



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 2478, PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE I OF THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO RECOGNIZE AND PROTECT THE INHERENT AND INALIENABLE RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE TO CLEAN WATER AND AIR, A HEALTHFUL ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE AND HEALTHY NATIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND BEACHES.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**DATE:** Monday, February 9, 2026                      **TIME:** 4:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 224

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Wade H. Hargrove, Deputy Attorney General

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Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purpose of the bill is to propose an amendment to article I of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii to add a new section that would provide: "The inherent and inalienable rights of the people, including present and future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate and healthy native ecosystems and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed." (Page 2, lines 7-11).

Although the bill indicates that the proposed amendment would complement existing constitutional provisions and reinforce protections of human health, natural and cultural values, and the environment, we believe that the amendment broadens already existing rights. See article XI, section 1 ("[T]he State . . . shall conserve and protect Hawaii's natural beauty and all natural resources" and "[a]ll public natural resources are held in trust by the State for the benefit of the people.") and article XI, section 9 ("Each person has the right to a clean and healthful environment, as defined by laws relating to environmental quality, including . . . conservation, protection and enhancement of natural resources.") of the Hawaii Constitution.

Our concerns are that the proposed amendment could be construed to limit the Legislature's future ability to regulate the environment in unprecedented ways and to raise questions concerning the constitutionality of existing environmental laws and regulations, or the implementation of such laws and regulations. All of this would complicate environmental enforcement.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 10:17:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dave Mulinix	Testifying for Greenpeace Hawaii	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, AEN Committee Members, Senator DeCoite, Senator Rhoads, Senator Awa,

My name is Dave Mulinix, Co-Founder & Hawaii State Representative of Greenpeace Hawaii, on behalf of our thousands of members and supporters statewide we stands in **STRONG SUPPORT** of [SB2478](#) that Proposes a constitutional amendment to ensure that the inherent and inalienable right of the people, including future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate and healthy native ecosystems and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed.

Passage of SB2478 is important because environmental rights as proposed in this bill are not addressed by other existing constitutional provisions in the Hawaii state constitution: Ensuring the rights to clean, safe and healthy environments are given the same constitutional standing and protection as other Human and Civil Rights in the Hawaii state constitution is of importance and value; and it is a goal that is not achieved with other existing constitutional language.

While Article XI, Section 1 speaks to the obligation of the state to protect natural resources, it does not speak to the rights of the people to clean and healthy environments.

Article XI, Section 9 is framed to acknowledge the rights and duties of state government to protect the environment, and the ability of people to enforce existing environmental protection laws, but it does not in fact recognize the inalienable rights of people to a clean and healthy environment ensuring that recognition of rights guides government action. As a result, the proposed Green Constitutional Amendment will fill a gap that exists in Hawaii’s constitution.

Placement in Article I ensures environmental rights are protected on par with other fundamental rights and ensures fair balancing of rights when needed. For example, when there is a tension between property rights and protecting the environmental rights of the people, the two will have to be balanced and both protected.

Finally, some Hawaii officials have expressed concerns that a Hawaii Green Amendment might spur frivolous lawsuits. Such concerns are unsupported by the law or facts. There hasn’t been a proliferation of inappropriate litigation relying on constitutional environmental rights in the three states where communities already enjoy Green Amendment protections. Rather, the lawsuits brought have been important and reasonable and have helped protect air, water, soil, human

health, and to support the proper interpretation of environmental laws passed by state government.

The Green Amendments in force in Pennsylvania, Montana and New York have not only been relied upon by communities to secure essential environmental protections otherwise being overlooked, but have also been used by state regulatory agencies, attorneys general, and local government bodies to protect their own environmental authority and their ability to pursue environmental protections they have identified as being of primary importance. In fact, there is no litigation that has been dismissed as frivolous because of a Green Amendment claim. Most often, the Green Amendment protections have been brought forth to help government officials and the courts properly interpret, apply and enforce the environmental laws and regulations that are already on the books, as opposed to being free-standing challenges to government overreach.

In closing, ensuring environmental rights protection will, by its nature, strengthen property rights protection because too often pollution migrates onto the property of others. The complement of property rights with environmental rights will allow us to better protect the sanctity of families and homes.

Please pass SB559 and protect and ensure our rights to a clean healthy environment.

Mahalo,

Dave Mulinix

Co-Founder & Hawaii State Representative

Greenpeace Hawaii.



**Chair Gabbard**  
**Vice Chair Richards**  
**Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment**

**Friday, February 13, 2026**  
**3:10 PM**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2478 PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO  
ARTICLE 1 OF THE HAWAI‘I STATE CONSTITUTION**

Aloha Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

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’s Education legislative committee is in **strong support** of SB2478.

In 2010, the United Nations passed a resolution identifying the right “to water and sanitation,” and in 2022, they additionally declared the right “to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.”<sup>1</sup> These parts of our natural environment are what allows us to live, and no human should be deprived of the necessities for survival. In addition to the protection of others, we must also remember that, as stated in the bill, it is our duty to “mālama ‘āina” and establish a reciprocal relationship with the land that provides for us.

