

For the Protection of Hawaii's Native Wildlife  
**HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY**

850 Richards Street, Suite 505, Honolulu, HI 96813-4709

Phone/Fax: (808) 528-1432; hiaudsoc@pixi.com

www.hawaii-audubon.com

DATE: March 30, 2007

FAX: 586-6501

TO: House Sergeant-At-Arms

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**Rep. Marcus Oshiro, Chair, Rep. Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair**

**Thursday, March 30, 2007; 3:00 P.M., Conference Rm. 308, Copies Needed 45**

**Testimony in Opposition of SB1718, HD1**

My name is George Massengale and I am member of the Hawaii Audubon Society (HAS) and during session I serve as the legislative Analyst for the Society. Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony, on SB1718, HD1, relating to the issuance of special purpose revenue bonds for electrical generation on the Island of Maui. We support the intent of legislation that fosters biofuels as an alternative fuel source. However, *we are somewhat troubled as to the lack of transparency with respect to the details of this venture* and the need for a biodiesel "mega-refinery" in Maui.

The Hawaii Audubon Society was founded in 1939, and has over 1,800 members statewide. The Society's primary mission is the protection of Hawaii's wildlife and habitats. The Society supports efforts that result in better management our state's land and habitat resources especially when proposed projects could potentially threaten our native plants, birds, animals, watersheds and ecosystems.

In addition to the transparency issue *we are extremely uneasy* by the fact the BlueEarth Maui is uncertain about the amount of palm oil that would need to be imported on a yearly basis. There is big difference from 40 million and 120 million gallons. *From our research we do know that palm oil has an increasingly destructive impact on rainforests and creatures living in them. Also, the global demand for palm oil has pressed some countries to produce it by denuding rainforests.* This has occurred in both Indonesia, and Malaysia, where vast areas of rainforest have been cut down to make room for palm plantations supplying the ever-increasing demand for

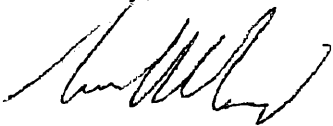
palm oil. *A disastrous result is that orangutans as well as number of bird species are now facing extinction due to loss of habitat.*

We also understand that BlueEarth and its partner, Hawaiian Electric, have committed to importing only palm oil produced on agricultural land that involves no destruction of rainforests, we sincerely hope that this will be the case. However we have no detailed information on how this will be accomplished.

For the Hawaii Audubon Society, there are just too many unanswered questions for us to support SB1718, HD1, at this time. *We believe that action on SB1718 should be deferred until such time that BlueEarth Maui can provide the legislature with additional details regarding this venture.*

Thank you for allowing me to testify here today.

Sincerely,



George S. Massengale, JD  
Legislative Analyst