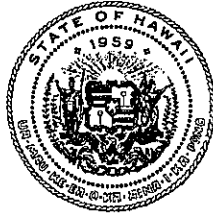
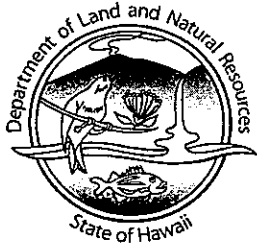


**SB 2483**

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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

On Senate Bill 2483 – RELATING TO AQUATIC RESOURCES

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON  
WATER AND LAND  
and  
AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

February 12, 2008

Senate Bill 2483 establishes a Hawaii Aquatic Stewardship Act, which provides for the creation of both a scientific and a native Hawaiian advisory group, in order to provide the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board) with independent evaluations of proposed rules affecting the State's aquatic resources. While the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the intent of this bill of bringing greater science and traditional Hawaiian wisdom to decision making and concurs with its basic philosophical approach, the Department nonetheless has serious concerns on whether both advisory groups can be managed effectively and efficiently. In particular, it is not clear how administrative support would be provided to the two advisory groups, or how conflicting recommendations would be resolved.

The Department notes that a large number of advisory groups to the Board have been proposed in both this and the previous legislative sessions, and suggests that if one or more such bodies are to be created, that the best aspects of all the measures so far proposed be combined into a single more cohesive measure for consideration.

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i  
Supporting S.B. 2483 Relating to Aquatic Resources  
Senate Committee on Water & Land  
Senate Committee on Agriculture & Hawaiian Affairs  
Tuesday, February 12, 2008, 2:45PM, Rm. 224**

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*The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawai'i's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for native species in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 32,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on O'ahu, Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.*

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The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii supports SB 2483.

Healthy reefs and fisheries have many economic, environmental and cultural benefits. We all have a stake in their future. Furthermore, fishing is integral to our cultural heritage and our island way of life. However, as anyone who has spent time in Hawaiian waters knows, many of our reefs and fisheries are at serious risk from a variety of threats and a precipitous decline in near shore populations of fishes. In fact, scientists estimate that our near shore fisheries are merely one-quarter of what they were a century ago—that is a decline of 75% over 100 years.

This measure takes the important step of codifying as state policy the primary importance of managing our aquatic ecosystems for long-term conservation, and adopting the best scientific management and monitoring techniques together with essential knowledge from native Hawaiian culture and history.

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