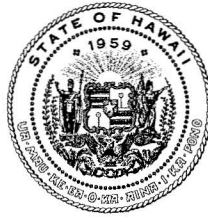


LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**LAURA H. THIELEN**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**TESTIMONY OF THE CHAIRPERSON  
OF THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**on Senate Bill 2464 – Relating To The State Mammal**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
WATER, LAND, OCEAN RESOURCES, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**March 12, 2008**

Senate Bill 2464 designates the Hawaiian Monk Seal as the State Mammal. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure, as the Department believes it is fully consistent with our goal to foster community-based conservation of Hawaiian monk seals and other indigenous wildlife species.

The Department works in close partnership with the numerous conservation organizations and community groups, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Marine Fisheries Service and National Marine Sanctuary Program, to promote the protection and recovery of our critically endangered Hawaiian Monk Seals. For example, with funding from NOAA, Department staff on Kau‘ai and Hawai‘i islands manage volunteer networks that each year set up hundreds of “seal protection zones” around seals “hauled-out” on popular beaches. These roped-off areas help ensure the protection of the seals and the safety of beach goers. As another example of cooperative conservation, Department and NOAA staff manage seal “pupping events” across the State, where nursing seal pups and their mothers are provided around-the-clock protection and monitoring during their six-week long nursing period on shore. These efforts are made possible with the invaluable support of the University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hawaii Pacific University, the United States Coast Guard, Hawai‘i Wildlife Fund, county lifeguards and police departments, numerous beach resorts and tour operators, individual volunteers, and many others.

The Department believes designating the Hawaiian Monk Seal as Hawai‘i’s State Mammal would help raise public awareness of the plight of the seal and bolster public support for our conservation efforts. The Department notes that similar conservation benefits have resulted from the designation of the humpback whale as our state marine mammal. The Department looks forward to working with the Legislature and all concerned parties toward the continued protection of Hawaiian Monk Seals and their ultimate recovery from endangered species status.



**SB 2464, RELATING TO HAWAIIAN MONK SEALS**  
House Committee on Water, Land, Ocean Resources and  
Hawaiian Affairs

March 12, 2008

9:00 a.m.

Room: 312

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** S.B. 2464, which would establish the Hawaiian monk seal, or ūlīoholoikauāua, as the official state mammal of Hawaiʻi.

OHA believes that bestowing this formal status upon the Hawaiian monk seal will direct more attention and public support towards the effort to improve the precarious predicament of this critically endangered mammal.

OHA urges the Committee to PASS S.B. 2464. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

fax 586-8494



## Conservation Council for Hawai'i

Testimony Submitted to the House Committee on Water, Land, Ocean Resources, and  
Hawaiian Affairs

Hearing: Wednesday, March 12, 2008  
9 am  
Room 312

### Support for SB 2464 Relating to the State Mammal

**Aloha.** The Conservation Council for Hawai'i supports SB 2464, which is to celebrate and raise awareness and support for the endangered 'Ilioholoikauaua – Hawaiian monk seal. Hawai'i's only other native land mammal is the endangered 'ōpe'ape'a – Hawaiian hoary bat, which is also worthy of recognition being the only native land mammal in Hawai'i.

We also support funding for monk seal response coordinators on each island to help save seals in danger of entanglement, harassment, and other threats (SB 3169). The coordinators are often the first line of response when seals are in trouble.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Ziegler



**Working Today for the Nature of Tomorrow!**

Telephone/Fax 808.593.0265 • email: [info@conservehi.org](mailto:info@conservehi.org) • web: [www.conservehi.org](http://www.conservehi.org)  
P.O. Box 2923 • Honolulu, HI 96802 • Office: 250 Ward Ave., Suite 212 • Honolulu, HI 96814

**Hawai'i Affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation**

President: *Julie Lelaloha* • Vice-President: *Nelson Ho* • Secretary/Treasurer: *Kim Ramos* • Directors: *Fred Kraus, Ph.D.* • *Douglas Lamerson*,  
*George Robertson* • *Claire Shimabukuro* • *Helene Takemoto* • *Mashuri Walte* • Executive Director: *Marjorie Ziegler*

---

**From:** Makaala Kaaumoana [mailto:makaala@hawaiian.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 11, 2008 10:32 AM  
**To:** WLHtestimony  
**Cc:** Rep. Hermina Morita  
**Subject:** SB 2464 support WLOH 3-12-08 9 am Rm. 312

Aloha Chair Ito and honorable committee members,  
The Hanalei Watershed Hui strongly supports SB2464 designating the Hawaiian Monk Seal as the Hawaii State mammal.