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<sup>1</sup> ; <https://docs.un.org/en/a/res/64/292> ; <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3982508?ln=en&v=pdf>

A vote for SB2478 is a vote for protecting a future where Hawai'i's youth and their natural environment can both flourish and live in harmony with one another. Through the codification of these rights, we can set a good example for Hawai'i's youth and protect them in the case that their livelihoods are violated. Therefore, the Hawai'i State Youth Commission strongly urges the committee to **PASS SB2478**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

The Hawai'i State Youth Commission

[hawaiiistateyc@gmail.com](mailto:hawaiiistateyc@gmail.com)

## Verbal Testimony

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Garrett, Members of the House Committee on Labor and Government Operations,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am speaking today on behalf of the Hawai'i State Youth Commission. The Hawai'i State Youth Commission is in **strong support** of **HB1653 HD1**.

As mentioned in our testimony, one of the most critical issues in Hawai'i's current education system is the teacher shortage and retainment rates. The significance of teachers' role in the future of Hawai'i's youth has been long overlooked, represented by salaries that are among the lowest in the nation. As the Youth Commission recognizes the importance of education in facilitating the next generation of thinkers, innovators, and leaders, we recognize the importance of teachers who guide the path for students to do so.

We must work to ensure that teachers are offered financial stability to support all they do for our keiki. Providing automatic step increases in teacher and educational officer salaries is a crucial initiative to filling the teacher shortage and retaining high-quality teachers for all future generations of learners in Hawai'i.

Therefore, the Hawai'i State Youth Commission strongly urges the committee to **PASS** **HB1653 HD1**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



**In strong support of SB2478**

**February 9, 2026**

Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

We, the undersigned 19 organizations, are writing in strong support of SB2478, the proposal to add environmental rights to the Bill of Rights of the Hawaii Constitution.

While Hawaii's constitution Article XI Section 9 speaks to the importance of having environmental rights protection for the people of Hawaii, it fails to put those rights on par with the other fundamental rights such as speech, religious freedom and due process right. Instead, it leaves environmental rights protection to the political process, to be defined by laws that can be subject to the politics of the day, easily undermined by a legislature that fails to fully appreciate the importance of protecting the environmental rights of all our people, and a legislative system that by its nature can be subject to gaps in protection or result in disproportionate harms for environmental justice communities that can be left without a remedy when they find themselves the victims of devastating levels of environmental pollution or degradation. The proposed Hawaii Green Amendment will provide a mechanism to fill the gaps, address inequities in interpretation and implementation of existing laws, and strengthen environmental protection by raising environmental rights up so they are given highest constitutional recognition and protection.

The proposed amendment reflects the rooted traditions and collective cultural conscience of the State's people, and exemplifies the fundamental Native Hawaiian notion of Aloha Aina, which translates to "love of the land" and is central to Native Hawaiian values and beliefs.

The proposed Hawaii Green Amendment will be a valuable complement to Hawaii's commitment and obligation to serve as a trustee of our state's natural resources and to protect those resources generationally that is found in Article XI Section 1 of our state constitution. The proposed environmental rights language will neither displace nor complete with this existing constitutional language. To the contrary, it will complement it by adding environmental rights protection to the natural resources trustee obligations of the state. This complementary approach of protection and values has proven helpful in other states. The proposed environmental rights language will also help to protect the legacy of environmental protection advanced by our current and previous legislators; ensuring strong protections already in place are not rolled back by any future legislative, regulatory or executive government officials who fail to hold the same environmental protection values.

The proposed Bill of Rights amendment will raise up our environmental rights so they become part of the guiding obligations and principles for all government action and legislation and, as with other Article I rights, are protected from government overreach and infringement. Article 1 placement also ensures that all state government, including branches, agencies and subdivisions, are constitutionally bound to protect our environmental rights, the obligation is not limited to the state legislature. Adding environmental rights to our Hawaii Bill of Rights will ensure that environmental protection and environmental justice are given high priority and that there is a focus on preventing environmental pollution and degradation throughout government decision-making when there is the best opportunity for preventing harm.

Bill of Rights protection will also ensure that when there are competing interests, environmental protection and rights will be part of the balancing of rights to be protected, rather than becoming subservient to other asserted rights, goals and needs. For example, if there is a tension between property rights and protecting the environmental rights of the people around, the two will have to be balanced and both protected. Ensuring environmental rights protection will also, by its nature, strengthen property rights protection because too often the property of others is invaded by the pollution of another, the complement of property rights with environmental rights will allow us to better protect the sanctity of our property, family and homes.

Securing Bill of Rights protection for our environmental rights is not intended to, nor would it be expected to, prevent industry, development or economic growth in our state. But it will ensure that business, industry and economic development advance sustainably and in ways that protect environmental interests, justice and rights. Environmental protection and economic development are not mutually exclusive, in fact they are inextricably connected – a healthy economy depends on a healthy environment, healthy communities and healthy people. The proposed environmental rights amendment will ensure that as we grow jobs and our economy, we also protect the environment for the health and safety of present and future generations.

