by educating them with the 'ike that it held within it. Native plants can essentially reduce the loss of water and consequently flooding. Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony for this important bill.

Sincerely, Aliana

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because planting native trees would help not only to provide shade, clear air, but also to keep native trees thriving, and having native trees on our campus. We could use them for medicinal purposes and further educate ourselves with ike kupuna about the different uses for our native trees like kukui. Kukui nuts can be turned into this oil that is good for skin conditions like dry and chapped skin. Having access to native trees like this on our campus will allow us to learn the benefits of them and also do hands-on experience by taking care of the trees, and forming products out of them.

Sincerely, Clara

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because it is important for kids like me who live in Hawaii to know about the native tree in the place they come from. And it is a good learning experience to work with some of these native plants like the kukui. There are different benefits like kukui like you can make kukui oil, you can make inamona ect. And that is only the kukui tree and there are many more native trees that we as kids can learn about

Sincerely, Finn

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha mai kākou,

‘O Isabella ko’u inoa, no Waimānalo Ko’olaupoko mai au. I am currently a student at Mālama Honua Public Charter School. After reviewing the information said in the bill, I strongly support this project and bill. I believe this bill would be able to greatly benefit our school communities in many positive ways since many problems could be solved through this effort. As mentioned in the bill, the trees would clean the air, reduce heat that enters campuses, positively affect a student’s ability to learn while in school, offer learning opportunities to the keiki of Hawai’i, and contribute to the overall health of our ecosystems. Especially incorporating indigenous Hawaiian plants would be beneficial towards this project. As Hawai’i continues to lose many different species of native plants and animals, being able to use native plants that revive our culture rather than plants that are invasive brings us a step closer to sustaining our community. If we continue letting hāole koa and iron wood trees take over our ‘āina, we will continue to lose native plants at a fast rate. One native Hawaiian tree that would be very beneficial to this project is ‘Ohi’a Lehua. ‘Ohi’a Lehua are known for being able to adapt to variable and harsh weather conditions that we encounter in the Hawaiian islands. They also play a key role in watershed protection and water conservation by retaining water that comes following storms and preventing subsequent erosion and flooding. Overall, I believe this bill would be able to greatly benefit the environment while offering new and different learning opportunities to many different schools. This project has the potential to positively impact the education and healthiness of hāumana, schools, and the ‘āina. Through this effort, we are able to contribute towards the rehabilitation and sustainment of our community for years to come.

Sincerely,

Isabella Manini, 8th Grader from Mālama Honua PCS

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha, O Wau O Jace.

Aloha I'm Jace and I'm a student currently enrolled in Malama Honua Public Charter School and I support this bill. Coming from a school focused on the importance of land preservation, native Hawaiian trees play a substantial role not only in the climate of Hawai'i but also within the cultural practices of Hawaiians. Trees such as the 'ohiā lehua had both medicinal properties and uses for building. In the traditional practices of la'au lapa'au, a practice where native hawaiians would use plants and convert them to medicine, the 'ohiā lehua leaves would be used for a medicinal tea. While the wood would be used to make a multitude of cultural items such as po'i boards (Papa), kapa beaters, weapons, and houses. Identifying ancient uses for this plant, it could be translated to a school environment where it could be used as a source of information and curiosity. As many schools don't provide firm education on the Hawaiian practices, being able to have native trees surrounding school campuses can help assist in this problem as it can take students outside and be educated on the uses of the plant. Through this it can help more people be able to know the importance and value of native plants. Currently my campus is surrounded by invasive plants such as haulekoa, with the lack of native plants. The current state of the 'ohiā lehua is in danger due to the introduction of many diseases that have decimated a larger population of the trees. Being able to have 'ohiā will allow it to have more abundance across the islands and make it increase to a level where it will be stable. If the population does become stable again throughout the islands, we will be able to reforge the ancient uses of the trees to help our communities. Showing the benefits of planting native trees.

Mahalo for reading my testimony for this bill,
Sincerely, Jace Inagaki.

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because with the native Hawaiian trees on campus it will bring awareness to endangered native plants and trees in Hawai'i. I think Hala tree would be a perfect tree to put on school campuses as it has a lot of uses and history. I also think that the Ohi'a lehua tree could be put on school campuses as they are starting to be endangered and having them on campus would bring awareness. The native trees could be used as learning experiences, shade/canopy, and much more. Native Hawaiian trees are very important to Hawai'i because native trees house native birds and also help the environment. This is the reason why I support this bill.

Sincerely,

Leina'ala

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because knowing that Hawaiian trees are deteriorating the more time goes on. I feel this bill will also help students learn more about native trees and how to care for them. It can also introduce them to the importance of native plants, things they can do with them. Maybe even medicinal ways they can use them. This is why I support this bill

Sincerely, Kaalaneo Hikalea

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha, O Keahi kou inoa no Waimanalo mai au

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School and I support this bill because as a keiki of Waimanalo I love to play with friends and family outside in the sun, and with the trees being planted will benefit us because as we play in the sun we could grow tired and want to take a break, so with the tree being planted we can sit down and take a break in the shade. I also think it could be like a natural playground because as a little kid I loved to climb trees. It will also add a nice touch to the campus.

