

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA  
P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY  
CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER  
AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

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

Before the Senate Committees on  
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS  
and  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
Thursday, February 19, 2026  
3:10 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 3002  
RELATING TO THE HAWAII STATE PLANNING ACT

Senate Bill 2003 establishes green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines for State facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects in the Hawai'i State Planning Act to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors; adds a definition of "green infrastructure;" and requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to submit a report to the Legislature making recommendations for implementing green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

Hawai'i's commitment to uphold the Paris Climate Accord and its progressive move toward a zero-emissions, clean economy by 2045 requires that we actively invest in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>). Meeting these targets will require both emissions reductions and meaningful carbon sequestration strategies. Green infrastructure provides a robust and cost-effective framework for climate resilience, where the co-benefits of carbon sequestration, ecosystem enhancement, and economic vitality come together.

Green infrastructure offers essential ecosystem services, including stormwater management by collecting, slowing, and filtering water as it moves from land to sea. These functions help reduce flooding, enhance water quality, recharge groundwater, and protect coral reefs and coastal ecosystems. Investing in carbon-positive initiatives like green infrastructure also promotes a healthier Hawai'i, as green spaces provide key public health benefits, such as cooling urban heat

islands, improving air quality, supporting mental health, and boosting overall community well-being.

The Department advocates for including landscape-scale practices within the definition of green infrastructure. As noted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), green infrastructure can include site-specific management practices and watershed-scale techniques, such as land preservation and the restoration of wetlands and floodplains that naturally store water and reduce runoff. Incorporating both site-level and watershed-scale approaches ensures that green infrastructure planning is thorough, science-based, and aligned with natural systems.

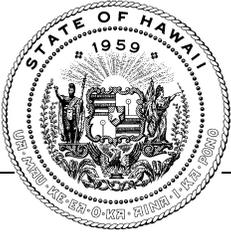
This measure closely aligns with the mission of the Department's Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program, which exists to support all Hawai'i's communities in fostering wellbeing and resilience through planting, caring for, and building relationships with the trees and forests we rely on, which are vital to the ecosystems we depend on. We do this for our keiki, our kūpuna, ourselves, our 'āina, and everyone's future.

The Kaulunani Program enhances our communities' capacity to plan for, establish, manage, and safeguard all types of green infrastructure, including street trees, urban forests, green spaces, bioswales, and related natural areas where we live, work, and play. Hawai'i's urban tree canopy is shrinking, and with it, the numerous ecological, social, and economic benefits provided by urban green infrastructure. This measure would help reverse that trend by boosting statewide commitment and coordination.

The Department also values strong collaboration with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, county partners, and community-based organizations to ensure coordinated implementation and alignment with State efforts on climate, hazard mitigation, and land use planning.

Finally, the Department notes that although native and Polynesian-introduced trees and vegetation are preferred for green infrastructure projects, it is not always feasible to use native and Polynesian-introduced species due to site conditions, availability, or survivability limitations. When these species are impractical or unavailable, non-invasive species, as identified by the Hawai'i-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment and Plant Pono, should be used to avoid unintended ecological harm.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



**STATE OF HAWAI'I  
OFFICE OF PLANNING  
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846  
Fax: (808) 587-2824  
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
Director

before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON  
WATER, LAND, CULTURE & THE ARTS  
AND  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

Thursday, February 19, 2026  
3:10 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

in consideration of  
**SB 3002,**  
**RELATING TO THE HAWAII STATE PLANNING ACT.**

Chairs Lee and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Inouye and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) would like to offer the following **comments with a concern** on SB 3002, which establishes green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines in the Hawai'i State Planning Act.

Green infrastructure has the potential to improve quality of life for both Hawai'i's residents and visitors. The incorporation of green infrastructure into state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects supports the State's sustainable, long-term development. The *Hawai'i State Plan Phase I Update Report (2018)* highlights the need to address topics relating to green infrastructure, including Sustainability, Green Practices, Climate Change, Conservation and Environmental Stewardship, Self-reliance/Resiliency/Security, and Local Food Production—all of which align with the intent of SB 3002.