In addition to helping protect our communities from damaging actions and decisions, the amendment will provide a powerful foundation on which our Hawaii government officials can conceive and advance protection laws, policies, programs and decisions.

We all need and deserve clean water and air, healthy native ecosystems and beaches, a healthful climate and environment. We need and deserve recognition and protection of our inalienable human rights to a clean and healthy environment so we can live healthy, long and good quality lives. And so it is just and right that we should ensure our environmental rights are protected as firmly and powerfully as the other fundamental rights we hold dear.

With Respect and Appreciation,

Signed:

Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii

Tanya Yamanaka Aynessazian, Principal Contractor, Chamber of Sustainable Commerce

Melodie Aduja, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party

Cara Oba, Climate Protectors Hawaii

Lisa Bishop, President, Friends of Hanauma Bay

Maya van Rossum, Founder, Green Amendments for the Generation

Susan B. Roberts Emery, Green Party of Hawaii

Dave Mulinix, Co-Founder, Greenpeace Hawaii

Anne Frederick, Executive Director, Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action

Travis Idol, Hawaii Interfaith Power and Light

Ted Bohlen, Co-Founder, Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition

Helen Cox, Chair, Kauai Climate Action Coalition

Laurel Brier, Kauai Women's Caucus

Don May, Our Revolution Hawaii

Hanna Lilley, Hawaii Regional Manager, Surfrider Foundation

Rob Brower, Chair, Surfrider Foundation, Kauai Chapter

Susan Gorman-Chang, Trinity United Methodist Church

Stuart Coleman, Executive Director & Co-Founder, WAI – Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations

Ruta Jordans, Zero Waste Kauai



To: The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)  
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Monday, February 9, 2026, 4:00 pm

**In strong support of SB2478**

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and AEN Committee members;

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support of SB2478 with a suggested amendment.** SB2478 proposes a constitutional amendment to add environmental rights to the Bill of Rights of the Hawaii Constitution.

For the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style, we respectfully suggest the following amendment to the language in the description of the measure and on page 2 as follows:

**"ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS**

Section \_\_\_\_\_. The inherent and inalienable rights of the people, including present and future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, ~~and~~ healthy native ecosystems and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed."

SECTION 3. The question to be printed on the ballot shall be as follows:

"Shall the Hawaii State Constitution be amended to ensure the inherent and inalienable rights of the people, including present and future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, ~~and~~ healthy native ecosystems and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed?"

The Green Amendment will serve to strengthen the environmental protections currently recognized in our Hawaii Constitution. This is needed now more than ever in these times where ecosystems and our climate are facing destruction. 350Hawaii welcomes the inclusion of a Green Amendment in which environmental rights are given highest constitutional recognition and protection, on par with other fundamental rights such as speech.

The amendment would be a tool to help put a focus on the prevention of environmental harm, as well as provide legislators and regulators constitutional grounding upon which to advance positive and

strengthened environmental protections. Environmental threats are growing worse and we are facing a climate crisis. Because healthy environments, including climate, are currently not recognized and protected as inalienable rights and given constitutional recognition and protection, protecting these basic human needs becomes an afterthought in government decision making, and sometimes is not considered at all. The health of the environment and environmental impacts should be considered first, at the start of planning, decision making, and regulating. Our constitution should recognize and protect the rights of all people, **including future generations**.

We all need clean water and air, a healthy environment and climate to live healthy, long and good quality lives. And so it is just and right that we should ensure our environmental rights are protected as firmly and powerfully as the other fundamental rights we hold dear.

Opponents of this measure have cited a concern that it will create increased litigation and that “administrative agencies are already swamped by contested cases.” Such concerns are unsupported by the law or facts. Green Amendments do not support frivolous litigation. In Pennsylvania, New York, and Montana, where Green Amendments now exist, there has not been an onslaught of frivolous litigation relying on constitutional environmental rights. Rather, the lawsuits brought have been reasonable and helped to shape the understanding of the constitutional requirement.

The Green Amendments in force in Pennsylvania, Montana and New York have not only been relied upon by communities to secure essential environmental protections otherwise being overlooked, **but have also been used by state regulatory agencies, attorneys general, and local government bodies to protect their own environmental authority and their ability to pursue environmental protections they have identified as being of primary importance**. In fact, there is no litigation that has been dismissed as frivolous because of a Green Amendment claim. Most often, the Green Amendment protections have been brought forth to help government officials and the courts properly interpret, apply and enforce the environmental laws and regulations that are already on the books, as opposed to being free-standing challenges to government overreach.

With a Green Amendment, government agencies would need to consider our environmental rights when executing their duties, it would not be an afterthought as it is now. **We all need clean water, clean air, a healthful environment and climate**. Having the Green Amendment would support and secure better government decision-making that avoids environmental pollution and degradation.

The sooner these rights are recognized, the better off the future will be for our children.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this very important legislation, and for your consideration of our suggested amendment.

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 4:44:34 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/9/2026 4:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and honorable members of committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as co chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i stands, we stand in VERY STRONG Support of SB2478, known as the Green Amendment, not after the Governor, but concerned with or supporting environmental protection; environmentally friendly.

