

**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 House Committee on**  
**WATER & LAND**

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

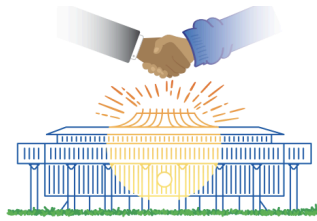
**In consideration of**  
**SENATE BILL 3014**  
**RELATING TO WILDLIFE**

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.



## CLIMATE FUTURE FORUM

---

Aloha Representative Hashem, Representative Morikawee, and committee members of WAL,

My name is Yanrong, I live in Mo‘ili‘ili and as a member of the Climate Future Forum, I am writing to support the passing of SB 3014.

On behalf of the Climate Future Forum, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 3014, which increases the protection and restrictions for taking or harassing protected turtles in the State.

In Hawai‘i, the honu play a significant role in culture and in ecosystems. They act as keystone species in our reefs and oceans that graze on algae and sea grass which would otherwise smother coral, directly improving reef health. But because of overfishing, habitat loss, and food chain disruption, we are beginning to see the effects of these issues in our day to day life.

While already under these threats, the honu experiences constant harassment: grabbing turtles, sitting on them on land and in water, petting them which breaks the barrier on the shell and leads to bacteria and disease to the turtle. For the incidents when DLNR officers or HPD officers arrive, it is often simple citations for the unlawful crime against these sea turtles that get overlooked.

This bill reinforces the protections set around the honu, increasing fines and adding longer sentencing time if a person is found to harass the precious honu. By doing so, these harsher citations will allow for less offenses made and more knowledge upon the protection of these animals. Several quasi-experimental studies find that sentence enhancements or longer terms can produce modest reductions (about 5–8 percent) in certain crimes, mainly via deterrence and incapacitation.

Our reefs are the foundation of life in Hawai‘i. They feed our families, protect our ‘ohana from storms and strengthen our economy, all while supporting the cultural identity that connects mauka to makai. As a Youth Leader of Oceans & Biodiversity policy working group, I am committed to protecting our Honu of Hawai‘i.

The Climate Future Forum *empowers youth (ages 14–26) to actively engage in shaping and advocating for climate policy and legislation. By bringing together youth, educators, policymakers, and nonprofits, the forum fosters meaningful dialogue on climate action priorities and provides actionable steps to address climate change in Hawai‘i. Through discussions involving over 100 youth, the forum has identified key*

*high-priority areas, including regenerative food systems, climate and the economy, clean energy and transportation, climate justice and equity, and sustainable infrastructure.*

Thank you very much for your support of youth engagement in climate policy. We respectfully request that the WAL Committee pass **SB3014** with a favorable recommendation.

Sincerely,  
Yanrong Chen

Youth Leader of Hawai'i Climate Future Forum

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:29:07 AM

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

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

Comments:

We are in strong support of this measure. We abhor removing important species who are vital to the health of our reefs. The cruelty which is inherent in the industry- starving fish prior to shipment out of Hawai'i, and the death of large numbers en route should not be allowed.

We are pleased to ask your passage of SB3014!

Mahalo.

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 4:36:57 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee members

I fully SUPPORT SB 3014 to increase fines. I would like to ask that a provision be added to the bill to ensure that the laws are enforced and payment collected.

Cheryl Burghardt

Nuuanu Oahu

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 7:38:38 PM

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

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

3014 SB RELATING TO WILDLIFE.

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 1:47:38 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pat Joyce	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing to express my strong support for SB3014, which aims to better protect Hawai‘i’s sea turtles.

In October 2021, two Maui residents were charged with the illegal take and possession of a green sea turtle after a DOCARE officer discovered them retrieving a net containing a dead, entangled turtle. According to public Environmental Court records, the only penalty for this act was a \$250 fine per person (Case IDs: 2DCC-21-0001456 and 2DCC-21-0001454).

It is deeply troubling that the death of a protected honu carried such a minimal consequence. This penalty does not reflect the importance of these animals to Hawai‘i or the seriousness of the harm done. SB3014 would ensure stronger protections for sea turtles and meaningful consequences for those who harm them.

For these reasons, I urge you to pass SB3014.

Mahalo for your consideration,  
Pat Joyce

Source: <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/blog/2021/10/06/nr21-173/>  
*With Illegal Take And Possession Of A Sea Turtle*

*"Maui Men Charged*

**SB-3014**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:40:07 AM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha honorable representatives,

As a resident and environmental conservation volunteer, I routinely observe humans disrupting our honu, seals, and birds.

I strongly support I creasing the fine as a possible deterrent to these offenses.

Education and signage would also be helpful.

Mahalo nui, Gwen Young