

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark J A Vermeij [mailto:vermeij@hawaii.edu]

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 2:45 PM

To: WLHtestimony

Cc: Rep. Ken Ito; epcarroll@capitol.hawaii.gov

Subject: Support for HB 3260

Lahaina, Feb 12 2008

Respected Representatives,

Having seen quite a few reefs around the world, one of the most typical characteristics of those in Hawaii is that that they're silent. Wherever you visit a reef in other parts of the world, you can hear parrotfish scraping away at the reef, keeping it clean from algae that would otherwise overgrow and kill corals, eventually causing the whole reef, and all organisms that depend on it to collapse. This is not an apocalyptic doom scenario, it has actually happened in many places, especially in the Caribbean. Realizing their mistake to overharvest organisms like parrotfish that play a crucial role in maintaining the health of the wider reef ecosystems, millions are currently spent to reverse the collapse of whole reef ecosystems against which many had warned for a long time. Increased microbial loads, loss of aesthetic value, biological productivity, fishing possibilities and tourist revenue followed and there is hardly any evidence that this trajectory of decline can be reversed.

While the workings of reef ecosystems are not well known and differ from one place to another, many have observed how seemingly small changes to them can have profound effects. The adding of an invasive species or the removal of what scientists call "ecosystem engineers" (such as parrotfish and corals) will inevitably cause some form of reef meltdown. Some require actual proof on how this dynamic will play itself out and when such proof cannot be delivered, the scenario described above is deemed unlikely. These are the people that are scratching their heads right now in the Caribbean. They realize, too late, that desiring actual proof in a situation where common-sense could have worked just as fine, has cost them dearly. Needless to mention that the costs associated with reef recovery greatly exceed the money earned from depleting these resources in the first place. I now wonder whether Hawaii is about to make the same mistake.

Everyone who has been on the islands for more than 10 years talks about the lower number of Uhu that swarm the reef, making it increasingly more difficult to keep out in a natural way what shouldn't be there. Keeping excessive algal and microbial growth under control is a task that we, as humans, will never be able to take over. Algal problems in various places of the state indicate that control of algae by herbivores, such as parrotfish, is already breaking down. The subsequent decline in reef health comes with unnatural changes in microbial communities, and the prevalence of Staph infections these days should be regarded as another (common-sense) indicator that reefs are changing in a direction from which no one will or can benefit.

An obvious decision to contribute to the prevention of these problems would be to leave the parrotfish to their work, keeping the reef healthy and for us to enjoy. Certainly one should not stop old fishing traditions, but I want to stress the word "old". Semi-industrial fishing for parrotfish on the islands' north shores where 1000's of pounds of parrotfish are taken using unsportsmanlike collection methods (i.e. spear fishing using SCUBA gear at night when parrotfish are sleeping) does not remind me of the old-days when people took what they needed. I am not in a position to judge or tell people what to do, but I do want to point out that the reef decline that has been observed by those on the island for more than a few years will certainly not become easier to reverse if such practices continue. One doesn't have to be a scientist to understand how this works or see the benefits of a conservative approach when it comes to protecting the foundation that supports Hawaii's tourism and traditional fisheries on which the income of many depends. Will the excessive taking of parrotfish be the straw that breaks the camel's back and be the last stressor that needs to be added to ensure a rapid collapse of Hawaiian reefs? It has certainly happened elsewhere.

Efforts by local fishermen to protect these fishes therefore deserve all support. It is them, who probably know best how the number of parrotfish has gone down over the last decades. In other words, those who recently showed up have no historic baseline to which to compare present day parrotfish abundance and might consider the current situation as "normal". Fishermen do see long-term trends. Local actions as the one described above have taken the form of proposing a bill (HB3260) to limit the taking of parrotfish and I suggest we follow their insight. It would be naive not to trust those who know best and make the same mistake that has been made in so many other tropical locations that faced these issues in the past. They did not act and it has cost them dearly in an ecological, economic and cultural sense, and so will it to Hawaii. The old Hawaiian traditions allowed for the protection of natural resources once these were threatened and this mentality still exists today. As

a scientist I could go on and on about studies that have shown the importance of parrotfish, but I like to believe that common-sense and traditional practices on these islands do not require such a cold, factious approach.

Therefore I would like to support bill HB 3260, proposing to create bag limits for Parrot fish, Kumu, Munu and Moano Ukali. Currently, these fish can be harvested in unlimited quantities.

Sincerely,

Mark Vermeij

Dr. M.J.A. Vermeij
Marine Ecologist
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From: Diane Shepherd [mailto:doctord@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 2:21 PM
To: WLHtestimony
Cc: testimony
Subject: support for HB 3260

Dear Representatives,

I write in support of HB 3260 to establish a limit on the take of parrot and goatfish species. As you may or may not know, these fish are extremely vulnerable at night. In Samoa, night scuba fishing has been illegal for some years because populations were being wiped out by commercial operators. Please support this bill to place reasonable limits on the take of these important food fishes.

Thank you, Dr. Diane Shepherd Veterinary Clinic
300 Ohukai Rd. C108
Kihei, HI 96753
doctord@hawaii.rr.com

From: Diana Bergantino [<mailto:diana@pacificwhale.org>]

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 4:18 PM

To: WLHtestimony

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB3260

I support HB3260 for bag limits. I encourage you to support this bill.

Mahalo,

Diana Lyn Bergantino
Pacific Whale Foundation Eco-Adventures
Eco-Adventure Director
808-856-8301 Office
808-870-4436 Cell
diana@pacificwhale.org

Our mission:

To promote appreciation, understanding and protection of whales, dolphins, coral reefs and our planet's oceans. We accomplish this by educating the public -- from a scientific perspective -- about the marine environment. We support and conduct responsible marine research and address marine conservation issues in Hawaii and the Pacific. Through educational ecotours, we model and promote sound ecotourism practices and responsible wildlife watching.