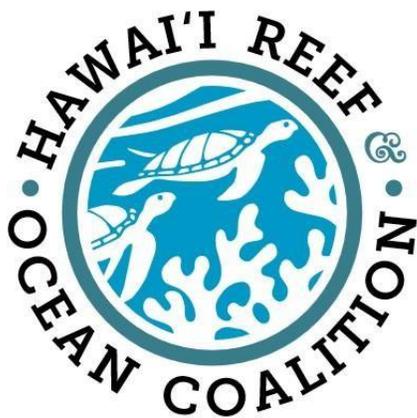
SB2478 proposes a Hawai'i constitutional amendment which, if passed in a future ballot referendum, would ensure that the inherent and inalienable right of the people, including future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, healthy native ecosystems, and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed. This is needed now more than ever in these times where ecosystems and our climate are facing destruction. We are all connected, we are a part of nature and not separate from nature. What we do to our soil, air, water, we do to ourselves. We need to be good stewards of this planet that we are borrowing from all future generations. The tipping point is now.

Please support SB2478, our world depends on this.

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo



To: The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair, the Honorable Tim Richards, III, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment.

From: Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

**Re: Hearing SB2478 PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE I OF THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION TO RECOGNIZE AND PROTECT THE INHERENT AND INALIENABLE RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE TO CLEAN WATER AND AIR, A HEALTHFUL ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE AND HEALTHY NATIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND BEACHES.**

Hearing: Monday February 9, 2023, 4:00 p.m., room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Agriculture and Environment Committee Members:

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (HIROC) is a group of scientists, educators, filmmakers and environmental advocates who have been working since 2017 to protect Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean. The Climate Protectors Hawai'i seek to educate and engage the local community in climate change action.

**The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and the Climate Protectors Hawai'i  
STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2933!**

Hawai'i has very fragile ecosystems, from coral reefs that are suffering from warming oceans, to drinking water polluted with petroleum spilled from underground storage tanks. These fragile ecosystems need protection now more than ever, as environmental threats are growing worse and we are facing an existential climate crisis and rapid declines in aquatic life. Recently, the need for this amendment has been underscored by the harm to our drinking water from spills at the permitted facility at Red Hill.

This bill proposes a constitutional amendment to Article I, the Hawai'i Bill of Rights, to provide more protection of environmental rights. If approved by voters, the Green Constitutional Amendment as drafted in this bill would recognize and protect the right to clean water and air, healthful environment and climate, healthy native ecosystems, and beaches.

In Hawai'i, environmental protection and this amendment are rooted in the traditions and collective conscience of the people. Environmental protection is deeply honored and valued as part of the culture, beliefs, way of life, and economy. Native Hawaiians have had a traditional and on-going special relationship to the environment and 'aina.

Because "a healthful environment and climate," and "healthy ecosystems" are currently not recognized and protected as inherent, inalienable rights in the Hawaii's Constitution's Bill of Rights, protecting these basic human needs sometimes becomes an afterthought in government laws and decision making, and sometimes is not considered at all. The inclusion of this fundamental right in Article I would not be redundant or unnecessary. It would complement, not supplant, the existing recognized role of government as public trustee of all public natural resources in Article XI, Section 1.

We all need clean water and air, and a healthful environment and climate, to live healthy, long and good quality lives. And so it is just and right that we should ensure our environmental rights are protected as firmly and powerfully as the other fundamental rights we hold dear. We need environmental protection rights

raised up to be on par with other fundamental rights such as speech, assembly and religious freedoms.

This Constitutional amendment would provide a new and important tool for protecting the State's environment. This new amendment may fill a significant gap where there is not yet a law to address a serious environmental condition or threat, until legislative protections can catch up, and strengthen enforceable environmental rights that belong to all the people of Hawai'i.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i and Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition particularly applaud the inclusion of healthful climate and healthy ecosystems in the rights that would be recognized and protected in this amendment, if adopted. The Climate Protectors Hawai'i and Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition were both formed out of concern for these overlooked (and typically degraded) public interests. The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition shares this interest in a healthful climate, which is also critical for corals and other marine life that are dying primarily from warming, more acidic oceans, as well as in "healthy ecosystems."

New York in 2021 became the third state to adopt a Green Constitutional Amendment. In addition to Hawai'i, numerous other states are considering similar amendments at this time.

The amendment would now read: **“The fundamental right of the people, including future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, healthy native ecosystems, and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed.”**

**The Climate Protectors Hawai'i and the Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition ask the Committee to advance this bill to continue discussion of this important right for the people of Hawai'i!**

Mahalo!

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



February 8, 2026

Dear Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

My name is Maya K. van Rossum. I am an environmental advocate and attorney. I am the Founder of Green Amendments For The Generations. I have published numerous books & articles, and presented as an expert nationwide, on the value and importance of constitutional recognition of environmental rights.

With the passage of SB2478, Hawai'i has the opportunity to:

- ✓ be the 4<sup>th</sup> state in the nation to provide a Green Amendment that gives highest protection to environmental rights, and
- ✓ to leave a powerful legacy of environmental protection that will withstand the vagaries of political change.

