
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DIVISION OF AQUATIC RESOURCES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO PROTECT THE TOTAL REEF
SYSTEM.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii is home to a majority of the nation's coral
2 reefs, including the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument;
3 and

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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii's reefs are vibrant, living organisms,
6 which support over 7,000 known species of marine plants and
7 animals; and

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9 WHEREAS, the ocean and the living creatures that occupy its
10 reefs and waters hold great significance in native Hawaiian
11 culture; and

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13 WHEREAS, the health of Hawaii's reef ecosystems are
14 integral to the well-being of Hawaii's largest economic engine,
15 the visitor industry; and

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17 WHEREAS, the economic, social, ecological, and cultural
18 value of Hawaii's coral reefs is unquestionable; and

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20 WHEREAS, large volumes of reef fish critical to the health
21 of Hawaii's reefs are being collected for use in aquariums; and

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23 WHEREAS, reef fish taken by the aquarium trade are shipped
24 all over the world by the millions; and

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26 WHEREAS, the collection of reef fish for aquariums is not
27 effectively regulated or enforced, resulting in many empty reefs
28 in Hawaii; and

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30 WHEREAS, action must be taken to mitigate or avoid these
31 threats to Hawaii's marine ecosystems; and



1 WHEREAS, the mission of the Division of Aquatic Resources
2 (DAR) of the Department of Land and Natural Resources was
3 written in 1956 with a mandate to manage fisheries--defined as
4 the extraction of ocean life for sport, commerce, or
5 subsistence--but did not recognize limits, constraints, or
6 balances on aquarium fish extraction, because fish and habitat
7 were considered bountiful; and

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9 WHEREAS, the mission of DAR must be revised to protect
10 Hawaii's reef system to ensure an abundance of fish and a
11 species-habitat balance; and

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13 WHEREAS, DAR has already begun the lengthy process of
14 implementing herbivore protection areas to re-balance reef
15 species with the habitat and thereby avoid algae suffocation;
16 now, therefore,

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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
19 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
20 of 2009, that DAR is urged to protect the total reef system--
21 both the coral reef habitat and the species that serve to
22 maintain that habitat--to allow it to recover to hosting an
23 abundance of fish and not to manage it merely as a fishery that
24 is sustained with minimal propagation levels; and

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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that fish in Hawaii's reefs shall
27 neither be known as ornamental nor aquarium fish that are
28 available for extraction and sale, but as an integral part of
29 reef balance, health, and survival in Hawaii; and

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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
32 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Land and Natural
33 Resources.

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OFFERED BY:



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. J. ...', is written over a horizontal line.

MAR 18 2009

