



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 10:31 a.m.

By

Darren T. Lerner, PhD
Director, Sea Grant College Program,
School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology
and
Vassilis L. Syrmos, PhD
Interim Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 2218 HD2 SD1 – RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) supports HB 2218 HD2 SD1. HB 2218 HD2 SD1 would authorize the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into “community co-management agreements” with qualified Hawai'i-based nonprofit groups both mauka (inland) and makai (seaward).

Hawai'i Sea Grant supports a novel program of research, education, and extension services, directed to the improved understanding and stewardship of coastal and marine ecosystems of the State, Region, and Nation. Authorizing co-management agreements between DLNR and qualified Hawai'i-based nonprofit groups will place one more tool in the Region's tool box for effective stewardship of natural resources.

Hawai'i Sea Grant currently partners with DLNR, as well as many community nonprofits across the State, on coastal and marine research and conservation initiatives. Co-management agreements will open up new opportunities for collaboration that support thriving coastal ecosystems, community resilience, and the perpetuation of cultural practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

‘Ōlelo Hō‘ike ‘Aha Kau Kānāwai

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT TO HB2218 HD2 SD1

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Ki‘ina Hana a me nā Kumuwaiwai
(Senate Committee on Ways and Means)
Ke Kapitala ‘o Hawai‘i
(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

Apelila 7, 2026

10:31PM

Lumi 211

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Senate Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HB2218 HD2 SD1, which provides clear and consistent pathway and standards for the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements. Such agreements empower communities to continue to mālama ‘āina and support ahupua‘a-based management. **Further, this bill has no appropriation or other funding request.**

OHA supports policies that protect and perpetuate traditional, place-based management practices consistent with OHA’s statutory and constitutional duties. OHA is the constitutionally-established body responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of Native Hawaiians.¹ Further, under the Hawai‘i State Constitution Article XII, section 7, the state has a specific duty to protect Native Hawaiian cultural practices, including practices that mālama ‘āina. In furtherance of its constitutional mission, OHA has identified the following strategic priority relevant to HB2218 HD2 SD1: “Increased community stewardship of Hawai‘i’s natural and cultural resources that foster connection to ‘āina, ‘ohana, and communities.”² OHA therefore has substantive obligations to protect the cultural and natural resources of Hawai‘i for the agency’s beneficiaries and believes this measure assists in this kuleana.³

¹ Haw. Const. Art. XII Sec. 5

² Office of Hawaiian Affairs, *Mana I Maui Ola: OHA’s 15-Year Strategic Plan for 2020-2035*, available at <https://www.oha.org/about/mana-to-maui-ola/>.

³ See HRS Chapter 10.

OHA recognizes community-based stewardship and management as perpetuating Native Hawaiian traditional and customary resource management practices. As one example, OHA has supported community-based fisheries management initiatives, particularly initiatives by rural communities that follow the Native Hawaiian traditions, values, and lifestyles that have sustained communities for generations.⁴

DLNR has long acknowledged that it alone cannot sustainably manage the public trust lands. Place based management by ‘āina based groups ensures resource protection and assists DLNR in fulfilling its mission to sustainability manage public trust lands. While communities and the State increasingly demonstrate overlapping interests and goals, no consistent legal pathway exists for DLNR to enter into community co-management agreements.

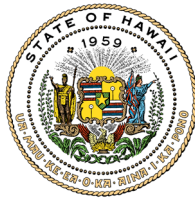
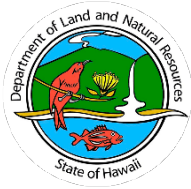
The management framework outlined in this bill would cure this problem and provide meaningful guidance to identify bona fide community groups with community ties and place-based relationships, and establish clear rights, roles, and responsibilities for community co-managers. The proposed framework in this bill is not merely theory, but codifies demonstrated best practices developed by community groups practicing mālama ‘āina. Authorizing community co-management agreements allows Native Hawaiian and local communities to care for their beloved places. **As a friendly amendment, and to ensure the primary purpose for co-management remains stewardship of place, OHA supports the amendments proposed by KUA.**

For the reasons stated above, OHA respectfully urges this committee to **PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this critical issue.

⁴ See, e.g., Office of Hawaiian Affairs Board of Trustees Resolution of February 27, 2014, *A Resolution Supporting Community Based Subsistence Fishing Area Designation and Rules*.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS
Tuesday, April 7, 2026
10:31 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2218, HOUSE DRAFT 2, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill 2218, House Draft 2, Senate Draft 1, authorizes the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to enter into community co-management agreements, establishes qualifications for eligible community co-managers, and authorizes the disposition of public lands by a community co-management agreement. **The Department submits this testimony in strong support of this measure and offers the following comments.**

This measure responds to long-standing structural limitations that prevent the Department from forming meaningful, long-term partnerships with community organizations that are essential to the stewardship, education, and care of public lands. Across the Department's divisions, existing legal tools—such as short-term permits, rights-of-entry, revocable agreements, or concession contracts—do not adequately support community-based co-management models and do not align with public trust principles or on-the-ground realities.

The Department manages vast and diverse public lands with limited staff and resources. These lands require ongoing stewardship, education, restoration, cultural access, and monitoring that cannot be met by the Department alone. Community partners regularly step forward to fulfill these roles on a volunteer or nonprofit basis, without seeking commercial benefit. However, current mechanisms do not allow for secure, long-term agreements that reflect the true nature of these partnerships.

In some cases, the Department has been unable to implement community co-management because existing legal tools are either too restrictive or inappropriate. For example, leasing arrangements that grant exclusive control have been found to conflict with public trust requirements, while concession agreements are designed for commercial activity and are not suitable for non-commercial stewardship or cultural partnerships. As a result, the Department

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CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
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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

has been limited to short-term or revocable agreements that fail to meet long-term management and restoration goals.

These short-term arrangements also make it difficult for community organizations to obtain funding or invest in long-term projects. Financial institutions are reluctant to support programs where agreements are month-to-month, revocable, or lack long-term security. Community partners must repeatedly seek renewals, creating uncertainty and administrative burden that undermines sustained engagement and capacity-building.

House Bill 2218, House Draft 2, Senate Draft 1, would allow the Board of Land and Natural Resources to enter into community co-management agreements through direct negotiation, without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations. This authority would create a more appropriate and transparent pathway for long-term partnerships that support stewardship, mālama ‘āina, and public access.

Under this framework, the Department would continue to require compliance with all applicable laws, including Chapter 343, HRS, and would ensure community outreach and environmental review where required.

Many community organizations lack the capacity to meet the financial, bonding, and environmental testing requirements associated with long-term commercial leases. Community co-management agreements would allow these largely volunteer-based groups to provide management, maintenance, education, restoration, and cultural programming without being subject to requirements that are unrelated to their mission or activities.

For lands managed for conservation and resource protection, such as Forest Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Natural Area Reserves, and Nā Ala Hele trails, long-term agreements are especially critical. Restoration, ecosystem recovery, and cultural practices require time horizons that extend well beyond the limits of short-term permits. A co-management framework would allow for sustained collaboration, trust-building, and intergenerational continuity of care.

In addition, many public lands—such as Forest Reserves—do not generate sufficient revenue to cover management costs. Community co-management agreements would allow partners to generate revenue, where appropriate, to help offset operational and stewardship expenses while maintaining public access and trust protections.

Community co-management agreements have the potential to create jobs for residents and to allow generated revenue to remain within these communities instead of in the pockets of foreign entities. Accordingly, every co-managed site represents avoided contractor costs, permitting the Department to extend project lifespans without engaging in public auction or procurement requirements, making co-management one of the most cost- and time-effective tools available for achieving various Department goals.

House Bill 2218, House Draft 2, Senate Draft 1, provides a long-term, secure, and flexible framework that protects the public trust, strengthens relationships between the Department and community partners, and supports collaborative mālama ‘āina principles. It fills a critical gap in existing law and enables the Department to more effectively steward Hawai‘i’s public lands for present and future generations.

However, the Department recommends the following amendment to page 5, lines 12-15, to ensure the primary purposes of this measure is for the Department to collaborate with community-based mālama'āina groups to steward public lands within the Department's jurisdiction while permitting collaboration in managing recreational activities:

- (4) Management of parking, ~~and~~ visitor activities, **and public and recreational park and facilities in conjunction with other mālama 'āina focused principles;**
- ~~(5) Management of public and recreational parks and facilities;~~
- ~~(6)~~(5) 'Āina education;

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

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

REIKO MATSUYAMA, MANAGING DIRECTOR



Testimony of Derek S.K. Kawakami

Mayor, County of Kaua'i

Before the

Committee on Ways and Means

April 7, 2026; 10:31 AM

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

In consideration of

House Bill 2218 HD2 SD1

Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

I write in **strong support** for HB 2218 HD2 SD1 which would authorize the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements and establish qualifications for eligible community co-managers; additionally authorizes the disposition of public lands by a community co-management agreement.

This legislation addresses critical gaps in Hawai'i's natural resource management framework while honoring traditional native Hawaiian stewardship practices with qualified community-based organizations.

Many community-government partnerships have existed for years in Hawai'i. The Hui Maka'āinana o Makana from Hā'ena, Kaua'i has worked for over two decades to steward Hā'ena State Park. The Hui has helped transform what was once a chaotic and overrun park to an area where the practices of our kupuna are perpetuated through the interpretation, restoration, care, and protection of its natural and cultural resources.

Although the Hui has a concession agreement with the DLNR, a longer-term agreement that honors the traditional native Hawaiian concept of mālama 'āina and place-based practices for natural and cultural resource management will allow them and other community groups across the state effectively manage the State's public trust resources. HB 2218 HD2 SD1 provides the mechanism for this care and protection.

Community co-management is not merely a cultural preference, it is a practical necessity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of HB 2218 HD2 SD1.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 5:23:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Testifying for Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!

HAWAI'I OCEAN LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE



April 7, 2026

Hawai'i State Legislature
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** for HB 2218 HD2 SD1, Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and esteemed members of the committee,

The Ocean Legislative Task Force—a coalition of more than 150 individuals across over 20 organizations statewide—**strongly supports** HB 2218 HD2 SD1, relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. This measure authorizes DLNR to enter into community co-management agreements and establishes qualifications for eligible community co-managers. It also authorizes the disposition of public lands by a community co-management agreement.

HB 2218 HD2 SD1 advances responsible stewardship of Hawai'i's public trust resources by formally recognizing the role that communities can play in caring for lands and waters through structured partnerships with the State. By authorizing DLNR to enter into written community co-management agreements with qualified community-based organizations, this bill creates a clear legal framework for collaborative, place-based management that can strengthen ecological outcomes while supporting cultural practices and local knowledge.

The Task Force strongly supports the bill's recognition of long-standing Native Hawaiian and community stewardship traditions, which have helped sustain natural and cultural resources for generations. Providing statutory authority for co-management will empower communities to participate meaningfully in conservation, restoration, education, and monitoring efforts in ways that align with both traditional practices and contemporary science.

This measure also helps build long-term local capacity to advance statewide conservation goals. Community co-management agreements can support habitat restoration, protection of marine and coastal resources, visitor management, and the preservation of customary and subsistence practices—priorities that directly align with DLNR's mission to protect Hawai'i's natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations.

The Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force advocates for measures that advance cesspool conversion and wastewater management, protect Hawai'i's coral reefs and reef fish, ensure transparent and sustainable implementation of the Green Fee program and long-term environmental staffing, and support other measures that strengthen Hawai'i's coastal and marine ecosystems.

Finally, HB 2218 HD2 SD1 establishes important qualifications for community co-managers that promote accountability, transparency, and readiness to undertake shared management responsibilities. These standards will help ensure that partnerships are effective, equitable, and grounded in broad community support, while respecting the State's public trust obligations.

For these reasons, the Ocean Legislative Task Force respectfully urges the Committee to pass HB 2218 HD2 SD1 with favorable recommendations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

The Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force advocates for measures that advance cesspool conversion and wastewater management, protect Hawai'i's coral reefs and reef fish, ensure transparent and sustainable implementation of the Green Fee program and long-term environmental staffing, and support other measures that strengthen Hawai'i's coastal and marine ecosystems.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

April 7, 2026

10:31 AM

Conference Room 211

In **SUPPORT** of **HB2218 HD2 SD1**: RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **strongly supports HB2218 HD2 SD1**. This bill provides long-needed statutory clarity for DLNR to enter into community co-management agreements with qualified Hawai'i-based nonprofits, an essential tool for effective, place-based stewardship across the islands.