While OPSD supports the intent of this measure, **OPSD is concerned** that it may be redundant with current efforts to comprehensively review and propose updates to the Hawai'i State Planning Act pursuant to Act 36, SLH 2024. This ongoing work provides an opportunity for concepts such as those presented in SB 3002 to be considered as part of a broader set of recommended updates, which will be submitted in a final report to the Legislature ahead of the 2027 Legislative Session. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Written Testimony before the Joint Senate  
Committees on Water, Land, Culture & the Arts AND  
Committee on Government Operations

Thursday, Feb 19, 2026 (3:10 pm) Conference Room 225

**RE: SB 3002 Relating to the Hawaii State Planning Act**

Chairs Lee and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Inouye and Gabbard and Members of the Joint Senate Committees on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts and Government Operations:

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

TFHF supports the above-referenced Bill, which establishes green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines for state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects in the Hawai'i State Planning Act to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

Trees create multiple benefits well documented by research and noted in this Bill's preamble. Trees create shade and use evapotranspiration to lower temperature. Trees also recharge groundwater and decrease surface runoff protecting our reefs. Trees trap pollutants and store CO2. Trees calm traffic. Sadly though, Honolulu has been losing urban tree canopy over the past years.

Unfortunately, often green infrastructure is the last item considered and the first "value engineered" out of a capital improvement project, when that is completely opposite of the kind of thinking and action we should be taking. Green infrastructure should be the first item considered and the last to be cut.

This Bill has an important accountability aspect by requiring the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to submit a report to the legislature making recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines established by this measure. That's important because execution is where the "rubber meets the road". We are confident that if all government agencies act in support of mitigating climate change, this Bill will result in much-needed positive change. The best time to act was 20 years ago, the next best, is today.

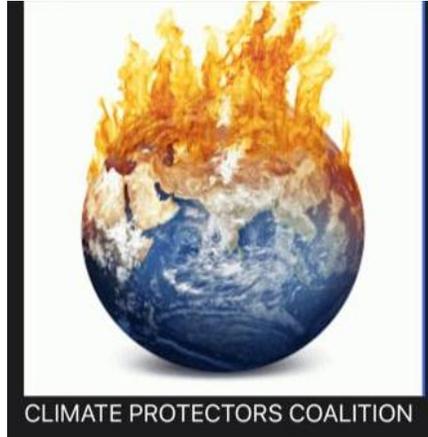
We urge passage of this bill onto the Committee on Ways & Means for further consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Dinell, President

**HONOLULU is HOT    TREES are COOL**

Visit us: [www.TreesForHonolulu.org](http://www.TreesForHonolulu.org) Contact us: [info@TreesForHonolulu.org](mailto:info@TreesForHonolulu.org) Voice/Fax/Text: 808-707-6353  
P.O. Box 12051, Honolulu, Hawaii 96828



To: The Honorable Chairs Chris Lee and Angus McKelvey, the Honorable Vice Chairs Lorraine Inouye and Mike Gabbard, and Members of the Committees on Water, Land, and Culture and the Arts and Government Operation.

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

**Re: Hearing SB3002 RELATING TO THE STATE PLANNING ACT**

Hearing: Tuesday February 19, 2026, 3:10 p.m., room 225

Aloha Chairs Lee and McKelvey, Vice Chairs Inouye and Gabbard, and members of the committees on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts and Government Operation!

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. HIROC is interested in preventing polluted runoff that harms the reefs and oceans.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i seek to educate and engage the local community in climate change action. We support the use of trees and other design measures that reduce heat, save energy, and reduce the climate impact.

---

**Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawai'i STRONGLY SUPPORT SB3002.**

The so-called “green infrastructure” is a range of measures that use plant or soil systems, including trees, permeable pavement or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to conserve water and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters. Sustainable design concepts for public infrastructure use green vegetation and trees to decrease urban temperatures, reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, and capture water to replenish the water table.

The effects of climate change have made implementing sustainable design concepts more critical, as each passing year has seen increased temperatures and other impacts from climate change.

Studies have found that individuals who live in areas with more trees and green space are less likely to have acute respiratory symptoms and less likely to die of heart disease or respiratory disease. Hawaii is world-renowned for its vegetation. Citizens and tourists alike actively seek out green spaces. Increasing the number of parks and green spaces in Honolulu's urban core will enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors alike.

This bill would establish green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines for state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects in the Hawai'i State Planning Act. It would use green infrastructure, vegetation, and trees in State facilities to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. The bill adds a definition of "green infrastructure". It requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to submit a report to the Legislature making recommendations for implementing green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines.

This bill would make our infrastructure more sustainable and save water and energy.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

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

To: Senator Chris Lee, Chair  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair  
Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
Committee on Government Operations

From: Veronica Moore, Individual Citizen

Date: February 18, 2026

RE: Senate Bill 3002  
Measure Title: RELATING TO THE HAWAII STATE PLANNING ACT.  
Report Title: Hawai'i State Planning Act; Green Infrastructure; Office of Planning  
and Sustainable Development; Report

To All Concerned,

My name is Veronica Moore and I support Senate Bill 3002. Thank you for introducing this bill.

Sincerely,

Veronica M. Moore