June 12, 2020

The Honorable Ed Case
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Aloha e Representative Case,

On behalf of The Trust for Public Land, I write to you in strong support of HR 7045. This new legislation would authorize the U.S. Forest Service to study the possibility of creating a national forest in Hawai‘i.

While Hawai‘i is fortunate to have land protected within several national parks and national wildlife refuges, in addition to state-owned or managed reserves, there is no national forest in the Islands. A national forest would protect the unique forest resources and habitats that only exist in Hawai‘i.

The legislation has several laudable goals. It promotes cooperation and stewardship among governmental partners, non-government organizations, the Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry, and local communities, including Native Hawaiians. The bill also covers the six main islands, ensuring that many geographies and ecosystems will be included in the study. Lastly, a national forest in Hawaii would continue joint efforts by many partners to conserve forestland across the Hawaiian Islands enabling recreation, education, and cultural activities.

Mahalo to you and Congresswoman Gabbard for working together on this bill. We look forward to working with you as the bill is considered by Congress.

Mahalo –

Lea Hong
Hawaiian Islands State Director
Edmund C. Olson Fellow