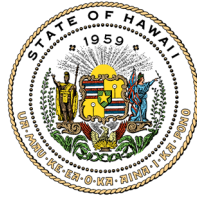


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'  
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
Acting Chairperson**

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

**Thursday, March 19, 2026  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 411**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 3253, SENATE DRAFT 2  
RELATING TO CONSERVATION**

Senate Bill 3253, Senate Draft 2 would create the Hawai'i Conservation Sanctuary, a nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing and supporting conservation efforts, endangered species protection, and wildlife preservation, as well as overseeing related programs. This bill is set to become effective on 7/1/2050. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent behind this measure and provides the following comments.**

The Department's mission is to protect, conserve, and manage Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources. The Department recognizes that accomplishing this mission increasingly relies on partnering with non-governmental organizations, including nonprofit groups that support State conservation efforts and priorities while enhancing public engagement and education.

The Department emphasizes the importance of ensuring that any nonprofit organization established under this measure aligns with existing statutory authorities.

The Department suggests the following amendments to page 4, lines 10 to 18:

(b) The Hawaii conservation sanctuary shall protect and expand populations of endangered species and other native wildlife [~~from~~] within [~~and outside~~] the State by developing and operating conservation sanctuaries in the State including:

- (1) One around a recreational body of water; and
- (2) One in an area appropriate for the protection of native birds; ~~and~~
- (3) ~~One in an area appropriate for the protection of rescue animals and larger species of wildlife].~~

The Department does not support importing wildlife species from outside the State into Hawai'i. Additionally, the bill does not clearly specify which rescue animals or larger wildlife species it is intended to include.

The Department supports the goals of Senate Bill 3253, Senate Draft 2 to strengthen conservation through partnership and collaboration. This would require clear roles, responsibilities, and coordination.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

**SB-3253-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 7:38:51 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/19/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Godfrey Akaka	The Native Hawaiian Gathering Rights Association	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

We are in strong opposition to this bill. The continuous closed areas are eliminating hunting and fishing locations thus shrinking the size of public access for gathering and imposing more pressure into smaller areas. Environmentalists and climate change fanatics cannot take over our resources and further cause more damage with heavy imbalance to our ecosystems.



## Care for 'Āina Now Coalition

March 18, 2026

Hawai'i State Legislature  
House Committee on Water & Land

Re: Testimony with comments on SB 3253, SD2, Relating to Conservation

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and esteemed members of the committee,

On behalf of our coalition's leadership committee, we are writing to provide comments on SB 3253, SD2, relating to conservation. This bill establishes the Hawai'i Conservation Sanctuary to protect and expand the populations of endangered species and other wildlife in the State.

The Care for 'Āina Now Coalition submits testimony in support of SB 3253, which establishes the Hawai'i Conservation Sanctuary to protect and expand the populations of endangered species and other wildlife in the State. Our coalition strongly supports efforts that strengthen Hawai'i's commitment to stewardship of native ecosystems, protection of endangered species, and responsible management of our natural resources. Creating a framework for coordinated conservation partnerships has the potential to improve long-term outcomes for wildlife preservation while also increasing public awareness and engagement in mālama 'āina. We appreciate the purpose of this measure to bring together government agencies, conservation organizations, cultural practitioners, and community partners in a more unified approach to conservation.

At the same time, we respectfully urge careful implementation to ensure that the establishment of a conservation sanctuary does not unintentionally create risks to Hawai'i's fragile ecosystems. Any introduction, relocation, or management of wildlife should be conducted only with strong biosecurity safeguards, clear scientific guidance, and well-defined agency roles and responsibilities. We believe the goals of this measure can be successfully achieved if the program prioritizes protection of native species, prevents the introduction of invasive or non-native species except within secure conservation facilities, and maintains transparency and collaboration with existing conservation programs. With these considerations, the Care for 'Āina Now Coalition supports SB 3253 as a positive step toward strengthening conservation in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support this measure.

Care for 'Āina Now Coalition Leadership Committee

**SB-3253-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 11:08:37 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/19/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
kaimi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe this bill will encourage the regeneration of Hawaii's unique native ecosystems. We have seen projects like those proposed in this bill work well in other places.

I am in support of SB3253

**SB-3253-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 2:41:59 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/19/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alex Filardo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure and encourage the committee members to do so. Our Pacific neighbors in Aotearoa have demonstrated how this solutions works in practice, and this bill would enable us to take the needed conservation steps to protect endangered species in Hawaii. As the extinction capitol of the world, we need urgent and immediate action. SB 3253 is one step to get there.

Mahalo,

Alex Filardo

**SB-3253-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 2:45:31 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/19/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Carissa Cabrera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Members of the Committee,

SB3253 is a necessary and urgent bill that would enable the tools needed to give Hawai'i's endangered species a second chance at recovery. Our native species teeter on the edge of extinction, facing threats from climate change, invasive species, and habitat loss associated with development. Their removal from the ecosystem causes cascading impacts to the health of our environment, impacting our food systems, economy, and way of life. These conservation sanctuaries are a proven approach to species recovery, and can benefit our communities, visitor industry, and ecosystems at the same time. I strongly support this initiative moving forward and urge the committee to support it.

With aloha,

Carissa Cabrera