For decades, communities across Hawai'i have stepped up to monitor, restore, and mālama the lands and waters they rely on, providing countless thousands of volunteer hours monitoring resources and both human and non-human activities, educating the public, developing place-based and culturally-informed management plans, and otherwise filling the gaps left by the lack of sufficient government resources. Existing community-based partnerships in places such as Hā'ena, Miloli'i, and Kīpahulu have already demonstrated that collaborative co-management strengthens resource protection and supports long-term ecosystem resilience. Yet, as highlighted at the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) meeting on July 25, 2025, the absence of a clear legal co-resource management mechanism has forced the state to rely on unsuitable and piecemeal instruments, such as concession agreements, to attempt to leverage the potential contributions of our communities – undermining long-standing community efforts and the true value of community-based stewardship.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 directly addresses this policy gap. This bill reflects extensive collaboration among community networks and organizations, such as Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo, and multiple DLNR divisions, to provide a consistent framework for shared management from mauka to makai that strengthens ecological resilience, honors cultural responsibility, and advances the public trust.

The Sierra Club does defer to the on-the-ground community organizations, including Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo, who may offer refined language for the management of recreational parks and facilities, that could even further strengthen the vision and impact of this measure.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to **pass HB2218 HD2 SD1**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



SIERRA CLUB
OF HAWAI'I



Testimony Before The
Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)
IN SUPPORT OF HB2218 HD2 SD1
April 7, 2026, 10:31 a.m., Room 211 & via Videoconference

We are Olan Leimomi Fisher and Kevin Chang, Kua'āina Advocate and Executive Director, respectively, testifying on behalf 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) over 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 strongly supports HB2218 HD2 SD1 as an incremental step toward 'āina momona.

This measure would authorize the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into "community co-management agreements" with qualified Hawai'i-based nonprofit groups both mauka (inland) and makai (seaward). KUA supported the development of this bill over the past several months with significant community input and under the leadership of the Hui Maka'āinana o Makana (the Hui), longtime collaborative caretakers of the Hā'ena State Park and Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) on Kaua'i. KUA was founded in part by leaders from Hā'ena and the Hui to empower communities to care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage together.

This legislative effort was born in response to a shift from the expected long-term lease to the Hui at a Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) meeting on July 25, 2025, to a concession agreement that was deemed the "only" legal instrument available to secure a long-term agreement with the Hui. As made clear during that BLNR meeting, while the Hui greatly appreciated the efforts of Division of State Parks (DSP) to help secure a concession agreement, the shift from an anticipated long-term lease came as a shock and disappointment to the Hui and many of their supporters. Both DSP and the Hui voiced that a concession

agreement is a step backward in their decades-long journey toward co-management of their ancestral 'āina in Hā'ena. After this disappointing BLNR meeting, and with strong support from Speaker Nakamura's office, an informal "Community Co-management Strategy Working Group" was formed to delve further into solutions to better support for community co-management in Hawai'i. What emerged from an issue only for the Hui was insight on a policy gap that could serve a greater statewide effort for other community co-management initiatives across the state. The working group helped with the creation of HB2218 (companion [SB2685](#)) as one potential solution. **Visit our [website](#) for more on the Hui's history with co-management and the inspirations behind this legislative effort.**

Emphasizing the collaborative nature of this bill, DLNR (DSP and Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR)) have been key partners from the beginning, with the Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) recently coming on board, too. House Speaker Nakamura's office has been instrumental in this whole effort as well. KUA hosted three community talk story sessions regarding this legislation, the first with our E Alu Pū network members on October 11, 2025 in Kahalu'u, Hawai'i Island, then two virtual talk story sessions on October 28, 2025 and January 7, 2026 with various KUA network members and partners. Feedback from this outreach was carefully incorporated into the original version of the bill.

We appreciate this SD1 version changing the HD1 addition of 5-year reviews to 10-year reviews, however these additional "reviews" are still unnecessary given that any community co-management agreement plan already requires "performance and accountability standards..." and "reporting processes and requirements," (Page 7, Lines 13 and 16). Regular reviews and reporting should be unique to each community co-management agreement plan, leaving more flexibility and discretion for DLNR and the communities themselves to determine.

The intent of these community co-management agreements has always been to uplift collaborative community-based mālama'āina efforts to restore and protect public trust lands and waters for future generations. The SD1 also added "Management of public and recreational parks and facilities," to one of the allowed purposes for these types of agreements (Page 5, Lines 13-14). The original HB2218 version included "Management of parking and visitor activities" at the request of DSP and specifically related to the situation in Hā'ena where the Hui helps manage parking and visitor activities *in conjunction with* their primary mālama'āina-based efforts. **We therefore suggest a friendly SD1 amendment on Page 5, Lines 12-15 to allow for these additional purposes *in conjunction with* the primary goal of uplifting collaborative community-based mālama'āina efforts:**

(4) ~~Management of parking and visitor activities~~Aina

education; and

(5) Management of parking, visitor activities, and public

and recreational parks and facilities in conjunction with

one or more of the above purposes; ~~or~~

~~(6) Aina education;~~

We also want to clarify certain questions raised in past hearings, particularly regarding Section 4 of HB2218 HD1 amending *Hawai'i Revised Statutes* (HRS) § 171-13. **Currently, [HRS](#)**

§ 171-13 already authorizes DLNR to dispose of public lands through various means including fee-simple, lease, lease with option to purchase, license, permit, and easement with reverter, subject to certain restrictions. Adding “community co-management agreements” to HRS § 171-13, along with the 65-year time period restriction (Page 6, Lines 1-5), gives DLNR the authority to enter into co-management agreements for *no longer than 65 years*, as already allowed for leases under HRS §§ [171-36\(a\)\(2\)](#) and [171-95\(a\)\(2\)](#). Therefore, **this bill does not allow for any fee-simple sale of public lands through community co-management agreements, but merely mirrors the existing law, and gives DLNR and community organizations the flexibility to determine appropriate time periods for such agreements that can be *no longer than 65 years*.**

Further, regarding potential disputes related to the hypothetical of two or more community-based organizations seeking to undertake co-management for the same area – the intention behind these community co-management agreements is to better enable established, well-respected, community nonprofits that have largely already proven they are ready to carry co-management kuleana with DLNR. **Vetting for community co-manager organizations was deliberated extensively through our community outreach discussions and infused throughout the bill**, including: (1) providing information on past and current projects in the proposed area, (2) justification for the co-management agreement, and (3) a list of qualifications for board members and staff. As written, HB2218 HD1 already allows for multiple purposes under these agreements (Page 5, Lines 9-21), and encourages cross-community collaboration with *more than one* organization able to partake in co-management *in the same area*. **Even further, any co-management agreement would still have to go through the HRS Chapter 91 public hearing process for further feedback and testimonies by others across Hawai‘i.**

The communities we work with are committed to ensuring the long-term health of our biocultural resources that they have cared for and depended on for generations since time immemorial. **We believe our environment, the foundation of our very existence, is about sustained and long-term commitments toward achieving ‘āina momona abundance once again.** To get there requires maintaining protections for mālama ‘āina, including through this bill, to protect necessary... Our decisions today will continue to shape the future that our keiki’s keiki will one day inherit – we hope for a future of shared and harmonious abundance, and hope you do, too.

Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to submit testimony. Please **PASS** HB2218 HD2 S1 with our suggested friendly amendments.

Aloha ‘Āina Momona no nā kau ā kau.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 7:55:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John & Rita Shockley	Testifying for Free Access Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

The Free Access Coalition supports HB2218. The free access to important government decisions needs to be shared by having public members involved.

The DLNR needs to open up to public groups who should be involved in decision making.

Mahalo for your time.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 8:20:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kehaulani Lum	Testifying for Ali'i Pauahi Hawaiian Civic Club	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to offer our **strong support** for HB2218 HD2 SD1 authorizing the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements with qualified community-based organizations.

Ali'i Pauahi Hawaiian Civic Club (APHCC), which is based in 'Aiea, 'Ewa, O'ahu, was chartered in 1973 by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, with a mission to perpetuate and preserve Native Hawaiian culture. We were founded mainly by teachers in the DOE; strong community leaders who understood the necessity of partnerships for ultimate success.

Since 2014, Ali'i Pauahi has partnered with the U.S. Navy to restore Loko I'a Pā'aiau, one of three royal fishponds comprising the complex built by Queen Kalanimanu'ia, of O'ahu, over 25 generations ago. Born in Wahiawa, at Kukaniloko, she moved her seat of government to Kalauao, and ruled from her ponds and lands in peace for over 65 years. In her time, there was no war, only abundance.

Our MOU with the U.S. Navy, the first of its kind in the nation, is a model of collaboration between native people and the federal government and allows partnerships with all levels of government and community. We have received awards for reconnecting community to the sacred space and served as a primary inspiration for which the Polynesian Voyaging Society requested permission from the Navy to bring its voyaging canoe Hōkūle'a into Pu'uloa (Pearl Harbor) for the first time in its then-40 year history, 8 years ago. In 205, the wa'a returned again and welcomed thousands of DOE students, families and visitors to visit and learn. None of this would have happened without our collective kuleana.

The late Dr. Noa Emmett Auwae Aluli, a lineal descendant of Pā'aiau, described the magnificent interconnectivity of mālama 'āina best, when he said: "Ola ka 'āina, ola ke kanaka, ola ka lāhui." "The health of the land is the health of the people, is the health of the nation." Aloha Kekahi i Kekahi.

The State has an affirmative duty to mālama'āina, care for the public trust lands and waters of Hawai'i. Caring for our precious 'āina (that which feeds us all) requires collective kuleana (responsibility), and as DLNR has long acknowledged, it alone cannot effectively and sustainably manage all the lands and waters within its purview. For decades, grassroots

communities throughout Hawai‘i have been supporting and collaborating with DLNR to mālama the places we all love and call home. But while the need and interest in collaborative mālama‘āina continues to grow, no consistent legal pathway exists for DLNR to enter into community co-management agreements. Several different tools do exist (e.g., curatorships, permits, concessions, community-based subsistence fishing areas), but these all vary significantly in form and function, often causing various administrative delays and managerial issues.

The primary intent of community co-management agreements is to empower more community-based mālama‘āina groups to collaborate with DLNR in caring for our public trust ‘āina for present and future generations. In light of this, we respectfully recommend a friendly amendment to the “purposes” section in the SD1 (Page 5, Lines 12-15), allowing for “management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities” in conjunction with the other mālama ‘āina-focused purposes. These are integral connections to ensure peace, harmony and pono practice.

Please **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1 with our friendly amendment.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kehaulani Lum, Pelekikena

Ali'i Pauahi Hawaiian Civic Club



Chair Dela Cruz
Vice Chair Moriwaki
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Tuesday, April 7, 2026
10:31 AM

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2218 HD2 SD1 RELATING TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

The Hawai‘i State Youth Commission was first created through Act 106 in 2018, “to advise the governor and legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the State.” The Hawai‘i State Youth Commission is in **strong support** of **HB2218 HD2 SD1**.

As a youth-led body, we recognize that the decisions made today shape the Hawai‘i future generations will inherit. This measure supports long-term, community-driven stewardship by giving DLNR clear authority to enter into co-management agreements with community groups, strengthening care for Hawai‘i’s lands in partnership with communities.

By expanding community-based co-management, this bill creates additional opportunities for youth to engage in place-based, ‘āina-centered education. The need for climate and environmental literacy is urgent, as Hawai‘i faces more frequent and intense storms, prolonged droughts, and increasing wildfire risk. Yet many young people remain disconnected from the

knowledge and skills needed to respond to these challenges. Strengthening these pathways can better connect youth to the ecosystems and practices that sustain our islands, helping prepare the next generation to navigate these growing environmental realities.

The Hawai'i State Youth Commission urges the committee to **PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Hawai'i State Youth Commission

hawaiistateyc@gmail.com

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:28:42 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Fox	Testifying for Malama Kaua'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo nui for your consideration.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:33:59 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Testifying for Green Party of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DelaCruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Honorable Members of Committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as co chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i, and on behalf of our members we are grateful to have the opportunity to offer VERY Strong Support for HB2218 HD2 SD1.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama 'āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

The Green Party of Hawai'i, applauds this bill and we urge you to Pass HB2218 HD2 SD1 !

Mahalo for this one!

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauiilo



Care for 'Āina Now Coalition

April 7, 2026

Hawai'i State Legislature
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 2218 HD2 SD1, Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and esteemed members of the committee,

On behalf of the Care for 'Āina Now Coalition leadership committee, we write in strong support of HB 2218 HD2 SD1, relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. This measure authorizes DLNR to enter into community co-management agreements and establishes qualifications for eligible partners.