As a place of refuge and birthing, Hanalei has a strong connection to this very endangered mammal and believes this designation will support efforts to better understand their plight and restore their numbers.

Please pass SB2464 and support Ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua.

Me ka pono, Makaala

Maka'ala Ka'aumoana  
Executive Director  
Hanalei Watershed Hui  
P.O.Box 1285  
Hanalei, HI 96714  
808-826-1985

*The Hanalei Watershed Hui mission is to support and protect the ecology, cultures and sustainable economies of Hanalei.*

---

**From:** Kfletchb@aol.com [mailto:Kfletchb@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 10, 2008 3:08 PM  
**To:** WLHtestimony  
**Cc:** jennifer.metz@noaa.gov  
**Subject:** SB 2464 (SSCR2650) & SB 2465 (SSCR2651)

Dear Sir or Madam,

I have just recently become a Monk Seal Responder.

I am a Navy wife and currently serve as a Guardian in the Honu Guardian program at Laniakea Beach. Through 2 years of tourist observation around the honu, I have come to realize that the monk seal should be protected as well.

Nine out of ten individuals are respectful of our wonderful sea creatures, but it only takes one person to endanger the life of these animals while they are hauled out on our beaches.

I strongly support Hawaiian Monk Seal Day and making the monk seal the State Mammal of Hawaii. Public awareness of the monk seal is the way to protect this species so that they can continue to thrive.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Banes

98-1731B Kaahumanu St.  
Aiea, HI 96701

cell: 780-7297

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**From:** donnafesta@aol.com [mailto:donnafeasta@aol.com]

**Sent:** Monday, March 10, 2008 10:32 PM

**To:** WLHtestimony

**Subject:** SB2464 State Mammal Hawaiian Monk Seal

Testimony IN SUPPORT of SB2464, Designating the Hawaiian monk seal the State Mammal

Please make eight (5) copies.

March 11, 2008

Dear Representatives Ito, Karamatsu, and committee members,

Thank you for raising SB2464 State Mammal Designation Hawaiian Monk Seal. Please accept this testimony expressing my STRONG SUPPORT for this bill.

This bill is important to me because I spent 27 days in January watching over a Hawaiian Monk Seal on Kailua Beach. I was unaware of how close these mammals are to extinction. I volunteered my time because I honestly felt I had to be there, someone needed to keep this seal (Chester) safe. Although I had no knowledge of these animals prior to Chester's visit, I have learned a great deal in a short time. I am also planning on dedicating more of my time and energy to save these beautiful creatures.

It is critical that the state legislature act to pass this bill because the State of Hawaii needs to be involved in the protection and use its power to provide a safe haven for these animals. As a volunteer I need to know the right agencies and departments are involved to combat the rapid decline of the Hawaiian Monk Seals.

While the population of monk seals is declining in the northwest Hawaiian Islands, it has been increasing in the Main Hawaiian Islands during recent years. There are a variety of factors contributing to this occurrence, including disappearance of beachfront pupping habitat due to global warming, but we should also consider the return of Hawaiian monk seals to the Main Hawaiian Islands as a direct appeal to all Hawaii's residents to participate in the protection and recovery of this twelve million year old species.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer my strong support for this bill.

Sincerely,

Donna Festa (RA)

CENTURY 21 Kailua Beach Realty

130 Kailua Road Suite 110

Kailua, HI 96734

808-561-8112 (cell)

808-262-8275 (fax)

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**From:** Becky [mailto:bwaikiki@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 10, 2008 7:52 PM  
**To:** WLHtestimony  
**Subject:** Hawaiian Monk Seal

As a volunteer for NOAA and a resident of Hawaii, I am asking that this session of the Hawaii Legislature pass a resolution to protect and vote for the Hawaiian Monk Seal as Hawaii's State Mammal.

These beautiful and mysterious creatures can only teach mankind how to survive all of the upcoming centuries of ecological disasters and miracles.

Saving these mammals will be a miracle, but many of your constituents and supporters are volunteering their time, love of life, and love for these islands to help maintain, grow, and protect the future of this wild and important chain in our ecological future.

We don't have much time, so please don't delay in your support and vote to pass this resolution.

Mahalo nui Loa,  
Dana Jones  
Waianae, HI

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TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, OCEAN RESOURCES, AND  
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Mr. Ken Ito, Chair  
Mr. John Riki Karamatsu, Vice Chair

VIA: WLH FAX: 586-8494

FR: Georgette Yaindl  
1312A 13th Ave.  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
808-732-3138  
yaindl@hawaii.edu

RE: **For Public Hearing, Wednesday, March 12, 2008**  
**8:30 am; Conference Room 312**

Please make eight (8) copies.

