

**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 Committee on  
JUDICIARY**

**Wednesday, March 4, 2026  
9:40 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 016**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 3014  
RELATING TO WILDLIFE**

Senate Bill 3014 proposes to increase the fines for taking or harassing protected turtles in the State. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this bill and offers the following comments.**

Sea turtles are protected under state and federal law, yet incidents of harassment continue to occur, placing these animals at risk and undermining conservation and recovery efforts. Stronger penalties are an important deterrent and emphasize the seriousness of these violations.

In recent years, there has been an increase in sea turtle harassment associated with social media and tourism, including approaching turtles for photographs, touching or chasing them, and interfering with their ability to rest or return to the ocean. These behaviors cause stress and can result in injury or habitat displacement. This measure strengthens enforcement and supports responsible wildlife viewing, helping to protect Hawai'i's sea turtles for future generations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:24:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/4/2026 9:40:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cathy Goeggel	Testifying for Animal Rights Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are in strong support of this measure. Mahalo.

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:05:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/4/2026 9:40:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill. Mahalo.

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 6:52:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/4/2026 9:40:00 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 writing in **strong support of SB3014**, which increases the fines for taking or harassing protected turtles in the State. This bill sends a clear message that Hawai‘i will not tolerate the mistreatment of these revered and vulnerable creatures.

**Recent incidents demonstrate that current penalties are insufficient deterrents.** In November 2025, a viral video showed a man picking up a honu on an O‘ahu beach, propping it up for a photo, then dropping it back onto the sand. Marine life advocates described the incident as "disturbing, disgusting"—and a stark reminder that despite posted signs and repeated warnings, people continue to cross the line, often for a social media photo. DLNR enforcement chief Jason Redulla had a simple message for offenders: "Knock it off. Respect our wildlife as you would the wildlife where you come from."

**SB3014 strengthens the consequences for this kind of behavior.** Under current state law, harassing a sea turtle is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000 and/or 30 days in jail. But with federal penalties potentially reaching \$100,000 per violation, there is a significant gap between state and federal enforcement. This bill increases state fines to better reflect the seriousness of the offense and the cultural and ecological value of these animals.

**Hawai‘i's sea turtles are both ecologically vital and culturally sacred.** Green sea turtles, or honu, are threatened species protected under the Endangered Species Act. They face numerous challenges: habitat loss, entanglement in fishing gear, climate change, and disease. Human disturbance adds another layer of stress—interfering with feeding, resting, and breeding behaviors. In Hawaiian culture, honu are considered ‘aumakua, ancestral guardian spirits, and are revered as symbols of longevity and good fortune.

**Stronger penalties send a necessary deterrent message.** Touching, chasing, feeding, or getting too close (within 10 feet) constitutes harassment under both state and federal law. Yet incidents continue. By increasing fines, SB3014 puts would-be offenders on notice that Hawai‘i prioritizes the protection of its native wildlife over photo opportunities.

This bill is a simple, straightforward update that reflects our values as a community: we protect what is precious, and we hold accountable those who would harm it.

I urge you to pass SB3014. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 10:27:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/4/2026 9:40:00 AM

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

3014 SB RELATING TO WILDLIFE.

Increase fine from \$250 to \$500

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 11:06:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/4/2026 9:40:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is An and I'm a public health student on O'ahu. I am a member of Climate Future Forum who shared this bill with me. Please support SB3014.

Mahalo,  
An  
Honolulu

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 7:11:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/4/2026 9:40:00 AM

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

Comments:

SB3014 Testimony

Aloha council members, my name is Stella Anderson and I am a freshman at Kulanihako'i High School. I would like to testify on bill SB3014.

All my life I have been told to "keep a good distance from the turtles" to protect the turtles' health and comfortability. Though, whenever I go to the beach, people would make a literal circle around the swimming turtle to entrap and look at it. This always infuriated me because I hate when people do that to me and I'm a human! What makes me more mad is the videos I see when people are roughhousing with turtles even though they're in the turtle's environment.

I support this bill because it gives people a much bigger consequence and would teach them to actually learn some respect for the animals and the islands. This would also help reduce the damage on the mucus that helps the turtle's immune system.

One suggestion I do have is to use the money to help support the Maui Ocean Center's sea turtle rescue. This can help improve their research and would help them have better equipment.

Thank you for reading my testimony.

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 5:30:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/4/2026 9:40:00 AM

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

Comments:

As a volunteer and beach recreation resident, I observe our turtles being harassed by visitors and locals. I support increasing the fine to dissuade there behaviors

Thank you

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 7:22:54 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/4/2026 9:40:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

I strongly support SB 3014, which strengthens protections for Hawaiian sea turtles.

In October 2021, a Department of Land and Natural Resources enforcement officer on Maui found a dead Hawaiian green sea turtle tangled in a fishing net after observing two men pulling the net from the rocks. The men were charged with illegally taking and possessing a protected species. According to public Environmental Court records, they were each fined \$250, plus court fees.

A \$250 fine per person for the death of a protected honu does not reflect the seriousness of the harm or the importance of these animals to Hawai‘i. SB 3014 would help ensure stronger protections and more meaningful consequences when sea turtles are harmed.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to pass SB 3014.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.