Sincerely,

Keahi

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because if they plant Native Hawaiian trees on their campus, students can learn more about the importance of native plants and the benefits that can come from it. Planting Native Hawaiian trees can help people further connect with our culture and it can help with stress, and create a calming energy so that people can relax.

Sincerely,

Keaka

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am an eighth grade student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because according to the Department of Land and Natural Resources 90% of our native plants are found nowhere else in the world. This is significant because with the ability to have access to these plants on campus is an amazing opportunity not only for students but for teachers and community members as well. This is because not only are many of these plants are on thre brink of extinction and in a highly endangered state but because this is an opprotunity to save many. Like the 'Ōhi'a lehua, Koa, Kukui, La'amea, Hala, and many others including the Wiliwili which is found only in Hawai'i. All of these plants thought not all endemic but all native, all useful, and all an amazing option for shade and an amazing opportunity to learn different uses of these plants for the keiki of Hawai'i. It is extremely important for the keiki like me to learn and be able to learn about and use them the way our kupuna did. Having these plants on campus makes this much easier on teachers and students to obtain the information and ability to work with the trees. This is why I highly recommend and support the planting of these native shade trees on school campuses.

Sincerely,

Kaleo'omakani'olu'olu

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because

Native plants are important to Hawai'i because these different native plants and trees can teach us many things. We can learn many things from them like how to make hula implements or make food like pai'ai. With these plants and trees we can also help others by using la'au lapa'au methods from plants for different cuts or sickness and they can benefit us. Also these plants can benefit kids mentally because if we plant things like native flowers it can make them be in a good healthy work environment because they are proud of the space they are in. Planting these native plants can help our 'aina I know this because I went to a conference and one of the sessions was for Mauna Kea forest restoration and we planted native plants for fires on Mauna Kea to help stop things like destroying native plants and causing erosion so this can help our 'aina from being destroyed.

Research shows that kids benefit from spending time in nature. The benefits are increased attention, more physical activity, more complex use of language and better social skills.

Sincerely,

Lawai'a

February 22, 2024

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because it can help kids learn more about native plants and can help learn more cultural activities. I also think that planting native trees on school can also help clean the air and can have a nice atmosphere around the school. The importance of these trees/plants is that it can help with the soil to make it healthier, It can help with the ecosystem by helping the wildlife like native birds, and can help with educational and cultural benefits.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony for this important bill.

Sincerely, Matthew

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because there are benefits of planting trees.

Trees give off oxygen that we need to breathe. Trees reduce the amount of stormwater runoff, which reduces erosion and pollution in our waterways and may reduce the effects of flooding. Many species of wildlife depend on trees for habitat. Trees provide food, protection, and homes for many birds and mammals. It is also educational for the children of the schools to learn how to plant the trees and take care of them.

Sincerely, Puana Thompson

February 22, 2024

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because it can benefit your campus with beautiful native trees but can also encourage students to learn more about native plants. Most native Hawaiian trees are both pretty and really good for shade, an example is a Kou tree which has a beautiful orange flower with long and full leaves that are great for shade. Another good example is an 'ōhia lehua tree which has a beautiful red, yellow and orange flower depending on the tree you choose. This bill will help to encourage others to start to replant and utilize native plants. This is why I think we should support this bill to help campuses flourish and continue to utilize native plants.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony

Sincerely, Kalei

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because when we use native shading trees we are able to absorb storm weather and benefit the health of our ecosystem. Native trees are important because for example if we have kumu niu (coconut trees) growing around our campus we will be able to make kaula (rope) using the husk so we can make Hawaiian implements, use the water for ceremony, and the meat for 'ai (food). Another native tree that can be beneficial is the Kukui nut tree. With this tree it can beautify our campus and we can use the nut to make oil for dry skin. And lastly with our native trees we are able to study its medicinal qualities and use the different parts to make tools if we ever need to survive off the land.

Sincerely,

Kase

February 22, 2024

Support for HB 1969 Shade Tree Program

Aloha,

I am a student at Malama Honua Public Charter School. I support this bill because native trees are endangered because they are being overrun by invasive plants. Having these native plants can benefit the keiki and 'ōpio at schools to encourage them to get education about native plants and how to care for them. This can help us to clear the land as much as we can of invasive species. One example of a native tree is a La'a Mea. A la'a mea tree has benefited us as hula dancers by providing a fruit that we use as an implement. As hula dancers we use our surroundings. Using our surroundings can connect us more to the 'āina. This can encourage keiki at school to get educated on Hawaiian plants. This is the reason why I support this bill.

Sincerely,

Kaleiomailani

HB-1969-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2024 8:07:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiana Otsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testifying in strong support.

HB-1969-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2024 5:20:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lydi Morgan Bernal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you very much for hearing this bill! I strongly support this bill to promote tree planting and care, strengthened staff capacity via the additional arborist position, and increased beauty, health, food security, and quality of life on Hawaii's school campuses.

If possible please broadened the scope of the program to include all types of beneficial, non-invasive trees, such as food trees and native tree species (which may or may not be considered "shade trees").

Mahalo nunui!