Three states currently have constitutional environmental rights protections similar to what is being proposed in SB2478 – Pennsylvania, Montana and New York. In these three states, giving environmental rights the same highest legal standing given to other cherished freedoms such as speech and religion is working well. Green Amendments similar to SB2478:

- are not displacing existing laws, but instead are strengthening their interpretation and application;
- are providing legal protections in those instances when there is a gap or loop hole in the law (e.g. PFAS; data centers); and
- are proving beneficial for advancing environmental justice and to help address the serious issue of climate change.

In the 3 states with similar amendments, there have been zero frivolous lawsuits, and to the extent legal action has been pursued, it has been to address serious issues of community concern.

SB2478 does not usurp the police powers of government and the fundamental ability of the legislature to enact laws and take measures to advance the common good of its citizenry. Instead, it offers the guidance and the vision for environmental protection the people of Hawai'i want to see from their government.

SB2478 will provide communities, as well as government, a constitutional pathway to avoid environmental harm and secure needed protections when the laws as written fail to do so.

- ⇒ To the extent existing laws are providing the environmental protections needed, the constitutional environmental rights amendment will serve as silent support.
- ⇒ But in those times when existing laws are not ensuring environmental rights are honored, the amendment can provide a backstop and foundation for good government officials and impacted communities to secure needed protections.

While Hawai'i has a well-developed system of environmental protection laws there will always be unique situations the law could not or did not fully address; and over time there will always be new and impactful technologies and contaminants that the law has yet to address (e.g. PFAS, data centers). For these situations, the constitutional right will empower government and impacted communities to advance and secure needed protections.

By ensuring that every level and arm of government –state, county and city level, and legislative, executive and judicial branches -- are embracing environmental rights protection as part of their day to day work, passage of the proposed environmental rights amendment put forth by SB2478 will help identify environmental concerns earlier in the decisionmaking process, when the opportunities to remedy and avoid harmful environmental impacts can be more accessible, cost effective and impactful.

While avoiding legal action is a goal of the amendment, if the courts do become involved, it will not be to displace the legislative or executive branches of government. As with other constitutional rights, the role of the courts will be to determine if the government action at issue meets constitutional muster, and leave it to the other branches of government to remedy any constitutional deficiencies identified. And notably, because the amendment is focused on government action, it will not support legal action between private parties.

With the proposal of SB2478, and its companion HB1932, Hawai'i is helping to lead the way in recognizing the importance and value of giving constitutional recognition and protection for the inalienable, human right, of all people to a clean, safe, and healthy environment. Constitutional Green Amendments are being advanced by communities nationwide – with proposals put forth in over 20 states. Many are looking to the proposal here in Hawai'i for both guidance and inspiration.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

With respect and regards,



Maya K. van Rossum  
Founder/Leader

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 3:35:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
laurel brier	Testifying for kauai women's caucus	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support for putting the Green Amendment on the ballot to confirm the people's priority of clean, water, air, environment as an inalienable right now and future generations



FEBRUARY 9, 2026

## SENATE BILL 2478

CURRENT REFERRAL: AEN

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Kris Coffield,  
*President*

David Negaard,  
*Director*

Mireille Ellsworth,  
*Director*

Justin Salisbury,  
*Director*

Eileen Roco,  
*Director*

Beatrice DeRego,  
*Director*

Corey Rosenlee,  
*Director*

Amy Zhao,  
*Policy and Partnerships  
Strategist*

### POSITION: SUPPORT

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Imua Alliance supports SB 2478, which proposes a constitutional amendment to ensure that the inherent and inalienable right of the people, including future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate and healthy native ecosystems and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai'i-based organization dedicated to ending sexual exploitation and gender violence, and combating all forms of systemic exploitation in our society, including climate injustice. According to a report produced by the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, global sea levels could rise more than three feet by 2100, with more recent projections showing this occurring as early as 2060. In turn, over the next 30 to 70 years, approximately 6,500 structures and 19,800 people statewide will be exposed to chronic flooding.

Additionally, an estimated \$19 billion in economic loss would result from chronic flooding of land and structures located in exposure areas. Finally, approximately 38 miles of coastal roads and 550 cultural sites would be chronically flooded, on top of the 13 miles of beaches that have already been lost on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui to erosion fronting shoreline armoring, like seawalls. As we work to reduce carbon emissions and stave off the worst consequences of climate change, we must begin preparing for the adverse impact of sea level rise on our shores.

We are now quantifying the speed at which we must act. We cannot continue to develop the 25,800-acre statewide sea level rise exposure area—one-third of which is designated for urban use—without risking massive structural damage and, potentially, great loss of life. In turn, we must take steps to ensure access to a clean and healthy environment as the worst effects of climate change approach our shores.

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Rights of nature laws, including so-called “Green Amendments,” have been enacted in the United States and throughout the world as a means of protecting important ecological and cultural resources. In 2006 and 2007, the town of Tamaqua Borough in Pennsylvania established the first environmental personhood ordinances in the nation, which were intended to combat toxic waste. Since then, other locations have enacted or proposed rights of nature measures, including in 2010 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and in 2020 Orange County, Florida.

