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February 9, 2019

TO: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

The Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Senate Committee on Water and Land

FROM: ^{KG} Kelly T. King
Council Chair

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 11, 2019; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 685, RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to provide funds to establish invasive species technician positions for the Department of Land and Natural Resources' Division of Forestry and Wildlife in East Maui to control invasive species, like miconia, from negatively impacting the environment and economy.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. The East Maui Watershed is not only a critical collector of water for the island of Maui, but it is also home to an array of native plants and creatures. Invasive species, like miconia, weaken and destroy our watershed, threatening both the water supply of the people of Maui and the home of rare plants, bugs, and birds.
2. In addition to miconia, other invasive species like Himalayan ginger and strawberry guava infest East Maui. More support is necessary to combat the threat invasive species present.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.