HB 2218 HD2 SD1 strengthens stewardship of Hawai'i's public trust resources by enabling collaboration between the State and community-based organizations through a clear co-management framework. This approach supports place-based management grounded in local knowledge and community relationships.

Community organizations across the state are already engaged in restoration, monitoring, education, and cultural stewardship. This measure better aligns those efforts with state priorities while recognizing the importance of Native Hawaiian knowledge and long-standing stewardship practices.

Co-management will also help build capacity to advance key conservation priorities, including habitat restoration, protection of marine and coastal resources, visitor management, and the continuation of customary and subsistence practices. The bill also establishes qualifications for co-managers that promote accountability, transparency, and strong community support.

For these reasons, the Care for 'Āina Now Coalition leadership committee respectfully urges the Committee to pass HB 2218 HD2 SD1 with favorable recommendations. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Care for 'Āina Now Coalition Leadership Committee

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy
Supporting HB2218 HD2 SD1, Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources
Committee on Ways and Means
April 7, 2026 at 10:31 am
Conference Room 211 and via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify today. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Hawai'i and Palmyra strongly supports HB2218 HD2 SD1, which authorizes the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements, establishes qualifications for eligible community co-managers, and authorizes the disposition of public lands by a community co-management agreement.

TNC has worked across Hawai'i to conserve native ecosystems in partnership with the State and community leaders who hold generational knowledge and kuleana for their lands and waters. These partnerships have advanced watershed protection, invasive species control, community-led monitoring, nearshore fisheries management, coastal restoration, and resident and visitor education. Despite their maturity and success, there remains no consistent statutory authority to define shared responsibilities, roles, and rights of entry and use between DLNR and co-managers.

Across the state, including at Kīholo, Kīpahulu, and Ka'ūpūlehu, TNC has seen how supporting community-led stewardship produces stronger ecological outcomes and more durable, culturally grounded management solutions. These communities already engage in long-standing collaborative management with DLNR, including through Curatorship Agreements, Fishery Management Areas, and other arrangements. However, these tools do not provide the consistent, comprehensive, durable framework needed to clarify shared management functions, ensure accountability, and support the multi-generational planning needed to best manage the state's natural and cultural resources.

The primary intent of community co-management agreements is to empower more community-based mālama 'āina groups to collaborate with DLNR in caring for our public trust 'āina for present and future generations. In light of this, we suggest an amendment to the "purposes" section in the SD1 (Page 5, Lines 12-15), allowing for "management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities" in conjunction with the other mālama 'āina-focused purposes.

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The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra
April 7, 2026
Page 2

By authorizing long-term agreements with qualified nonprofits, this bill allows successful partnerships to be supported in a consistent, transparent, and enduring way. TNC respectfully urges passage of this measure to ensure communities and ecosystems across Hawai'i can continue to thrive through sustained collaborative care.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB2218 HD2 SD1.

Guided by science, TNC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 84,000 acres in 13 nature preserves and 18 managed areas and have supported over 50 coastal communities to help protect and restore the nearshore reefs and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 6:06:56 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nakoolani Warrington	Testifying for Kupuna for the Moopuna	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2218 HD2 SD1

We, Kūpuna for the Mo‘opuna, a hui of Hawaiian Homes Commission Act kūpuna beneficiary farmers from Pana‘ewa, Hawai‘i, **testify in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2218 HD2 SD1.**

HB 2218 HD2 SD1 will allow the Board of Land and Natural Resources to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust. This measure will help ensure the protection of environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life for generations to come.

SUPPORT and PASS HB 2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo.



HAWAI'I LAND TRUST

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Date: April 7, 2026

Time: 10:31 a.m.

Place: CR 211 and via Videoconference

Re: SUPPORT – HB 2218 HD2 SD1, Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources

Aloha e Luna Ho'omalua Dela Cruz, Hope Luna Ho'omalua Moriwaki, a me nā Lālā o ke Kōmike:

Hawai'i Land Trust (HILT) **SUPPORTS** HB 2218 HD2 SD1, which authorizes the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements and establishes qualifications for eligible community-based organizations to serve as co-managers.

As an entity that works collaboratively with diverse public and private partners to enable and provide land stewardship, HILT recognizes that the care of our natural and cultural resources can be strengthened by formal relationships between the State and the communities who know these lands best. Community co-management is a proven model for effective stewardship, as it leverages local knowledge, ensures a consistent presence on the ground, and fosters a deep sense of kuleana among residents.

This bill provides a much-needed legal framework for the disposition of public lands via co-management agreements. By establishing clear qualifications for community co-managers, this bill ensures that organizations tasked with these responsibilities are non-profits with a demonstrated commitment to resource protection and the technical capacity to execute stewardship plans effectively. This transparency and structure will empower community-based organizations while providing the DLNR with reliable partners to help meet our shared 'āina stewardship goals.

For organizations like HILT, these agreements represent a vital pathway to formalizing stewardship roles that many community groups have unofficially held for generations. Formalizing these partnerships through HB 2218 will secure the long-term care of Hawai'i's unique ecosystems and cultural sites for the benefit of all residents and future generations.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

'Olu Campbell

President and Chief Executive Officer



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Sunday, April 5, 2026

To: The Honorable Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair,
The Honorable Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair & members of the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: HB 2218 – Mechanism for Board of Land and Natural Resources to partner
With community groups to co-manage and steward lands and waters of the State

Hearing: Decision-making, Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:31 am, Room 211 & video

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha e, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i has approximately 6,680 enrolled members in all four of Hawai'i's counties. **We strongly support HB 2218.** As we all know, the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the State of Hawai'i's affirmative, constitutional duty to *mālama 'āina*, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under the Board's jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligation on its own without help.

This bill would create an explicit and consistent legal pathway and mechanism for the BLNR to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the State's constitutional duties. Under this bill, if it becomes law, the Board could establish formal relationships with community organizations to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their *'āina*. Grassroots communities throughout Hawai'i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board.

This bill would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai'i, for the benefit of the public trust, our *'āina*, and present and future generations.



Testimony in strong support of HB 2218 re co-management of lands & waters
For Senate Ways and Means Decision-Making
April 7, 2026
Page 2

Accordingly, the Environmental Caucus joins many others in supporting this valuable bill.

Mahalo nui loa,

Alan Burdick, Co-Chair burdick808@gmail.com

Mike Ewall, Co-Chair mike@energyjustice.net

Melodie Aduja Co-Chair *Emerita* legislativepriorities@gmail.com

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 3:56:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannette Gurung	Testifying for WOCAN	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Jeannette Gurung, PhD

Kailua Kona



*He Lawai'a no ke kai papa'u, he pōkole ke aho; He Lawai'a no ke kai hohonu
he loa ke aho" "A fisherman of shallow seas uses a short line; a fisherman
of the deep sea uses a long line."*

KALANIHALE

April 5, 2026

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Kaimi Kaupiko**, and I submit this testimony on behalf of **Kalanihale** and in support of the **Miloli'i community in strong support of HB2218 HD2**.

This measure is important because it gives the Department of Land and Natural Resources clear authority to enter into **community co-management agreements** with qualified community-based organizations for the stewardship of public trust lands and resources. The bill recognizes that this approach honors Native Hawaiian concepts of **mālama 'āina** and **ahupua'a-based management**, while creating a practical framework for long-term partnership between communities and the State.

For Miloli'i, this bill is especially meaningful. The measure specifically recognizes that communities such as **Miloli'i, Hā'ena, Kipahulu, and Kealahou** have already established community-based subsistence fishing areas and would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. That recognition matters because it reflects what our communities have long known: place-based communities carry generational knowledge, stewardship capacity, and a deep commitment to caring for the natural and cultural resources that sustain us.

As someone from Miloli'i, I know our relationship to 'āina and kai is not theoretical. It is cultural, genealogical, and lived. Our families have long practiced stewardship through responsibility, observation, and reciprocity. HB2218 HD2 helps create a lawful and accountable pathway for communities and government to share responsibility in caring for these resources for subsistence, cultural, and future community benefit.

We also support this bill because it allows co-management agreements to include the protection of natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian customary and traditional practices, habitat restoration, visitor management, and 'āina-based education. It also requires co-management plans to include clear responsibilities, adaptive management, accountability, reporting, and equitable data sharing. Those provisions are important to ensure these agreements are credible, durable, and community-centered.

For these reasons, **I, Kaimi Kaupiko, on behalf of Kalanihale and in support of Miloli'i, strongly support HB2218 HD2** and respectfully urge the Committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**Me ka ha'aha'a,
Kaimi Kaupiko
On behalf of Kalanihale and in support of Miloli'i**

89-1831 Milolii Road
Captain Cook, HI 96704

Phone: (808)937-1310
Fax: (866)265-6376

kalanihale@gmail.com
www.kalanihale.com

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 5:54:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Keolamau Tengan	Testifying for KA'EHU	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Keolamau Tengan, Executive Director of KA'EHU - a Native Hawaiian run organization that stewards 64 acres of coastal wetlands and 4,500 feet of coastline. I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai'i's affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama 'āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai'i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their 'āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state's constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai'i, for the benefit of the public trust, our 'āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Keolamau Tengan



April 6, 2026

To: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki, and the members of the Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Subject: **HB2218 HD2 SD1**, Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources

Aloha,

We express **our strong support for HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which authorizes the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements and establishes qualifications for community co-managers.

The bill's establishment of stable, long-term, co-management agreements can secure land access for community groups engaged in mālama 'āina activities that in turn promote local food production. Ensuring 'āina is respectfully stewarded helps support healthy ecosystems that are the foundation for a healthy food system. A healthy food system grown from the long-term viability of local agriculture that will emerge from this bill strengthens the resiliency of our local food supply chains.

The bill's inclusion of 'āina education as an activity under co-management agreements helps reconnect young people to where their food comes from alongside traditional cultural practices. These agreements will provide stable, community-led spaces where the next generation can learn about sustainable food production, resource management, and traditional customs.

Community co-management can honor traditional Native Hawaiian knowledge and is a crucial step towards food sovereignty. Community-led, local stewardship also fosters a sense of adaptive management that is essential for resiliently responding to climate change impacts.

We **strongly support HB2218 HD2 SD1** as this bill is the step we need towards fostering future leaders in Hawai'i's food system. Establishing DLNR's authority to form community co-management agreements is a critical step toward creating a more resilient, equitable, and 'āina-rooted food system for Hawai'i.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,
Sydney Haas & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

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 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food 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.



April 6, 2026

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

My name is Kamalei Lind, and I submit this testimony on behalf of Kīpahulu 'Ohana, Inc., a grassroots nonprofit organization in Kīpahulu, East Maui, with deep generational ties to the 'āina and nearshore resources we care for. We are dedicated to the cultural sustainability of the Kipahulu moku through educational programs which incorporate local, national and international partnerships and projects. We envision families working in harmony together to preserve and enhance the traditional cultural practices of the Hawaiian people. To this end, we conduct culturally-based agricultural and resource management projects from mauka to makai.

We strongly support HB2218 HD2 SD1, which would authorize community co-management agreements between the Department of Land and Natural Resources and qualified Hawai'i-based nonprofit organizations.

The State of Hawai'i holds an affirmative duty to mālama 'āina and uphold the public trust for the benefit of present and future generations. Caring for our lands and waters—that which feeds us all—requires shared kuleana. DLNR has long acknowledged that it cannot, on its own, sustainably manage the full scope of Hawai'i's public trust lands and resources.

Across Hawai'i, grassroots and Native Hawaiian-led community organizations have, for decades, been actively engaged in caring for 'āina in collaboration with DLNR—through education, restoration, monitoring, cultural practice, and place-based management. Kīpahulu 'Ohana is one such example. After more than a decade of community-driven effort, Kīpahulu was designated as a Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) in 2024. This designation reflects both the capacity and long-standing commitment of our community to care for our nearshore resources in partnership with the State.

At the same time, our experience with the CBSFA has demonstrated both the potential and the limitations of existing frameworks. While it provides an important foundation for community-based management, it does not fully support the breadth of on-the-ground responsibilities, long-term planning, and adaptive, place-based management that communities are ready to take on across mauka to makai systems. This highlights the need for a more comprehensive and flexible co-management structure.

While the need and readiness for these partnerships continues to grow, there remains no consistent or comprehensive legal framework that allows DLNR to enter into long-term, community-based co-management agreements.