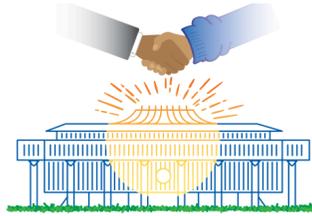
Perhaps the most well-known international example of rights of nature legislation is the Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement) Act of 2017 enacted by the New Zealand parliament, which was the first piece of legislation to declare a river to be a legal person. The Te Awa Tupua Act bestowed upon the Whanganui River the rights, duties, and powers of a legal person, including the ability to sue those who harm it. Moreover, the Te Awa Tupua Act was aimed at improving the relationship between the government of New Zealand and its indigenous people through the enshrinement of the rights of nature associated with the culturally significant Whanganui River into law.

Our state should likewise take steps to preserve access to a clean and healthy environment. From the military’s fuel tanks beneath Red Hill to the pesticides unleashed by agrochemical companies on local farmland, our ‘āina has been subjected to degradation by those who put corporate profits before public health. Yet, public health should be treated as a sacrosanct fundamental right of Hawai‘i’s people, who should have the power to take legal action when the precious environment upon which we depend is endangered, thereby undermining the sustainability of our island home. For the sake of our keiki, we cannot afford to wait to solidify strategies to preserve our environmental resources for generations to come.

With aloha,

*Kris Coffield*

President, Imua Alliance



## CLIMATE FUTURE FORUM

To: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Tim Richards, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Environment (AEN.)

Hearing: 02/13/2026, 3:10pm

From: Climate Future Forum

Re: **STRONG SUPPORT for SB2478**

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Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Environment,

The Hawai'i Climate Future Forum is a youth-led organization that equips young people across Hawai'i to engage directly in climate policy through research, testimony, and community-based solutions. My name is Vivienne Hill, and I am a freshman at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. On behalf of the Climate Future Forum's Regenerative Food Systems working group, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of SB2478**.

SB2478 proposes a constitutional amendment to recognize and protect the inherent and inalienable right of present and future generations to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, and healthy native ecosystems and beaches. By placing these environmental rights side-by-side with other fundamental civil liberties, this measure would ensure that government at every level must safeguard these conditions as a baseline for human health and community well-being.

As youth, we are already living with the escalating impacts of climate change and ecological degradation, from coral bleaching and coastal erosion to extreme heat and threats to local food production. Codifying a right to a healthful environment and climate provides a clear, enforceable standard that can guide future legislation and investments so that our communities are protected proactively rather than only after harm has occurred.

For those of us working on regenerative food systems, these environmental rights are the basic conditions that make local agriculture and community food security possible. Farmers and fishers rely on clean water, healthy soils, breathable air, and functioning native ecosystems to produce food. When climate change, contamination, erosion, or invasive species degrade 'āina and



waterways, our ability to grow food locally and rely less on imports is directly undermined. Recognizing a constitutional right to a healthful environment and climate helps ensure that land use, water, pollution, and climate decisions treat Hawai'i's food systems, and access to locally grown food, as a non-negotiable priority.

SB2478 builds on and strengthens commitments the Legislature and people of Hawai'i have already embedded in our Constitution and laws. In 1978, Article XI charged the State with conserving and protecting natural resources for present and future generations and recognized a judicially enforceable right to a clean and healthful environment. In 2007, Act 234 established a binding cap on greenhouse gas emissions and affirmed that climate stability is essential to public health and welfare. SB2478 clarifies in what these actions already imply: clean water and air, a stable climate, and living native ecosystems are baseline conditions for life and must be treated as inherent rights the State is duty-bound to protect.

On behalf of Climate Future Forum and youth across Hawai'i who are stepping up to protect our home, I **respectfully urge you to pass SB2478.**

Sincerely,

Vivienne Hill  
Student | Youth Policy Leader, Regenerative Food Systems  
Hawai'i Climate Future Forum

To: Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Matthew Masterson, MSW Student

Date: February 13, 2026

RE: Testimony in support of SB2478 - proposing a constitutional amendment recognizing the right to clean water and air, a healthy environment and climate, and healthy environment and climate, and healthy native ecosystems and beaches.

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Matthew Masterson, and I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB2478.

This measure proposes a constitutional amendment recognizing that the people of Hawai'i, including our future generations, hold an inherent right to clean water, air, a healthy environment and climate, and healthy native ecosystems and beaches. These rights should be protected and not infringed on.

I believe SB2478 is a strong step toward advancing our health equity and addressing the social determinants of health and community well-being. There is specific evidence in the form of studies, reviews, and testings that show environmental conditions can and do affect our community's well-being. When families face these repeated disruptions in their environment, whether in the form of heat, flooding, wildfire smoke, unsafe drinking water, ecosystem decline, or shoreline loss, these effects reflect directly in our communities.