From: Kecia Joy [mailto:kecia@mauiocenter.com]

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 4:01 PM

To: WLHtestimony

Subject: I Support HB 3260

Testimony in Support of HB3260-

I, Kecia Joy, support HB3260 for bag limits. I am speaking on behalf of myself as a marine biologist and concerned citizen. I encourage you to support this bill please- something must be done to protect the reefs. It is the International Year of the Reefs and lots of attention and focus is on what we can do to help. This is very important and I urge you to really DO something by supporting this simple bill.

Thank you,

Kecia Joy

Director of Education

Phone: (808) 270-7085 • Fax: (808) 270-7070

192 Ma'alaea Rd. Wailuku, HI 96793

www.mauiocenter.com

*Our Mission: To foster understanding,
wonder and respect for Hawaii's marine life.*

From: Maui Dreams Dive Co [mailto:dive@mauidreamsdiveco.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 4:17 PM
To: WLHtestimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB3260

I support HB3260 for bag limits. I encourage you to support this bill.

Rachel Domingo
808-874-5332

From: Robin Newbold [mailto:robin@mauirobin.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 4:22 PM
To: WLHtestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HB3260

Testimony in Support of HB3260

I support HB3260 for bag limits. I encourage the representatives to support this bill.

Robin Newbold
Kihei, HI
808-875-7661

From: Rob Phillips [mailto:mauibb@clearwire.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 4:22 PM
To: WLHtestimony
Subject: uhu bill

I strongly support the regulations of Uhu limits.

Aloha,

Rob Phillips
Kihei, Maui

-----Original Message-----

From: Brooke Porter [mailto:brooke@pacificwhale.org]
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 3:49 PM
To: WLHtestimony
Subject: Testimony

Testimony in Support of HB3260

I support HB3260 for bag limits. I encourage you to support this bill.

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Brooke Porter, M.Ed.
Director of Conservation

Pacific Whale Foundation
300 Ma'alaea Road
Suite 211
Wailuku, Hawai'i 96793
Work (808) 856-8341
Fax (808) 243-9021

www.pacificwhale.org

From: Cochran, Elle [mailto:Eleanora.Cochran@vacationclub.com]

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 4:58 PM

To: WLHtestimony

Subject: HB3260

Aloha to our House of Representatives,
I am in complete support of HB3260. Please! Our treasured marine life and their future depend on it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Elle Cochran
President
Maui Unite

From: andreapeltzer@netscape.net [mailto:andreapeltzer@netscape.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 4:55 PM
To: WLHtestimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB3260

I support HB3260 for bag limits. I encourage you to support this bill.
We can't conserve our limited resources if we allow just one to have an unlimited access!

Thank you,

Andrea Peltzer
808-214-8986

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From: Richard Fairclo [mailto:rfair7@earthlink.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 5:13 PM
To: WLHtestimony
Subject:

February 12, 2008

**To: Representative Hermina Morita, Chair
Representative Mele Carroll, Vice Chair & Members of the
Committee on Energy & Environmental Committee**

From: Richard Fairclo
33 Lokelau PL
Haiku, Maui, HI 96708

Re: Hearing on HB 3260-Relating to Land Use
February 13, 2008 at 8:30am
Conference Room 312, State Capitol

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Dear Chair Morita, Vice Chair Carroll and Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3260—Relating to fishing limits.

I support limits on fishing. It is obvious to all that humans are killing fish beyond the ability of populations to absorb.

I have observed fish populations from boats and snorkeling in the Kihei area for 10 years. Please take action, and pass HB3260.

Richard Fairclo
rfair7@earthlink.net

From: Charlie Lindsey [mailto:CLindsey@kirc.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 5:17 PM

To: WLHtestimony

Subject: RE: I SUPPORT HB 3260

Testimony in Support of HB3260

I support HB3260 for bag limits. I encourage you to support this bill.

**Charles R. Lindsey
808-878-1701**

From: Andrea Kawabata [mailto:widget_98@hotmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 5:36 PM

To: WLHtestimony

Subject: Testimony for HB 3260

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am in complete support of HB 3260.

I believe that it is time, NOW, to protect these species of reef fish for future generations to enjoy. Better management of the taking of Uhu, Kumu, Munu and Moana Kali is a great start for the health of the reef, ecosystems that depend on these species, as well as for the enjoyment of the people of Hawaii.

As a fisherman and diver from the Big Island of Hawaii, I see first hand the impact that commercial and recreational divers, fishermen, night divers, and netters have on these fish species. I know the cultural and financial significance of these fish. And because the superior edibility of these fish, these are some of the most sought after reef fish. They need to be better managed NOW. With this bill, we can stop the careless harvest of these fish which are so important to Hawaii's people.

Let's see this bill through and the management of Uhu, Kumu, Munu and Moana Kali a reality.

Sincerely,
Andrea Kawabata

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-----Original Message-----

From: Stephanie M Kowalski [mailto:kowalski@hawaii.edu]

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 5:38 PM

To: WLHtestimony

Subject: HB3260

Aloha,

I have been advised that you will be hearing HB5360 Wed 13 Feb. I wanted to advise you that I strongly support this bill and would hope that you would consider passing it. The fish that inhabit Hawaiian waters need your support to survive as a food source for future generations. If we do not take action now to prevent the decline of current fish stock we may suffer serious consequences. Please seriously consider how our marine ecosystem need yours protection to stay strong and healthy.

Mahalo nui loa,

Stephanie M. Kowalski
148 Halaulani St
Makawao, HI 96768-8411
Cell: (808) 205-4946
Home: (808) 572-9515