



Aloha Tree Alliance (ATA) offers its strong support for HCR166, urging Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to continue the identification and prioritization of state lands in East O‘ahu suitable for the planting of native Hawaiian trees.

ATA is a Honolulu-based nonprofit dedicated to ecological restoration, climate resilience, and the perpetuation of Native Hawaiian cultural practices through community-centered reforestation practice. Our work is rooted in aloha ‘āina , the deep, reciprocal relationship between people and the land they care for. We believe that restoring native trees to our ahupua‘a is not only an ecological imperative, but a cultural one.

East O‘ahu is home to rich native ecosystems and communities with a profound connection to the land. Identifying suitable state lands for native tree planting in this region would expand opportunities for reforestation, watershed protection, and the restoration of habitat for native wildlife. Equally important, it creates space for communities to gather, steward, and deepen their pilina with the ‘āina.

ATA has seen firsthand what becomes possible when land is made available for this purpose. Our recently blessed Kuli‘ou‘ou Hawaiian Hardwoods Community Forest, developed in partnership with DLNR's Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW), demonstrates the transformative potential of biocultural restoration on state lands. This site is already bringing together cultural practitioners, master artisans, families, and youth to plant and steward native hardwoods including Koa, Lama, ‘Uhi‘uhi, and the endangered Na‘u. It is a living example of what community-based natural resource management can look like in practice.

We encourage DLNR to approach this land identification process with a biocultural lens — prioritizing sites where native tree planting can serve both ecological, educational and cultural goals, and where communities can be meaningfully involved in long-term stewardship. Hawai‘i is a recognized global leader in community-based conservation, and this measure is an opportunity to deepen that legacy in East O‘ahu.

Aloha Tree Alliance stands ready to serve as a partner in this effort. We bring nursery capacity, volunteer networks, restoration expertise, and established relationships with cultural practitioners and conservation agencies. Together, we can contribute to something far greater than ourselves, a legacy of healthy land for the generations to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

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HCR-166-HD-1

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Testimony for WLA on 4/17/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Fung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My son is a third-grader at Hahaione Elementary School. In one of their units of inquiry, they learned about government and civics. As part of that, he had an idea for a law to plant more Hawaiian trees, because he saw that the Hahaione ridge was brown and barren.

He share this idea with Rep. Gedeon during a Capitol tour that Rep hosted, and we support the resolution that he has proposed.

More Hawaiian trees are important for local ecosystem, providing homes and habitat for native animals. They also beautify the landscape, restoring the fauna that was originally intended.