The beauty of SB2778 is that it is also aligns with a prevention-focused approach. This helps us to recognize that environmental rights at the constitutional level can have a positive impact on Hawai'i and strengthen the policy foundation for our future generations. With bills such as SB2778 and consistent enforcement measures, we can work together to provide each other cleaner water, purer air, and preserve our native ecosystems and beaches for our children and their children to cherish and enjoy. I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB2478 and advance it forward with a favorable recommendation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,

Matthew Masterson

MSW Student

Mjmaster@hawaii.edu

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 4:26:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

In strong support. This is for our future generations. Let them know we didn't just stand by and let Hawaii become degraded beyond measure or recovery!

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 3:43:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support SB2478. Nothing is more important to our quality of life than a clean and healthy environment. This should be considered a basic right to be protected by law.

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 1:38:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill!

Mahalo for introducing it, and for passing it out of committee!

With Aloha,

Lisa Bishop,

Oahu resident

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 4:47:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Stronly support!

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 9:20:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members!

SB2478 proposes a Hawai‘i constitutional amendment which, if passed in a future ballot referendum, would ensure that the inherent and inalienable right of the people, including future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, healthy native ecosystems, and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed. This is needed now more than ever in these times where ecosystems and our climate are facing destruction.

Environmental threats are growing worse and we are facing a climate crisis. Because healthy environments, including climate, are currently not recognized and protected as inalienable rights and given constitutional recognition and protection, protecting these basic human needs becomes an afterthought in government decision making, and sometimes is not considered at all. The health of the environment and environmental impacts should be considered first, at the start of planning, decision making, and regulating. Our constitution should recognize and protect the rights of all people, **including future generations**.

We all need clean water and air, a healthy environment and climate to live healthy, long and good quality lives. And so it is just and right that we should ensure our environmental rights are protected as firmly and powerfully as the other fundamental rights we hold dear.

Mahalo for supporting this bill!

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 7:09:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Benjamin Narwold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB2478 proposes a Hawai‘i constitutional amendment which, if passed in a future ballot referendum, would ensure that the inherent and inalienable right of the people, including future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, healthy native ecosystems, and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed. This is needed now more than ever in these times where ecosystems and our climate are facing destruction.

Environmental threats are growing worse and we are facing a climate crisis. Because healthy environments, including climate, are currently not recognized and protected as inalienable rights and given constitutional recognition and protection, protecting these basic human needs becomes an afterthought in government decision making, and sometimes is not considered at all. The health of the environment and environmental impacts should be considered first, at the start of planning, decision making, and regulating. Our constitution should recognize and protect the rights of all people, **including future generations**.

Mahalo,

Benjamin Narwold, Kapaa, Hawaii

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 4:36:57 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

**SUPPORT**

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 2:56:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

Several years ago, I moved to the Big Island of Hawaii from New Jersey. I want to be sure that Hawai'i keeps its wonderful environment and does not suffer the fate of so many states, including New Jersey, that have seen so much of their environment defiled by decisions that did not take the health of the environment and the people into consideration.

Therefore, I am in strong support of a Hawai'i Green Amendment. SB2478 proposes a Hawai'i constitutional amendment which, if passed in a future ballot referendum, would ensure that the right of all people - including future generations - to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, healthy native ecosystems, and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed. This is needed now more than ever in these times where ecosystems and our climate are facing devastation.

We all need clean water, clean air, and a livable climate. To ensure this, we need these rights to environmental protection raised to be on par with other fundamental rights such as speech and religious freedoms. Existing environmental laws primarily deal with providing a "right to pollute" - they only set limits to how much pollution is allowed. Also, existing laws can be changed by subsequent elected officials.

A constitutional amendment will insure that impacts on the environment are considered in advance of actions being taken, and also will not be able to be undone by a change in legislators.

Mahalo!

Carol Hemington

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 2:31:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael EKM Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill, our quality of life is and has always been intertwined with how we maintain and upkeep the world around us. If we had our way, this amendment would not be necessary, but it is. Because for generations we have been deceived into believing, by rich and powerful groups, that our quality of life rests solely in the destruction of nature. We have to silence the voices of the few and the greedy and protect Hawaii's natural beauty and wonder.

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 4:41:37 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Hello Senator Gabbard and Committee,

My name is Andrew Evans, I am born and raised and still reside in Kailua, and I work in private lands conservation restoring native habitats on the Windward side of O‘ahu. With this experience, I would like to write in support of SB 2478 to protect the people's enjoyment of air, water, climate, and ecosystems in the state's constitution. For seeing our future deeper in the impacts of the climate crisis, this constitutional amendment will provide the legal background to protect our islands against irresponsible economic or commercial interests, or otherwise negligent actions, that might not otherwise best represent the interest of the people. Protecting our environment is protecting our culture and our community's wellbeing. Please vote in favor of passing SB 2478.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrew Evans

Mahalo,

Andrew Evans

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 10:06:36 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SB2478. This bill's proposed constitutional amendment is urgently needed in our era of accelerating climate change and environmental degradation.

A livable climate and a healthy environment are basic human needs and should be enshrined in our constitution as inalienable rights. Currently, too many of our governmental policies treat environmental issues as an afterthought or fail to address them at all. SB2478 would help ensure that impacts to our climate and ecology are considered at every stage of planning, decision making and regulating. Our constitution should protect the right to a livable world for all our current and future generations.