Testimony IN STONG SUPPORT of SB2464, Designating the Hawaiian Monk Seal the State Mammal

March 11, 2008

Dear Representatives Ito, Karamatsu, and Committee members,

Thank you for raising for public hearing SB2464, the bill designating the Hawaiian monk seal as our State Mammal. This bill is the hana hou of HB2626 which was passed by your committee with the co-sponsorship of ice Chair Karamatsu. You all must be delighted to have the opportunity to do the right thing twice!

The WLH Standing Committee Report (HSCR 371-08) advancing the House bill stated,

Your Committee finds that there are only 1,200 Hawaiian monk seals remaining, and that this population is at risk from the threat of habitat loss, entanglement in marine debris, human disturbance, fishery interaction, and infectious disease. Designation as the state mammal of Hawaii may help to raise public awareness and encourage protection efforts of this unique but critically endangered species.

The Senate Economic Development and Taxation Committee advances the Senate bill with the following report (SSCT 2650):

The purpose of this measure is to recognize the importance and uniqueness of the Hawaiian monk seal to the Hawaiian Islands by establishing and designating the Hawaiian monk seal as the official state mammal.

Your Committee received widespread support for [these measures which would designate the third Saturday in April of each year as "Hawaiian Monk Seal Day" [and designate the Hawaiian monk seal as the State Mammal]. Supportive testimony was submitted by the Department of Land and Natural Resources; the Conservation Council of Hawai'i; the Marine Conservation Biology Institute, Hawaii; and over one hundred individuals; including the 4th

Grade Class of Island Pacific Academy, the 5th Grade Class of St. Andrew's Priory, students from Kapunahala Elementary School, Sacred Hearts Academy, Kamehameha Schools, over seventy from James Campbell High School, and from the University of Hawai'i.

Many of the people who testified were volunteers who watched over Chester, the Hawaiian monk seal, who recently spent several weeks of his annual moult on the windward Oahu beaches of Kailua and Lanikai. They spoke of how important it was to both protect Chester during the period when he was most vulnerable, and to educate the public who watched his progress – not always patiently or sympathetically.

The members of your Committee commend the commitment of all those who supported both of these measures, including the many students, teachers, and individuals who attended the hearing and spoke so eloquently about the plight of the Hawaiian monk seal and the importance of protecting this endangered symbol of Hawai'i.

**This recognition of the Hawaiian monk seal as our State Mammal is long over-due but nonetheless very much on time; if we are to recover the Hawaiian monk seal population, it is truly now or never. Unlike our State *Marine* Mammal, the humpback whale, Hawaiian monk seals live nowhere else on Earth, were born of our own rock some 12 million years ago, and are completely dependent on the consciousness and care of Hawaii's residents and visitors. It is up to us alone.**

**Thank you very much for your kind attention to this letter and for the Committee's awareness of our responsibility and last chance opportunity to recover the "OI" (Original Issue) Hawaiian!**

Sincerely,

Georgette Yaindl  
Kaimuki

---

**From:** Karen Rohter [mailto:karenrohter@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 10, 2008 9:10 PM  
**To:** WLHtestimony  
**Subject:** SB2464, SB2465 Monk Seal

FROM: Karen Rohter  
5<sup>th</sup> grade Teacher, St. Andrew's Priory

TO: Rep Ken Ito, Chair  
Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu, Vice Chair

House Committee on Water, Land, Ocean Resources & Hawaiian Affairs

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT for SB2464 (SSCR2650) Designating the Hawaiian Monk Seal as the State Mammal

Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT for SB2465 (SSCR2651) Designating an Annual Hawaiian Monk Seal Day

For Public Hearing, Wednesday, March 12, 2008; CR 312; 9:00am.

Please make 8 copies.

Dear Representatives,

The Hawaiian monk seal population has been steadily declining, with only about 1200 living today. We must initiate action that will increase public awareness of the plight of this very special endemic mammal. Having an official Hawaiian Monk Seal Day and designating it as our State Mammal will help bring that critical awareness to both our citizens of Hawaii and tourists who are enthralled by seeing seals haul out on our beaches. A perfect example is Chester the seal who hauled out on a Kailua beach for his yearly molting this last January. As Senator Fukunaga stated, "The purpose of this measure is to recognize the importance and uniqueness of the Hawaiian monk seal to the Hawaiian Islands".

Thank you for your attention to this very special bill.

Sincerely  
Karen Rohter  
St. Andrew's Priory