Although tools such as permits, curatorships, concessions, and community-based subsistence fishing areas exist, they vary widely in structure and purpose and are often ill-suited to support sustained, holistic management. These limitations can result in administrative inefficiencies, uncertainty for community partners, and missed opportunities for effective resource protection.

HB2218 represents a logical and necessary next step. By authorizing community co-management agreements, the Legislature would establish a clear and flexible pathway for DLNR to partner with trusted, Hawai'i-based nonprofit organizations that are rooted in place, accountable to community, and committed to the long-term care of public trust resources.

The primary intent of community co-management agreements is to empower more community-based mālama 'āina groups to actively collaborate with DLNR in caring for our public trust lands for present and future generations. In light of this intent, I respectfully suggest a friendly amendment to the "purposes" section in the SD1 (Page 5, Lines 12–15) to explicitly include the management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities, alongside other mālama 'āina-focused purposes. Including these elements will better reflect the on-the-ground realities that community partners are already helping to address and will support more comprehensive and effective management.

I respectfully urge you to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1 with this friendly amendment.

Me ke aloha 'āina,



Cheyenne Kamalei Lind, Executive Director



Hawai'i Conservation Alliance
— FOUNDATION —

Testimony in Support of HB2218 HD2 SD1

Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)

Tuesday April 7th, 2026

10:31am

Position: Support

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Conservation Alliance Foundation (HCAF) was founded in 2006 to support and advance the native ecosystem and biocultural conservation work of the Hawai'i Conservation Alliance (HCA) through fundraising, advocacy, and strategic outreach and communications. The HCA is a cooperative collaboration of conservation leaders representing twenty-eight government, education, and non-profit organizations working together to provide unified leadership for Hawai'i's most critical conservation issues. Together, the HCA and the HCAF strive to protect native ecosystems and ensure the unique biodiversity of our islands endures.

HCA has a strong history of supporting community co-management working with and from within various state and federal government agencies to encourage and co-design collaborative management principles and practices that guide the establishment and maintenance of equitable partnerships with communities. In 2018, HCA published its position paper, [*Making the Case for Community-Based Adaptive Collaborative Management in Hawai'i*](#), detailing how effective conservation in Hawai'i is achieved when grounded in the spirit and practice of co-management, a unique and critical relationship that elevates the benefits of cultivating and institutionalizing collaborations with community-based partners.

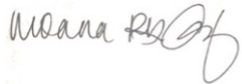
Individuals and communities with ancestral, generational, and cultural ties to place continue to 'auamo kuleana: to lovingly shoulder the privilege to care for the lands and waters we all depend on. Too often, those individuals and communities work alongside the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) without the formalization of their roles and responsibilities via appropriate mechanisms that also recognize their contributions. **HB2218 HD2 SD1** provides a consistent legal pathway to enter into agreements, formalize collaborations and move towards a more equitable framework for Mālama 'Āina within the Department.

The primary intent of community co-management agreements is to empower more community-based mālama 'āina groups to collaborate with DLNR in caring for our public trust 'āina for present and future generations. In light of this, I suggest a brief amendment to the "purposes" section in the SD1 (Page 5, Lines 12-15), allowing for "management of parking, visitor

activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities" **in conjunction with** the other mālama 'āina-focused purposes.

HCA stands in strong **SUPPORT** of **HB2218 HD2 SD1** and urges you to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony and for your leadership on this key issue within our communities.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Moana P.K. Ching". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Moana P.K. Ching
Executive Director



Board Members

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Associate Professor,
University of Chicago

Roella Foronda

Deputy Director,
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

HACBED Staff

Brent N. Kakesako

Executive Director

Merri Keli'ikuli

*Office Manager & Program
Support*

Date: April 6, 2026

To: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki,
Vice-Chair, and members of the Committee on Ways & Means

From: Brent Kakesako, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic
Development (HACBED)

Re: Support for HB2218 HD2 SD1 and comments

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED) strongly supports HB2218 HD2 SD1, which would authorize the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements and establishes qualifications for eligible community co-managers and authorize the disposition of public lands by a community co-management agreement.

HACBED was established in 1992 as a nonprofit statewide intermediary to address social, economic, and environmental justice concerns through community-based economic development. Our team advances its mission with core competencies in the areas of community and organizational capacity building, community and economic development planning, and asset policy development and advocacy.

In our work over the years, we have seen the commitment and struggle of community members and community-based organizations in stewarding 'āina that is connected to the different divisions of DLNR. There is also a growing interest and capacity to engage in collaborative mālama 'āina activities with the different divisions of DLNR but no consistent legal pathway exists across DLNR to enter into community co-management agreements. Several different tools do exist (e.g., curatorships, permits, concessions, community-based subsistence fishing areas), but these all vary significantly in form and function, often causing various administrative delays and managerial issues. As such, we see the authorization of community co-management agreements across DLNR as a huge opportunity for stewardship of 'āina in partnership with the people who know their places the best – and by extension a form of community-based economic development.

In reviewing the current bill, we humbly request an amendment to the “purposes” section that allows for “management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities” in conjunction with the other mālama 'āina-focused purposes.

The passage of HB2218 HD2 SD1 with the above amendment would be an opportunity for reciprocal benefit for DLNR and the state alongside community-based organizations and community members who are truly connected to these important places across our pae 'āina.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Brent N. Kakesako
Executive Director



HUI MAKA'ĀINANA O MAKANA

teaching the skills, knowledge, and practices of our kūpuna (ancestors) through the interpretation, restoration, care, and protection of natural and cultural resources in within the Hā'ena State Park.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 10:31 AM

Conference Room 2

Testimony in Support of HB 2218 HD2 SD1

From Chipper Wichman, Vice President of Hui Maka'āinana o Makana

I am writing today as a founding Director and current Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Hui Maka'āinana o Makana (the Hui) a nonprofit established in 1998 to support the care and management of Hā'ena State Park (HSP). **The Hui is in strong support of HB 2218 HD2 SD1.**

Our Hui has worked closely with Speaker Nakamura's office and DLNR leadership over the past six months to draft this bill. The actual drafting of the bill over these many months was done by Olan Leimomi Fisher the Kua'āina Advocate working for Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (or KUA) in collaboration with a "working group" made up of government experts and community leaders. KUA used their established networks to vet the ideas and proposed language which ultimately became the foundation of a draft bill creating an effective feed-back loop that informed the drafting process and ultimately the final language that is in the bill before you today.

Another key partner in the process has been the Hawaii Conservation Alliance (HCA) which hosted weekly zoom calls and gathered valuable suggestions and feed-back from their extensive membership and networks! In the 50 years that I have been advocating for community-based resource management I have never been part of such a collaborative process. This reflects the importance of this bill for both our communities as well as our State government.

In closing, we ask for your STRONG support of HB 2218 HD2 SD1 and support for the amendments requested by both KUA and DLNR.

Me ke aloha,

Chipper Wichman, Secretary

Hui Maka'āinana o Makana



HUI MAKA'ĀINANA O MAKANA

The Hui Maka'āinana o Makana is a non-profit organization dedicated to perpetuating and teaching the skills, knowledge, and practices of our kūpuna (ancestors) through the interpretation, restoration, care, and protection of natural and cultural resources in Hā'ena, Kaua'i.

TO: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Members of the **COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

From: Billy Kinney, Assistant Director
Hui Maka'āinana o Makana

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2218 HD2 SD1

I am Billy Kinney, testifying on behalf of the Hui Maka'āinana o Makana (the Hui), a nonprofit established in 1998 to support the care and management of Hā'ena State Park (HSP). Dedicated to the skills, knowledge, and the practices of our ancestors the Hui has been collaborating with State Parks to restore, care for, and protect the lands of HSP. The Hui has been instrumental in shaping what collaborative care and co-management looks like in Hawai'i: since the late 90's the Hui has worked closely with State Parks to steward HSP via curatorship, the Hui has created important management schema with the Division of Aquatic Resources and DOCARE establishing the first CBSFA with a management plan and rules package in 2015. After the 2018 Flood event, the Hui began community-led, government-supported efforts to manage visitor access to Hā'ena State Park: co-managing the area with DLNR, State Parks, and other agencies, the Hui's work is now a model and strong example for other communities to follow.

The Hui is in strong support of HB 2218 HD2 SD1, as an important step toward 'āina momona.

HB 2218 HD2 SD1, as currently written, will authorize the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) under legal terms that reflect those already written in State laws, to enter into "community co-management agreements" with qualified Hawai'i-based nonprofit groups both mauka (inland) and makai (seaward). This legislative effort was born in response to a shift from the expected long-term lease to the Hui at a Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) meeting on July 25, 2025, to a concession agreement that was deemed the "only" legal instrument available to secure a long-term agreement with the Hui. As made clear during that BLNR meeting, while the Hui greatly appreciated the efforts of Division of State Parks (DSP) to help secure a concession agreement, the shift from an anticipated long-term lease felt hurtful and frustrating as the Hui has been the clear and present collaborative partner and co-steward on-the-ground – for decades. Both DSP and the Hui voiced that a concession agreement is a step backward in their decades-long journey toward co-management of their ancestral 'āina in Hā'ena. After this disappointing BLNR meeting, and with strong support from Speaker Nakamura's office, an informal "Community Co-management Strategy Working Group" was formed to delve further into solutions to better support for community co-management in Hawai'i. What emerged from an issue only for the Hui was insight on a policy gap that could serve a greater statewide effort for other community co-management initiatives across the state. The working group helped with the creation of HB2218 (companion SB2685) as one potential solution. **Visit of Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo's (or KUA) [website](#) for more on the Hui's history with co-management and the inspirations behind this legislative effort.**

If you read carefully read into the legislative context of this bill, the actual bill too, it means to build and illuminates long-standing presence and need for community, collaborative co-management in



HUI MAKA'ĀINANA O MAKANA

The Hui Maka'āinana o Makana is a non-profit organization dedicated to perpetuating and teaching the skills, knowledge, and practices of our kūpuna (ancestors) through the interpretation, restoration, care, and protection of natural and cultural resources in Hā'ena, Kaua'i.

community-based mālama 'āina efforts – to restore and protect public trust lands and waters for future generations. The Hui is slightly concerned that the SD1 amendments included the addition of “public and recreational parks and facilities as one of the primary purposes of these agreements which creates a scrim over its original intent. **Please consider KUA's testimony and their proposed changes to SD1 for uplifting collaborative community-based mālama 'āina efforts, specifically.**

We have seen this bill take on amendments, even prior to HD1, regarding two or more community-based organizations wishing to undertake community co-management in the same community co-management, the sale or disposition of public lands, version HD2's addition of 5-year reviews. As mentioned in the testimony of KUA and Chipper Wichman (members of the drafting group of this bill), community co-management agreements would be most appropriate for well-established and respected organizations – organizations that have already demonstrated their pilina (connection/relationship) to that place over years if not decades. On page 7 of the bill, at line 21, section §171-C(c)(7) the bill describes the “co-management plan” that the applying organization must provide to the BLNR. There are a number of outlined and specific information that must be included in that co-management plan prepared by the organization for the BLNR's review. In addition, the inclusion of recreational parks and facilities may create complications in this vetting process. Secondly, as drafting members of this bill, it is important to note that the bill does not allow for any specific disposition or fee-simple sale of public lands through community co-management agreements. Instead, it merely refers to what is already authorized by Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 171-13. DLNR is already authorized to dispose of public lands through various means including fee-simple, lease, lease with option to purchase, license, permit, and easement with reverter, subject to certain restrictions. This bill adds community co-management to HRS § 171-13, giving the State and community organizations the flexibility to determine the appropriate time periods for such agreements – in addition, this bill outlines agreements as having 65-year time period restriction to mirror what is already allowed for leases under HRS §§ 171-36(a)(2) and 171-95(a)(2). Lastly, we are grateful for this version of the bill (HD2), but the addition of a 5-year review is unnecessary as “performance and accountability standards...” and “reporting processes and requirements,” are required to be set up in community co-management agreement plans (see Page 7, Lines 13 and 16 of bill).

We wanted to note that our Hui has worked closely various levels of community and government. Particularly, we have worked with Speaker Nakamura's office and DLNR leadership over the past six months to draft this bill, with the majority of the actual drafting of the bill over these many months being done by Olan Leimomi Fisher the Kua'āina Advocate working for Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (or KUA) in collaboration with a “working group” made up of government experts and community leaders. I have personally worked with KUA to bring draft concepts to their established networks in order to gain insight, feedback, and to vet the ideas and proposed language that ultimately became the foundation of the drafting process and language. Ultimately, that is the language that is in the bill before you today. Another key partner in the process has been the Hawaii Conservation Alliance (HCA), and the Ahupua'a Alliance Initiative, which hosted weekly zoom calls and gathered valuable suggestions and feedback from their extensive membership and networks. We have collectively never done advocacy, nor have we been apart of collaborative legislative efforts, that have been this powerfully reflective of both our communities voices and government's needs.