I've lived in Hawaii all my life, and over those four decades, I have seen the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss. My mountain community was consistently rainy in the 1980s but now has very dry summers. Most native plants in our local forests have been displaced by invasive species that are much more flammable and increase our wildfire risk. Like many other ridgeline neighborhoods, we've had several brush fires over the past decade. Like everyone in Hawaii, we're facing increasingly severe weather. And we're very concerned for communities along the coast, where storm surge and sea level rise are intensifying threats.

I'm giving testimony because I don't want Hawaii's keiki to face profound climate destabilization or an ecologically barren world. It is time to commit to restoration efforts.

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 7:53:55 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Robert Petricci

In strong support of SB2478

Mahalo

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 4:17:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I stand in support with this bill.

I'd like to recommend a non-substantive change to the wording of Section 1. – where it reads: “Native Hawaiian ~~notion~~ value of Aloha Aina, which translates to "love of the land" and is a central ~~to~~ Native Hawaiian values and beliefs.”

Otherwise, I stand whole heartily behind this bill. We need to ensure that the our environment is protected and not infringed upon.

Mahalo for your consideration,  
Keoni Shizuma

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 3:17:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Mr. Gabbard, Mr. Richards and other committee members,

I strongly support a clean, healthy environment and SB 2478.

Mahalo, Beverley Brand

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 5:43:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

SB2478 proposes a Hawai‘i constitutional amendment which, if passed in a future ballot referendum, would ensure that the inherent and inalienable right of the people, including future generations, to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, healthy native ecosystems, and beaches, shall be protected and shall not be infringed. This is needed now more than ever in these times where ecosystems and our climate are facing destruction.

-- Environmental threats are growing worse and we are facing a climate crisis. Because healthy environments, including climate, are currently not recognized and protected as inalienable rights and given constitutional recognition and protection, protecting these basic human needs becomes an afterthought in government decision making, and sometimes is not considered at all. The health of the environment and environmental impacts should be considered first, at the start of planning, decision making, and regulating. Our constitution should recognize and protect the rights of all people, **including future generations**.

-- We all need clean water and air, a healthy environment and climate to live healthy, long and good quality lives. And so it is just and right that we should ensure our environmental rights are protected as firmly and powerfully as the other fundamental rights we hold dear. Mahalo for listening.

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 11:17:57 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 3:32:30 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SB2478.

I am an old person who is very concerned about ensuring a livable and healthy environment in which my grandchildren and their children can thrive.

I believe this bill is a critical step toward achieving this goal.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 2:10:03 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

PLEASE support this VERY IMPORTANT constitutional amedment!!

The health of the environment and environmental impacts should be considered FIRST, at the start of planning, decision making, and regulating. Our constitution should recognize and protect the rights of all people, INCLUDING FUTURE GENERATIONS!

We all need clean water and air, a healthy environment and climate to live healthy, long and good quality lives.

Respectfully submitted, Lana Brodziak

**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 6:47:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordyn Koki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing in strong support of SB 2478, which proposes amending Article I of the Hawai‘i State Constitution to recognize and protect the inherent and inalienable right of all people to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, and healthy native ecosystems and beaches.

As a student majoring in environmental studies with a focus on environmental justice, I understand that environmental protection is not separate from social justice - it is inseparable from it. Access to clean water, safe air, and healthy ecosystems is fundamental to public health, economic stability, and community wellbeing. Yet historically, environmental burdens have disproportionately impacted Native Hawaiians and other local communities.

For Native Hawaiians, environmental rights are deeply connected to cultural survival. Practices such as fishing, gathering, farming, and caring for ancestral lands depend on access to clean water, thriving reefs, and healthy native ecosystems. When ecosystems degrade, it is not just a loss of biodiversity - it is a loss of cultural continuity, food sovereignty, and self-determination.

Constitutionally recognizing the right to a clean and healthful environment strengthens our collective responsibility to conserve Hawai‘i’s unique resources. It affirms that beaches, streams, forests, and reefs are not commodities reserved for a few, but shared inheritances that must remain accessible and protected for all people, especially future generations.

As climate change accelerates sea level rise, coral bleaching, drought, and extreme weather across our islands, we need stronger legal protections to ensure that decision-making centers long-term ecological health and environmental justice. SB 2478 would help embed mālama ‘āina into our highest governing document, reflecting the values Hawai‘i claims to uphold.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB 2478 and advance this vital amendment to protect our people, our culture, and our ‘āina.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Jordyn Koki



**SB-2478**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 11:26:27 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Selesitina Scanlan, and I strongly support the proposed amendment to recognize the inherent and inalienable right of all people to clean water and air, a healthful environment and climate, and healthy native ecosystems and beaches.

For island communities, these rights are essential to our survival. Clean water, breathable air, and healthy ecosystems are not optional. They are the foundation of life, culture, and community in Hawai'i and across the Pacific. Placing these protections in the State Constitution ensures they cannot be weakened by shifting political priorities and that future generations inherit an environment capable of sustaining them.

This amendment reflects a core Pacific value: caring for the land so it can care for us. It provides long-term protection for the resources our children and granschildren will depend on.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass this amendment.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.