



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented to the  
House Committee on Water & Land  
Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.

by

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on behalf of

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University of Hawai'i System

### HCR 132/HR 132 – URGING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Branco, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports HCR 132/HR 132 which urges the federal government to develop a national biodiversity strategy.

The native ecosystems of the Hawaiian Islands are home to a multitude of the plant and animal species that are found nowhere else on Earth. Unfortunately, with 44 percent of the species on the endangered list, Hawai'i has the unfortunate distinction as the “endangered species capital of the U.S.”

To help protect our island way of life, the land and its culture, UH hosts a number of programs including: UH Mānoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources partnership with the Army Natural Resources Program O'ahu, the establishment of a bioeconomy academy at UH Hilo, the sustainable community food systems program at UH West O'ahu and the Hawai'i Pacific Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit that serves to facilitate many of the important conservation collaborations across the state

Through the Office of Indigenous Innovation, UH is committed to examine the systems and practices that have allowed the ancestors of Hawai'i to create a symbiotic relationship with the living ecosystems around them, and begin to identify ways to restore them in contemporary times.

It is through these types of biodiverse conservation programs, that integrate indigenous knowledge and practices, will we be able to protect and preserve Hawai'i for future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.