Finally, I would like to add that our Hui is unique in the fact that it is governed by a council of lineal descendant families. Our “Ohana Council” is comprised of lineal families that trace their lineage



HUI MAKA'ĀINANA O MAKANA

The Hui Maka'āinana o Makana is a non-profit organization dedicated to perpetuating and teaching the skills, knowledge, and practices of our kūpuna (ancestors) through the interpretation, restoration, care, and protection of natural and cultural resources in Hā'ena, Kaua'i.

back, extending to a time before the lands of Hā'ena were partitioned and its people displaced. The lineal families have always been in support and dreamed of co-management as the path forward and to finally steward their ancestral lands and seas once more. We are fortunate to be able to elevate the phrase "Community Led, Government-Supported". It is a phrase that encompasses how the Hui, its lineal ties, and community leaders have been able to make Hā'ena the state-wide model of regenerative tourism and the standard for community-based natural and biocultural resource management. While rooted in historical frustration for the Hui, this bill and its familiars are opportunities to finally create a legal pathway for community co-management initiatives across the state—and for the State itself to truly benefit from partnering with expert communities so agencies may fulfill their respective duties to people and to protecting the natural and cultural resources of Hawai'i for all. Please, consider being the champions of this extraordinary bill and important piece of Hawai'i stewardship history. We humbly ask that you STRONGLY support of HB 2218!

Aloha 'āina,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "William Kinney", is positioned below the text "Aloha 'āina,".

William "Billy" Kinney
Assistant Director, Hui Maka'ainana O Makana
P.O. Box 1225 Hanalei, HI 96714



HAWAII

1164 Bishop St., Ste. 1512
Honolulu, HI 96813

tpl.org

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**TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND'S TESTIMONY SUPPORTING HB 2218 HD 2 RE
COMMUNITY CO-MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS
Senate Ways & Means Committee, Rm. 211
Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:30 a.m.**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members –

Trust for Public Land (TPL) strongly supports HB 2218 HD 2 which authorizes community co-management agreements between the State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources and qualified community-based organizations. This bill is a positive step towards fulfilling the State of Hawai'i's duty to mālama 'āina, as set out in *Ching v. Case*, 145 Hawai'i 148, 449P.3d 1146 (2019). Presently, no explicit legal pathways exist for the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into co-management agreements. This deprives much-beloved places across Hawai'i of the beneficial stewardship that local community experts can provide.

Community co-management of currently unmanaged or undermanaged State properties would benefit both the State and local communities. The State could reduce the risk of invasive or wildfire prone vegetation or illegal activities (e.g., dumping) taking over unmanaged lands. Local communities would be able to enter into longer term agreements with the State to mālama these places, investing in the land. For many people across Hawai'i, co-management agreements represent an opportunity to foster connection and access to the land and waters which feed their families (both physically and spiritually). While several tools are currently being used to foster partnerships between community and the government, there are significant challenges under the current ambiguous and bureaucratic system. This bill would create a clear path for both community organizations and the DLNR towards better caring for our 'āina .

Interest in community co-management is growing, as evidenced by the several county-level agreements to steward places such as Honu'apo, Miloli'i, and Mū'olea Point. By partnering with community, the State can be better positioned to fulfill our collective kuleana to mālama 'āina.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Lea Hong
Associate Vice-President
Hawai'i State Director
Edmund C. Olson Trust Fellow
Trust for Public Land



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India Clark
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Rachel LaDrig
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports HB2218.**

HBB218 provides DLNR with clear statutory authority to enter co-management agreements with qualified community-based organizations, bringing structure and accountability to the stewardship of public lands. The 65-year term, co-management plan requirements, and the SD1 amendment requiring plans be recommended by the department strike a reasonable balance between long-term community commitment and ongoing oversight. The direct negotiation pathway recognizes that co-management is built on sustained relationships and local knowledge, not competitive bidding.

We support the addition of parking, visitor activities, and parks and facilities management as a permitted purpose in SD1, provided it is exercised in conjunction with one or more of the bill's primary malama aina purposes. Co-management agreements should remain rooted in conservation, cultural stewardship, and community-based resource management. Allowing facilities management only as an ancillary function ensures the program does not become a vehicle for standalone recreational facility operations that fall outside the intent of the bill. We support the amendment language proposed by Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo to clarify this relationship.

We note that the bill's first permitted purpose, the preservation and practice of Native Hawaiian customary and traditional subsistence, cultural, and religious rights, encompasses traditional Hawaiian food cultivation, agroforestry, and community food production. We encourage the Committee and DLNR to interpret this purpose broadly enough to support agricultural stewardship as part of co-management agreements. The bill's value will depend on implementation, and DLNR will need the staffing and resources to review applications, conduct evaluations, and support co-management partners so that the system is accessible to grassroots organizations and not only those with the institutional capacity to navigate complex processes.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union



Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) **Strongly Supports: HB 2218 HD2 SD1**

Tuesday, April 7th, 2026 10:31 a.m. Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee.

HAPA strongly **supports HB2218 HD2 SD1**. The legislature has identified grassroot communities which have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for spaces (wahi pana) and the surrounding resources. The legislature also finds that “these efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements.”

HB2218 HD1 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honour traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is positioned below the 'Respectfully,' text.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director



Senate Committee on Ways and Means
April 7, 2026 at 10:31 AM
Room 211

Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2218 HD2 SD1

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO) we submit **strong support** for **HB2218 HD2 SD1**. This measure provides an essential framework for community co-management of state lands, strengthening partnerships between DLNR and trusted nonprofit and community stewards.

HANO is a statewide, sector-wide association representing nonprofits across Hawai'i. Since 2006, HANO has worked to strengthen and unite the nonprofit sector as a collective force to improve quality of life statewide by advancing policies and practices that promote nonprofit professionalism, sustainability, and effectiveness.

HB2218 directly supports nonprofits and community-based organizations that have long engaged in place-based stewardship of public trust lands. These organizations bring deep-rooted knowledge and demonstrated capacity to care for natural resources, cultural sites, and customary practices through restoration, education, and mālama 'āina. By establishing clear eligibility and agreement standards, this bill creates more durable, transparent, and effective pathways for community participation in land stewardship.

Community co-management recognizes the reality that many nonprofits have been caring for these lands for generations, often with limited resources but significant public benefit. HB2218 affirms their role as partners in achieving sustainable land management while improving continuity, planning, and long-term stewardship outcomes.

Importantly, this bill advances Hawai'i's constitutional obligations under Articles XI and XII by supporting the sustainable management of natural resources and the protection of traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices. HB2218 aligns state policy with mālama 'āina values and ensures that stewardship decisions are informed by community-based nonprofits and leaders who are most connected to place.

For nonprofits and community-based organizations, HB2218 represents a meaningful step toward equitable, effective, and culturally grounded stewardship of state lands. HANO respectfully urges your **strong support**.



‘Apelila 7, 2026
10:31 AM

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Via Videoconference & Conference Room 211
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Re: SB2218 HD2SD1 - RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and honorable members of the committee:

The Prince Kūhiō Hawaiian Civic Club (PKHCC) strongly **supports** SB2218 HD2SD1, which authorizes the Department of Land and Natural Resources to enter into community co-management agreements and establishes qualifications for eligible community co-managers. Authorizes the disposition of public lands by a community co-management agreement

PKHCC supports HB2218 HD2 SD1 and ask that you consider KUA’s proposed amendments.

Statutory authority for long-term community co-management agreements honors mālama ‘āina and ahupua‘a stewardship, and will help grassroots communities (e.g., Hā‘ena, Pūpūkea, Mo‘omomi, Kīpahulu, Ho‘okena, Ka‘ūpūlehu, Kealakekua) sustain care of wahi pana and public trust resources. Existing tools (curatorships, permits, concessions) lack the formal authority and duration needed for effective, long-term stewardship.

Adding “community co-management agreements” to HRS §171-13, with a maximum term up to 65 years, mirrors current lease limits and does not permit fee-simple sale of public lands. The bill’s vetting and accountability requirements prioritize experienced, place-based nonprofits and allow multiple organizations to collaborate; agreements remain subject to HRS Chapter 91 public notice and hearings.

Please PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1 and consider KUA’s friendly amendments.

Founded in 1964, the Prince Kūhiō Hawaiian Civic Club was established to promote the education and social welfare of people of Hawaiian ancestry. Its objectives include supporting high ethical standards in business, industry, and professional fields.

Mahalo for your consideration of our position.

Me ke aloha,

Shauna Kahiapo, Esq.
Pelekikena

president@pkhcc.org



April 7, 2026

WAM Hearing, 10:31 am

HB2218 HD2 SD1 DLNR Community Co-Management – In Support

Aloha WAM Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwake, and Members,

Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea (MPW) is a Hawai'i non-profit organization founded on the North Shore of O'ahu in 2005. 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."

For twenty-one years, we have focused our collaborative stewardship and education efforts on the Pūpūkea Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD), one of only three MLCDs on O'ahu.

MPW strongly supports HB2218 HD2 SD1.

This bill provides DLNR clear authority to enter into community based co-management agreements, with qualified community groups, which significantly amplifies the ability of both the State and communities across the islands to more effectively achieve our collective goals for sustained protection of the 'āina.

Mahalo for passing HB2218 HD2 SD1!

Denise Antolini

President, MPW

Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea
Post Office Box 188
Hale'iwa, HI 96712

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*Jenny Yagodich
Director of Educational Programs &
Makai Watch Coordinator*

Federal Nonprofit Organization
501(c)(3) FEIN 27-0855937
www.pupukeawaimea.org
info@pupukeawaimea.org

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 5:24:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB2218 to authorized DLNR to engage in co-management with community groups - a strategy which has proven to be highly successful here.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 12:17:18 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee,

I am testifying in **strong support** of HB2218, a landmark bill that would empower the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to formally enter into long-term community co-management agreements.

This legislation represents a profound and necessary shift toward collaborative stewardship, recognizing that the most effective and sustainable management of our public trust resources arises from partnerships with the communities who know, love, and are culturally bound to these places.

For decades, grassroots and lineal descendant organizations have been the de facto stewards of countless wahi pana and natural resources across our islands. They have invested immense volunteer labor, traditional knowledge, and cultural passion into restoration, education, and protection—often without the formal recognition or security needed to sustain their work for generations.

HB2218 provides that essential framework. It moves beyond temporary permits and unstable arrangements to authorize agreements of 65 years or more, granted through direct negotiation. This long-term security is not a privilege; it is the necessary foundation for true, multi-generational stewardship.

This bill is a direct fulfillment of our State Constitution’s mandate. Article XI, Section 1, and Article XII, Section 7, charge the state with protecting public trust resources and upholding Native Hawaiian customary and traditional rights. Community co-management is the most powerful tool to achieve both goals simultaneously.

By authorizing agreements specifically for the "preservation and practice of all rights customarily and traditionally exercised by Native Hawaiians," and for the restoration of native ecosystems, this bill ensures that management is guided by the very principles of mālama ‘āina that have sustained these islands for millennia.

The qualifications established in HB2218 ensure that agreements are forged with legitimate, place-based organizations deeply rooted in their areas of care. This structure provides clarity and accountability for both the state and the community.

Furthermore, by enabling the disposition of public lands through these agreements, the bill provides the tangible authority needed for co-managers to effectively carry out their kuleana, from managing visitor impacts to restoring native forests.

We have seen the success of this model in Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Areas (CBSFAs) and in countless informal partnerships. HB2218 seeks to replicate and strengthen that success statewide. It is a recognition that the state cannot manage these precious resources alone, and that the most powerful resource we have is the love and knowledge of our own communities.

I urge you to pass HB2218. It is a critical step toward justice, resilience, and a future where the state and its people work in true partnership to heal and protect our 'āina for all generations to come.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee, [L L L L] [SEP SEP] My name is U'ilani Naipo, and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life. [L L L L] [SEP SEP] The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai'i's affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama 'āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold these constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai'i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their 'āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state's constitutional duties. [L L L L] [SEP SEP] This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai'i, for the benefit of the public trust, our 'āina, and present and future generations. [L L L L] [SEP SEP] Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify. [L L L L] [SEP SEP] Sincerely, [L L] [SEP] U'ilani Naipo [L L] [SEP]

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

HB2218 HD2 SD1 — Empower Communities to Comanage 'Āina

Hearing: Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 10:31 a.m. | Room 211

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kealii Pang. I am a retired federal biologist with 26 years of service at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office, where my work focused on the conservation of Native Hawaiian ecosystems, species, and cultural resources across the Pacific islands region. I hold a Ph.D. in Botany from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, with doctoral research focused on land and forest use during the Kamehameha I era. I currently serve as Board President of Ka'ala Farm Inc., a Native Hawaiian cultural education nonprofit rooted in the ahupua'a of Wai'anae that has practiced community-based land stewardship for over five decades. I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB2218 HD2 SD1.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources carries a constitutional obligation to mālama 'āina — to care for the natural and cultural resources held in public trust for all of Hawai'i's people. That obligation is immense. The Land Board oversees vast areas of land and water across our archipelago, yet operates with finite staff, finite resources, and finite institutional knowledge of the specific places, communities, and ecological relationships it is charged to protect.

Community organizations throughout Hawai'i have filled that gap for generations — not because they were asked to, but because they are kānaka of their place. At Ka'ala Farm, we have worked the land of Wai'anae for more than 50 years. Our staff and community hold generations of place-based knowledge about the watershed, the native ecosystems, the cultural practices, and the people who depend on that 'āina. That knowledge cannot be replicated by any state agency working from Honolulu. It grows from daily presence, deep commitment, and aloha 'āina.

Despite this demonstrated capacity and commitment, no clear or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to formalize co-management partnerships with community organizations like ours. This gap leaves both parties without the legal structure needed to collaborate effectively, share responsibility, and hold each other accountable. It also leaves the state's constitutional duties under-resourced and under-fulfilled.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 closes that gap. It creates a clear, flexible framework — developed in genuine partnership between communities and the Department of Land and

Natural Resources — for co-management agreements that can unlock the full potential of grassroots stewardship. The benefits are not theoretical. Community co-management, grounded in traditional ecological knowledge and cultural values, strengthens food security, water security, climate resilience, and the environmental and cultural integrity of our islands. These are outcomes that the state, acting alone, cannot achieve at the scale and depth that our 'āina and our people deserve.

With 35 years of conservation work across Hawai'i and the Pacific, I have seen what is possible when government and community work together with clearly defined roles and mutual accountability. I have also seen what is lost when that partnership has no legal foundation to stand on. This measure provides that foundation. Pass it.

I urge the Committee to **PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1**.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Kealii Pang, Ph.D.

Kaimukī, Honolulu, Hawai'i

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 8:18:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2218 HB RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:04:30 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Peter Wilson and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Peter Wilson

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 11:05:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bo Breda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Bo Breda and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Bo Breda

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 5:16:51 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Shaver	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Christy Shaver and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Christy Shaver

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 7:49:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jody Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which enables the Land Board to partner with community organizations to better uphold the public trust and protect Hawai‘i’s natural and cultural resources.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources has a constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, but its limited capacity and the vast lands and waters it manages make this difficult to achieve alone. Communities across Hawai‘i are ready and willing to co-manage and steward these resources, yet there is currently no clear legal pathway to formalize these partnerships.

This measure creates a clear and flexible framework for collaboration between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, strengthening stewardship and resource management for the benefit of our ‘āina and future generations.

I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1.

Jody Smith 96825

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 8:19:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Wassell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is John Wassell and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
John Wassell

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:29:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**. This bill establishes a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources. This collaboration has the potential to provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, with reciprocal benefits between ‘āina and community, and will also protect the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is responsible for implementing the state of Hawai‘i’s constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina. However, the Land Board is limited in its ability to care for the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction, and cannot uphold constitutional obligations on their own. Grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i are willing to partner with the Land Board to co-manage and steward lands and waters. This bill would establish an explicit legal pathway for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements to facilitate community partnerships to fulfill the state’s constitutional duties to mālama ‘āina.

I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kaleiheana Stormcrow

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 10:51:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
irene kloepfer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Irene and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

irene kloepfer

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 11:09:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
emily gambino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Emily Gambino and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Emily Gambino

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 11:49:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Seikai Darcy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Darcy and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**. This bill addresses the significant interaction I have experienced between the department and local residents which has been acrimonious. It will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life. This bill is exciting and has the ability to remove conflicts and insert partnerships.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lisa Darcy, Maui, Kula, HI

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 12:13:15 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
DIANE CHOY FUJIMURA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

/Cmd+VAloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Diane Choy Fujimura and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Diane Choy Fujimura

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 12:34:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather McMillen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Committee Members,

I strongly and enthusiastically support HB2218 HD2 SD1 authorizing the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements with qualified community-based organizations.

In order to maintain the original spirit and intent of this measure, I support the voices of others offering a **friendly SD1 amendment on Page 5, Lines 12-15 to allow for these additional purposes in conjunction with the primary goal of uplifting collaborative community-based mālama‘āina efforts:**

~~(4) Management of parking and visitor activities~~ Aina education; and

(5) Management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities in conjunction with one or more of the above purposes; ~~or~~

~~(6) Aina education;~~

Parking and recreational facility maintenance offer valuable opportunities for community groups and DLNR to partner, but there are existing tools to support such efforts already. As stand alone activities, they are better suited for tools such as Special Permits, Concessions, or ROE limited term agreements.

This measure represents an exciting and critical opportunity /in Hawai‘i when we can meaningfully advance and enhance the partnerships and collaborations among community groups and DLNR to mālama‘āina. I urge you to **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo piha,

Heather McMillen

Pālolo Resident

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 1:50:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of HB2218. I believe it is a good idea for the DLNR to work with those groups which honor Native Hawaiian practices that protect the land and water. Mahalo for your consideration.

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

HB2218 – Relating to Community Co-Management
Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)
April 7, 2026, 10:31 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Frederick Smith. I live in the Kealakekua ahupua'a in the South Kona moku and am a graduate student focused on marine science and policy at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. I am writing in **strong support of HB2218**, a fiscally responsible measure that strengthens community involvement in the stewardship of Hawai'i's public lands.

Community co-management is a cost-effective approach to public resource management. Communities across Hawai'i have long contributed to monitoring, restoration, and stewardship of public lands and waters, providing significant on-the-ground capacity through volunteer effort, education, and place-based management practices. Existing partnerships in places such as Hā'ena, Miloli'i, and Kīpahulu, Kiholo, and Kealakekua demonstrate that collaborative approaches can strengthen resource protection and support long-term ecosystem resilience. However, the absence of clear statutory authority for co-management has limited DLNR's ability to consistently and effectively formalize these partnerships. HB2218 addresses this gap by providing a clear and appropriate framework for collaboration.

HB2218 also provides important administrative clarity. Clear statutory authority reduces disputes, establishes predictable pathways for co-management agreements, and allows DLNR to use staff time more efficiently. Administrative clarity supports more effective allocation of limited resources toward monitoring, enforcement, and resource protection. In addition, clear co-management authority improves eligibility for grants and other external funding opportunities that support stewardship and restoration, helping bring additional resources into Hawai'i without increasing State expenditures.

Beyond its fiscal benefits, HB2218 reflects a simple truth: Hawai'i's lands and waters are best protected when the State and communities work together. By clarifying DLNR's authority to engage in co-management, this bill affirms the value of local knowledge, cultural connection, and the shared kuleana we hold to care for public trust resources. It supports a stewardship model rooted not just in policy, but in relationship.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

Mahalo,

Frederick Smith
Captain Cook, Hawai'i

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:05:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl burghardt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and committee members,

I STRONGLY support HB 2218 HD2 Sd1 which authorizes community co-management agreements between the BLNR and malama aina organizations seeking to stewar their aina and foster deeper connections between people and place. THIS IS ESSENTIAL for our islands to move forward if we will sustain and take care of our island home.

Cheryl Burghardt

Nuuanu Oahu

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:25:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hayley Peter-Contesse	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Hayley Peter-Contesse, Mākaha

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:37:31 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra M Javar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully SUPPORT HB2218. It's the best solution. I ask for your support too. Thank you.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 3:52:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ken Stover	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Ken & Karen Stover, Kihei

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:18:23 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Inam Rahman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS (ADDRESSING RISKS & FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY)

HB 2218 HD2 SD1 – RELATING TO COMMUNITY CO-MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Inam Rahman, MD, a physician and long-time resident of West O‘ahu. I am writing in support of HB 2218 HD2 SD1 with important amendments to strengthen accountability, transparency, and financial sustainability.

This measure recognizes a fundamental strength of Hawai‘i: communities with deep cultural and generational ties to the land are often best positioned to care for it. For decades, grassroots organizations and lineal descendants have practiced mālama ‘āina, stewarding wahi pana and natural resources through place-based knowledge and cultural responsibility.

Formalizing these partnerships through co-management agreements with the Department of Land and Natural Resources can improve long-term stewardship, preserve cultural practices, and strengthen environmental protection. This is a positive and forward-looking step.

At the same time, given the bill’s provisions for long-term agreements and potential disposition of public lands, it is important to address several risks to ensure public trust, equity, and fiscal responsibility.

Suggested Amendments to Address Key Concerns

1. Clear and Transparent Qualification Criteria

Establish objective, publicly available criteria for selecting community-based organizations, including demonstrated stewardship experience, community engagement, and organizational capacity.

2. Accountability and Performance Metrics

Require measurable benchmarks (environmental outcomes, stewardship activities, community benefit) along with regular reporting and independent review to ensure agreements are delivering results.

3. Periodic Review of Long-Term Agreements

For agreements exceeding extended durations, require formal review at defined intervals (e.g., every 5–10 years) to allow adjustments or termination if performance expectations are not met.

4. Financial Feasibility and Cost Controls

Encourage cost-neutral or cost-sharing models that leverage community resources and partnerships. Require transparent reporting of costs to avoid unintended fiscal burdens on the State and prevent unfunded mandates.

5. Safeguards for Public Lands and Public Trust

Ensure that any disposition or use of public lands under these agreements remains consistent with public trust obligations and maintains access and benefit for the broader community.

6. Inclusive Community Representation

Encourage inclusive governance structures to ensure that co-management reflects diverse community voices and avoids unintended exclusion.

From a public health perspective, protecting our natural environment supports the well-being of our communities. At the same time, good policy must balance cultural stewardship with accountability and fiscal responsibility.

HB 2218 HD2 SD1 moves us in the right direction. With these amendments, it can become a strong, balanced framework that honors traditional knowledge while ensuring transparency, equity, and responsible use of public resources.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB 2218 HD2 SD1 with these amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Warm regards,

Dr. Inam Rahman, MD

Waipahū, O‘ahu

Physician | Community Advocate

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:31:25 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kimdonghyeon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

kimdonghyeon

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 4:52:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Andrew Isoda and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau'i

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 5:19:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 5:38:08 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Jonathan, Hilo

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 6:38:01 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this measure which ensures effective land management.

Judith White, Kapaa

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 7:24:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keri Zacher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Keri Zacher and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
[Your name]

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 8:03:33 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Fryer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2218 HD2 SD1, to authorize community co-management agreements between the Hawai‘i Board of Land and Natural Resources and mālama ‘āina organizations seeking to steward their ‘āina and foster deeper connections between people and place.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina — to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast regions under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligation entirely on its own. Grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to. However, no explicit or consistent legal pathway currently exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships.

This measure would establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2026 9:55:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Travis Smith, Waimanalo

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 2:07:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice K T Shiira	Testifying for Shimanchu Mamuyaa	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 4:58:50 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Norman Miyasato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 7:03:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John C Wert III	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Prof John C Wert (Ret)

Wailuku, Maui

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 7:21:03 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl hendrickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill would strengthen collaborative efforts between the state and community based organizations. By establishing long-term community co-management agreements it will restore and protect biocultural public trust resources for future generations.

Long term agreements are necessary to streamline effectiveness. The lack of statutory authority or a formalized process limits their effectiveness. It must establish agreements for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Enabling a state supported community co-management agreements between DLNR and partners would strengthen existing efforts. To establish a resilient state of place-based practice and sustained care.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 7:29:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leimomi Bong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

I support HB2218 HD2 SD1 authorizing the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements with qualified community-based organizations. I write as a resident of Kaka‘ako and a descendant of a lawai‘a family from Hōnaunau.

The State bears an affirmative duty to mālama ‘āina and steward public trust lands and waters. DLNR cannot effectively manage all resources within its jurisdiction alone. Caring for ‘āina (that which feeds us all) requires collective kuleana. For decades, communities across Hawai‘i have supported DLNR in this work, yet no consistent legal pathway exists for such agreements. Existing tools (curatorships, permits, concessions etc.) vary in form and function, creating administrative inefficiencies.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 establishes a consistent framework for community co-management, aligning community stewardship with State responsibility for present and future generations.

I respectfully suggest the following friendly amendments:

- Page 5, Lines 12–15 (Purposes):
Include “management of parking and visitor activities” as an allowed purpose, in conjunction with primary mālama ‘āina efforts.
- Page 7 (Performance and accountability):
Specify that performance standards and reporting requirements are established within each co-management agreement plan, allowing place-based implementation.
- HRS § 171-13 (Time period):
Include community co-management agreements under the existing 65-year authorization to ensure continuity in care.

These clarifications create the environment for effective implementation and sustainable collaboration. **Please PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1 with these amendments.**

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide testimony.
Leimomi Bong

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 8:19:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community-government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Thank you

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 9:55:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Diane Ware_ and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully Diane Ware Volcano Moku o Ka'u

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 10:07:10 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Shay Chan Hodges and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

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Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Shay Chan Hodges

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 12:13:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Marquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Malia Marquez and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

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Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Malia Marquez

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 1:21:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Boisvert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I FULLY SUPPORT THIS BILL!!

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 1:23:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Jorgensen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

PLEASE PASS THIS BILL.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 1:56:34 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chad K Taniguchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 3:26:53 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Chon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Angela Chon and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Angela Chon

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 4:06:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Ballesteros-Watanabe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Lauren and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Lauren Ballesteros-Watanabe

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 4:09:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Chun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Malia Chun, Kekaha

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 4:46:21 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jackie Keefe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Jackie Keefe and I am writing in **strong support of HB2218**, which authorizes the DLNR to enter into community co-management agreements for "preservation and practice of all rights customarily and traditionally exercised by Native Hawaiians for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes; preservation, protection, and restoration of archaeological, historical, and environmental resources; rehabilitation, vegetation, restoration, and preservation of native species and habitats; management of parking and visitor activities; and 'āina education."

We know that native Hawaiians and other generational 'ohana best know how to steward our lands, but our state and county governments' "ownership" have left them mismanaged for decades. However, community–government partnerships currently exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements. The lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness.

The legislature has identified grassroots and lineal descendent communities which have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for spaces (wahi pana) and the surrounding resources. The legislature also finds that "These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements."

Please choose to protect our 'āina and **pass HB2218 HD2 SD1**.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Jackie Keefe, Lahaina

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 5:18:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Douglas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 9:45:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Annalise Hart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Aloha,

Annalise

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 5:09:54 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Kaye	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

A much-needed bill. Please pass this legislation.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 6:33:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members:

I am submitting testimony in **support of HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 6:36:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Rob Culbertson and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1.

R A Culbertson

Honokaa

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 8:01:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Barker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Members,

I am writing to ask that you support HB2218 HD2 SD1 which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements.

This bill would enable a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 8:25:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamalani Baptiste	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kākou,

I strongly support HB2218 HD2 SD1, as it formalizes a process for community groups to establish co-management agreements with Hawai‘i State Parks.

As the current Makai Watch Coordinator for Hā‘ena’s CBSFA (Community Based Subsistence Fishing Area) through Hui Maka‘āinana o Makana, and as a lineal descendant of Wainiha Valley, I have had the privilege of witnessing the benefit a co-management agreement between the Hā‘ena community and Hawai‘i State Parks has had on the continued management of this area.

Comanagement agreements would allow for a system that facilitates: (1) equity-of-access to place - between residents, visitors, and of particular importance, lineal descendants, (2) the possibility for new revenue streams for (a) critical infrastructure, (b) ecological and cultural restoration, (c) educational programs, and (d) continued management of nearshore fisheries, and critically, (3) 'āina momona - ensuring food-security through antifragile indigenous systems. The benefits here listed are non-exhaustive, they serve as examples from Hā‘ena, but they illustrate a list of possibilities across Hawai‘i for other community groups, as new co-management agreements will provide for these and other benefits.

By formalizing this process, we help ensure community groups have a pathway for co-managing their own spaces in ways they have managed and cared for long before the existence of the State. Likewise, The State has an additional support system to fulfill its responsibility in managing the spaces it has been entrusted to care for, without being limited by its scope, institutional capacity, or jurisprudence.

Mahalo,

Kamalani Baptiste

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 8:40:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Mitsumori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2218 HD2 SD1.

Our environment is a living illustration of the interdependence among organisms and dynamics large and small that makes our ‘āina thrive.

This same collaboration among our grassroots communities is needed to help our Board of Land and Natural Resources carry out its responsibilities of mālama ‘āina.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 would establish a explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Please PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1.

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

Sincerely,
Michele Mitsumori
Hilo

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 8:53:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keoni DeFranco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Keoni DeFranco, and I am testifying in **strong support** of HB2218 HD2 SD1.

At its core, this bill is about recognizing something that our communities have always known and practiced: that caring for ‘āina is a shared kuleana. While the Board of Land and Natural Resources carries the constitutional responsibility to mālama Hawai‘i’s natural and cultural resources, the reality is that the scale of lands and waters under its jurisdiction makes it impossible to do this work alone.

Across Hawai‘i, there are communities already doing this work every day. They are restoring lo‘i, caring for forests, monitoring water systems, and protecting cultural sites. Right now, there is no clear and consistent pathway for DLNR to formally partner with these communities in a way that matches the urgency and scale of what is needed.

HB2218 creates that pathway. It establishes a flexible framework for co-stewardship, built with community input, that allows the state to actually live up to its constitutional obligation by working alongside the people who know these places best.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB2218 HD2 SD1.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 9:13:50 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Yaris	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Jason Yaris, Makaweli HI

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

HEARING:

Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 10:31 am
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2218, HD2, SD1 - RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Senator Hashimoto for my district on Maui, Senator DeCoite of Maui, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews and I am a lawyer and a long-time resident of Wailuku, Maui. I write you today in **strong support of HB 2218, HD2, SD1, Relating to the Department of Land and Natural Resources**, which authorizes the Department of Land and Natural Resources to enter into community co-management agreements and establishes qualifications for eligible community co-managers, and authorizes the disposition of public lands by a community co-management agreement.

House Bill 2218 HD2 SD1 identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. Grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

This measure seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, but the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the Board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

I respectfully request that you support HB2218 HD2 SD1 to enable state supported community co-management agreements between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish resilient place-based practice and sustained care for the work being done.

Mahalo nui,

Christine Andrews, JD
Wailuku, Maui

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 9:29:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ethan Porter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is highly important that we increase access to community decision making in our aina management.

April 07, 2026

Hawaii State Legislature
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT for HB2218 HD2 SD1, Relating to The Department of Land and Natural Resources

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and esteemed members of the committee,

My name is Calista Ancog, and I am submitting testimony in support of HB2218 HD2 SD1. I am currently studying environmental science at Chaminade University, with the intention of entering into conservation work.

At Chaminade, the environmental programs integrate traditional knowledge with modern conservation, emphasizing the importance and value of honoring places and the people that came before us. This measure embodies these sentiments at a state-level, by supporting long-term, community-driven stewardship through the co-management agreements between DLNR and community groups.

As I work toward a career in conservation, my internships at Bishop Museum and with DLNR have exposed me to the limitations and high expectations of the environmental field. The field is constantly at a deficit with teams barely large enough to do the work expected of them with limited resources. In my classes, we are repeatedly reminded that conservation is a field of passion, not of money or free-time. However, that doesn't have to be the case. This measure fills the gaps between DLNR and the work they don't have the capacity to accomplish, while supporting the existing community organizations that have the ability.

Having grown up on island, and hoping to establish my adult life here, I hope to see the conservation community thrive. But, that will only be possible as long as measures like this one continue to move forward creating a Hawai'i that values community partnerships, place-based learning, and traditional knowledge. This measure honors the past while considering the future, strengthening the long-term local capacity to care for the 'āina. Therefore, I humbly ask that you pass HB2218 HD2 SD1.

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

Respectfully,
Calista Ancog

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 9:31:32 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lea Kaahaaina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

I strongly support HB2218 HD2 SD1 authorizing the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements with qualified community-based organizations.

I have experienced first-hand the transformation of relationships between ‘āina (land) and people when community groups collaborate with DLNR, allowing a restoration of balance and reciprocity that benefits all. At places like Hā‘ena, Kaua‘i and Ka‘ūpūlehu, Hawa‘i, I have heard the land and sea breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that these reciprocal relationships with kānaka (people) are being actively managed and restored.

The State has an affirmative duty to mālama‘āina, care for the public trust lands and waters of Hawai‘i. Caring for our precious ‘āina (that which feeds us all) requires collective kuleana (responsibility), and as DLNR has long acknowledged, it alone cannot effectively and sustainably manage all the lands and waters within its purview. For decades, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have been supporting and collaborating with DLNR to mālama the places we all love and call home. But while the need and interest in collaborative mālama‘āina continues to grow, no consistent legal pathway exists for DLNR to enter into community co-management agreements. Several different tools do exist (e.g., curatorships, permits, concessions, community-based subsistence fishing areas), but these all vary significantly in form and function, often causing various administrative delays and managerial issues.

The primary intent of community co-management agreements is to empower more community-based mālama‘āina groups to collaborate with DLNR in caring for our public trust ‘āina for present and future generations. In light of this, I suggest a friendly amendment to the "purposes" section in the SD1 (Page 5, Lines 12-15), allowing for "management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities" in conjunction with the other mālama‘āina-focused purposes.

Please PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1 with my friendly amendment.

Mahalo nui loa,

Le‘a Ka‘aha‘aina

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 9:32:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Y. Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources carries a profound constitutional responsibility to mālama ‘āina—to care for and protect the natural and cultural resources of Hawai‘i. However, the sheer scale of lands and waters under its jurisdiction, combined with institutional capacity limitations, makes it impossible for the Land Board to fully meet these obligations alone.

Across Hawai‘i, community organizations and grassroots stewards have long demonstrated their deep commitment to caring for ‘āina. These groups possess generational knowledge, cultural connection, and place-based expertise that are essential to effective resource management. Many are ready and willing to partner with the Land Board to co-manage and steward these resources, yet there is currently no clear or consistent legal pathway to formalize these partnerships.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 addresses this gap by establishing a clear, flexible framework that allows for meaningful collaboration between the Department of Land and Natural Resources and community organizations. By creating this pathway, the State can better fulfill its public trust responsibilities while empowering communities who are already doing this important work on the ground.

This measure represents a transformative opportunity to strengthen stewardship, protect our environmental and cultural resources, and ensure that mālama ‘āina is upheld for present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1.

Me ke aloha ‘āina,
Nanea Lo, 96826
Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Member
Hawai‘i Workers Center Board Member
Clean Elections Hawai‘i Member
Honolulu Tenants Union Member
350 Hawai‘i Member

Carbon Cashback Hawai'i Member
Hawai'i Tax Fairness Coalition Member

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 9:56:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sydney Chung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Sydney Chung and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Sydney Chung

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 2218, HD2, SD1

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Ways & Means Committee:

My name is Mina Morita. I serve as Vice President of the Board of the Hanalei Initiative, the access management system operator at Hā'ena State Park for Hui Maka'āinana o Makana; however, today I submit testimony in my personal capacity as a Hanalei resident in strong support of House Bill 2218, HD2, SD1 with some friendly amendments and the effective date corrected. I believe one of the amendments made in the SD1 overly broadens the intent of the bill inadvertently. Inserted is a pdf of the amendments and rationale for your reference showing the strikethroughs and underlines.

The SD1 version changes the HD1 addition of 5-year reviews to 10-year reviews. These additional "reviews" in statute are unnecessary. Any community co-management agreement plan already requires "performance and accountability standards..." and "reporting processes and requirements," (Page 7, Lines 13 and 16). As the capacity of community co-managers may vary substantially, regular reviews and reporting should be unique to each community co-management agreement plan, leaving more flexibility and discretion for DLNR require more or less frequent reviews.

SD1 version added "Management of public and recreational parks and facilities," to one of the allowed purposes for these types of agreements (Page 5, Lines 13-14). The HB2218, HD1 version includes "Management of parking and visitor activities," which was at the request of Division of State Parks. This clarification is specifically related to the situation in Hā'ena where Hui Makaainana O Makana also manages parking and visitor activities (the access management operations) *in conjunction with* their primary mālama'āina-based efforts. The SD1 appears to significantly broaden the purpose of this bill, which is not the desired intent of this specific amendment. Therefore, the following amendment on Page 5, lines 12-15 is suggested.

(4) ~~Management of parking and visitor activities~~Aina education; and

(5) Management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities in conjunction with one or more of the above purposes; ~~or~~

~~(6) Aina education~~

Existing tool available to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for resource management remain limited to short-term revocable permits, concessions, or similar transactional arrangements. These instruments fail to reflect the kuleana embraced by

community-based stewards as long-term partners with DLNR and instead create uncertainty that undermines sustained investment in mālama ‘āina.

HB 2218, HD2, SD1 addresses this gap by explicitly authorizing community co-management agreements between DLNR and qualified community-based organizations, grounded in Native Hawaiian principles of mālama ‘āina and ahupua‘a-based stewardship. These agreements support the preservation of cultural practices, restoration of natural and historical resources, habitat protection, visitor management, and ‘āina-based education.

The DLNR alone cannot sustainably manage Hawai‘i’s public trust resources but as partners with place-based Native Hawaiian and local communities providing essential stewardship, knowledge, and capacity, hopefully this will achieve better outcomes for the ‘āina. Community co-management therefore helps to fulfill the State’s constitutional responsibilities to protect natural and cultural resources for present and future generations.

By establishing clear qualifications, accountability standards, adaptive management requirements, and defined roles within written co-management agreements, HB 2218, HD2, SD1 ensures that partnerships are transparent, performance-based, and aligned with community-driven stewardship outcomes.

For communities like Hā‘ena—and many others across the pae ‘āina—this bill represents the next necessary step: moving from short-term, transactional permissions toward durable, trust-based partnerships that reflect and encourage generations of stewardship and responsibility.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB 2218, HD2, SD1 with the suggested amendments attached.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Hermina “Mina” Morita, P.O. Box 791, Hanalei, HI 96714

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 10:01:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
J. Kehau Lucas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Kehau Lucas and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

SUBJECT: Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB2218 HD2 SD1** authorizing the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements with qualified community-based organizations.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members

My name is Kēhau Springer, and I am a kanaka ‘ōiwi practitioner and researcher residing in Kea‘au, Moku o Keawe. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB2218 HD2 SD1**.

For nearly two decades, I have worked alongside coastal communities including Miloli‘i, Kīpahulu, Mo‘omomi to develop their monitoring and management plans for Community Based Subsistence Fishing Areas (CBSFAs). These community grassroots organizations dedicate significant time, labor, and ‘ike to stewarding the nearshore environment, often coordinating closely with the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR), as well as State and County agencies.

Through this work, it is clear that DLNR alone cannot effectively manage the full scope of lands and waters under its jurisdiction. Community partnerships are not supplemental—they are essential. These relationships strengthen the State’s ability to fulfill its responsibilities while grounding management in place-based knowledge, long-term stewardship, and accountability to community.

Caring for our ‘āina—those systems that feed and sustain us—requires collective kuleana. HB2218 provides a necessary pathway to formalize these relationships by empowering community-based mālama ‘āina organizations to enter into co-management agreements that support the stewardship of public trust resources for present and future generations.

In that spirit, I respectfully encourage an amendment to the "purposes" section in the SD1 (Page 5, Lines 12-15), allowing for "management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities" in conjunction with the other mālama‘āina-focused purposes. In many communities, these are inseparable from broader stewardship responsibilities, and their inclusion would better reflect the full scope of mālama ‘āina in practice.

Mahalo nui to this committee for advancing **HB2218 HD2 SD1**. I respectfully urge you to **PASS this measure WITH AMENDMENTS**. Mahalo for your consideration.

Na‘u

Shauna Kēhaunani Springer

na Shauna Kēhaunani Springer
Kea‘au, Moku o Keawe, Hawai‘i
Founder & Executive Director, Ka Pa‘akai Consulting
Member of Nā Kai ‘Ewalu
PhD Candidate, Te Whare Wānaga o Waikato (The University of Waikato)

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 10:11:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leo Nahe Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha nō,

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community-government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Leo Nahe, Nu'uano

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 10:14:38 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pua'ala Pascua	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Committee Members,

I **strongly support** HB2218 HD2 SD1 authorizing the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to enter into community co-management agreements with qualified community-based organizations. This legislation creates a new pathway for the State to more fully embrace it's kuleana of mālama ‘āina by working in direct partnership with Native Hawaiian and local communities who have cared for our public trust lands and seas for generations, to realize shared goals and desired outcomes.

The primary intent of community co-management agreements is to empower more community-based mālama‘āina groups to collaborate with DLNR in caring for our public trust ‘āina for present and future generations. In light of this, I suggest a friendly amendment to the “purposes” section in the SD1 (Page 5, Lines 12-15), allowing for “management of parking, visitor activities, and public and recreational parks and facilities” in conjunction with the other mālama‘āina-focused purposes.

Please **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1 with my friendly amendment.

Mahalo nui loa,

Pua‘ala Pascua

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 10:47:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne Lorenzo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Anne M. Lorenzo and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1**, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to **PASS** HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Anne M. Lorenzo

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 11:04:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raquel Runnels	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Raquel S. Runnels and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

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Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo for your time.

‘O au iho nō me ka mahalo,

Raquel S. Runnels

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 11:05:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

SUPPORTING HB2218 HD2 SD1

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Hearing on April 7, 2026 at 10:31 am
Conference Room 211 and videoconference

My name is John Kawamoto, and I strongly support HB2218 HD2 SD1 because it enables the Department of Land and Natural Resources to partner effectively with knowledgeable community groups to protect and preserve Hawaii's precious natural environment, as well as archaeological and historical resources.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass this bill.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 11:48:48 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support this bill which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Nelson

Kaneohe

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 11:54:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS: NOTICE OF DECISION MAKING, Tuesday, April 7, 2026

TO: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair, Committee Members

RE: HB 2218, HD2 RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

FR: Curt A. Cottrell

Aloha and mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony. I strongly support and want to simply amplify DLNR, KUA and the numerous other Statewide community group's testimony in support of this landmark legislation.

The robust success of the DLNR Division of State Park's (DSP) collaborative co-management at Ha'ena State Park with Hui Maka'āinana O Makana is well documented and demonstrates the paradigm shift from top-down government resource and park management to "community lead, government supported" collaboration – and must be encouraged and continued.

After decades of underfunding - DSP established a significant revenue base primarily derived from out-of-state visitor entrance and parking fees at 10 DSP park units statewide. Prior to increased revenue, the common tool and approach for management was to conduct a request for proposals or invitation for bid with private sector entities to support fee collection or management with an aggressive percentage base rent to DSP, and a negotiated percentage to the lessee or permittee. ***This goal during an austere fiscal budget was purely revenue generation vs collaborative management and did not consider community-based partners and revenue sharing.***

However, the current DSP revenue stream now allows for a shift in focus from purely income and contracting management to enhanced co-management – ***without adding to the State's personnel costs.*** Instead, this model creates new community jobs and community empowerment on managing the social and physical impacts of tourism. Hui Maka'āinana O Makana now employs 55 neighboring residents to support park management – funded from their share of the visitor-based parking patronage revenue. ***This is an emerging model now pivoting the visitor industry's perception of tourism management.***

The standard IFB-RFP model still applies to certain park units - such as where there is not an engaged non-profit or community stakeholder with capacity or where the fee collection may not be sufficient to support this relationship. This legislation is intended to solidify current partnerships and to stimulate the creation of new partners. As an example, DSP is working with several community-based partners and a non-profit on Hawaii Island to establish a comparable co-management partnership at Kealakekua Bay State Historical Park. As with Ha'ena, lineal descendants of this moku are engaged. Hui Aloha Kiholo, a long time and venerated DSP partner under a Curatorship Agreement (that precludes the ability to collect or generate income) has the capacity and decades of equity as a managing partner to enter a comparable co-management disposition.

Back in the day of HRS promulgation, this section and provisions of Chapter 171 HRS was initially crafted primarily to enable straight up exclusive dispositions: the proposed amendments will simply add to the flexibility of DLNR to consider and establish community-based co-management dispositions for a variety of natural and cultural resources with progressive legal tools for enabling and sustaining co-management.

Given recent events associated with climate change and flooding, strong collaborative co-management partnerships with engaged community organizations are more pertinent and timelier than ever, making this bill a critical foundation for enabling co-management Statewide. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this timely and important measure.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 1:10:54 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Thank you.

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 1:30:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support HB2218 HD2 SD1

Dana Keawe

Moku o Keawe

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 2:06:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members.

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Currently, community–government partnerships exist through curatorships, revocable permits, and concession agreements, the lack of statutory authority and a formalized process limits their effectiveness. Through HB2218 HD2 SD1, the board may enter into community co-management agreements, by direct negotiation and without recourse to public auction, with qualified community-based organizations for a time period exceeding sixty-five years.

Community-based co-management has established community-based subsistence fishing areas, and additional communities are organizing, all of which would benefit from long-term co-management agreements. This legislation seeks to strengthen the management efforts currently sustained by the organizations performing the work to-date.

Please support HB2218 HD2 SD1 in enabling a state supported community co-management agreement between DLNR and partners that would strengthen existing efforts and serve to establish a resilient island of place-based practice and sustained care to the work being done.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 4:05:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jean Adair-Leland Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee,

My name is Jean Adair-Leland and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2218 HD2 SD1, which will allow the Land Board to realize the tremendous potential benefits that community organizations can provide in upholding the public trust, and protecting the environmental and cultural foundations of our islands and ways of life.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources is the primary entity tasked with carrying out the state of Hawai‘i’s affirmative, constitutional duty to mālama ‘āina, or to care for the natural and cultural resources of our islands. However, the vast areas of land and waters under its jurisdiction and its own institutional limitations mean the Land Board simply cannot uphold this constitutional obligations on its own. Fortunately, grassroots communities throughout Hawai‘i have long expressed their willingness to partner with the Land Board, to co-manage and steward the lands and waters that they are both intimately familiar with and deeply committed to, as dedicated tenants of their ‘āina. Unfortunately, however, no explicit or consistent legal pathway exists for the Land Board to enter into formal agreements that can facilitate such community partnerships, in furtherance of its and the state’s constitutional duties.

This measure would accordingly establish a clear, explicit, and flexible framework for collaboration, itself developed in partnership between community organizations and the Department of Land and Natural Resources, that could provide transformative benefits to natural and cultural resource management throughout Hawai‘i, for the benefit of the public trust, our ‘āina, and present and future generations.

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to PASS HB2218 HD2 SD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jean Adair-Leland

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 4:20:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amara Karuna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **support HB2218 HD2 SD1** which identifies and acknowledges the efficacy of community co-management agreements. We know that grassroots and lineal descendant communities have spent decades collaborating with government agencies to care for wahi pana and the surrounding resources. These efforts would be more effective and sustainable if supported by long-term community co-management agreements established through enacting legislation to do so by the state.

HB2218 HD2 SD1 seeks to enter into community co-management agreements with community-based organizations who honor traditional Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama ‘āina and place-based practices for effective management. The heart of this legislation is supported by the Hawaii State Constitution which supports co-management agreements as a means of restoring and protecting biocultural public trust resources for future generations, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Amara Karuna, Pahoa HI

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 5:17:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support

HB-2218-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 10:44:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/7/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
joseph simpliciano	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Just because people say they are lineal descendants doesn't mean they are exactly lineal descendants and most of them will tell you that their information is Kapu or is a family member of someone who may have frequented a spot which doesn't qualify you to manage any land or play owner to Kamehamehas land. All Land was leased to people by a Kamehameha through a royal patent or land commission award, the land was never owned by any person the land was leased to people in exchange for service to the kingdom and its people. This just shows that State parks is not effective in a management role and is unable to create a management plan especially one that receives taxpayers funds year after year, all state parks should be managed by park rangers or conservation officers but when has State parks request funding for Park rangers or conservation officers. Just because this model works on Kauai it does not mean it will work anywhere else especially in Waianae, we don't want any group coming into Waianae to manage our lands especially when we know there is no one qualified to do so, even those who say they are from Waianae.

In general, Haena land was gifted by Abner Paki to Princess pauahi and then gifted to Pease who then gifted it to Kinney who then turned around and sold it to others. which makes no sense to me because this is not how you acquire land but it happened. In general, that would mean the lineal descendants should be direct descendants of Abner Paki.