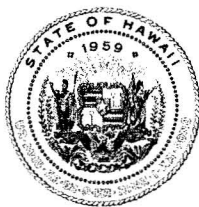


LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of  
LAURA H. THIELEN  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
JUDICIARY**

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009  
2:05 PM**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of  
House Bill 366, House Draft 1  
RELATING TO MANTA RAYS**

House Bill 366, House Draft 1 would prohibit the take of manta rays in State waters, and impose fines for violations. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this measure, but believes it to be duplicative of efforts already underway via the administrative rule process, and therefore considers the measure unnecessary.

The Department is aware of both the role of manta rays as charismatic marine megafauna of value to the reef-based tourism industry, and of their potential vulnerability to unregulated harvest. The Department is therefore addressing the protection of manta rays and other marine species of special concern through promulgation of a rule that would contain a list of no-take marine species afforded protection from harvest except by permit under special circumstances. This effort, which involves the potential protection of all sharks and rays in Hawaiian waters (along with many other species of concern) is already discussed and endorsed by the West Hawaii Fisheries Council for the West Hawaii area.

In summary, Department supports the protection of manta rays, and intends to bring forth a proposed administrative rule to this effect in the immediate future.

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

**RUSSELL Y. TSUJI**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**KEN C. KAWAHARA**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS



Ocean Tourism Coalition

*The Voice for Hawaii's Ocean Tourism Industry*  
820 Mililani Street, #810  
(808) 537-4308 Phone (808) 533-2739 Fax  
office@oceantourism.org

February 25, 2009

Testimony To: House Committee on Judiciary  
Representative Jon Riki Karamatsu

Presented By: Tim Lyons, CAE  
Executive Director

Subject: H.B. 366, HD 1 – RELATING TO MANTA RAYS

Chair Karamatsu and Members of the Committee:

I am Tim Lyons, Executive Director of the Ocean Tourism Coalition and we support this bill.

We have long been an advocate of preserving the natural ocean environment as it exists or as we can enhance it. The manta rays are clearly part of that picture and we believe that the seizure, capture, or killing of manta rays should be penalized.

Based on the above, we support this bill

Thank you.



*Friends of Pebble Beach  
87-3208 Carissa Road  
Captain Cook, HI 96704*

February 21, 2009

House Judiciary Committee

Dear Sirs:

We strongly support House Bill 366.

Manta rays are a special feature of the Hawai'i coast. Those of us who dive and snorkel, particularly at night, are in awe of the spectacle of these huge rays swooping close to lights to gather plankton. The joy that they spread to those of us in the water should be enough to protect them. Add to that a considerable boost to the diving industry here, and there are compelling reasons to ensure the current population if not increase their numbers. (I should point out that I do not work in the dive industry, nor do I represent it; but I value its contribution to our local economy.)

Legislative efforts in the recent past (2005 and 2006) have been sidetracked partially by D.L.N.R. asking that they be allowed to protect the manta rays. However, D.L.N.R. has done nothing in response to House Resolution 30 (2006) that urged them to take action to protect Hawaiian mantas. Meanwhile, particularly here on the Big Island, we are seeing an influx of immigrants from areas like Mexico where manta rays are eaten. We have received letters of inquiry from Hong Kong asking whether efforts to harvest manta ray gill rakers for sale on the Chinese medicinal market would be welcome here. And there have been efforts by West Coast aquariums to arrange for the capture of Hawaiian manta rays.

These dangers to the manta ray population are real and immediate. They will not wait for the normal delay by state bureaucrats, like those at D.L.N.R. Manta rays are slow to reproduce. A considerable amount of research has shown that Hawaiian mantas remain in the same area year to year and maintain stable populations. Other research in Indonesia and the Philippines has shown that manta numbers drop drastically when harvested for the Chinese market, let alone the local meat market.

We urge you to take care in listening to professed academic authorities who belittle this research. The Monterey Bay Aquarium has contacted several people interested in supplying them with manta rays. It appears that these people, despite their learning, are loath to admit a conflict of interest in discussing this issue in public.

Sincerely,



John Kellam  
Friends of Pebble Beach



**RESEARCH FOUNDATION**  
Research • Education • Conservation

P.O. Box 3227  
Kailua-Kona, HI  
96745-3227

info@mantapacific.org  
www.mantapacific.org  
808.325.1630

To: The Judiciary Committee  
Representative Jon Riki Karamatsu, Chair and,  
Representative Ken Ito, Vice-Chair

Re: HB366 pertaining to manta rays

From: Jan McLaughlin,  
Director and Co-Founder of Manta Pacific Research Foundation (MPRF)

---

I would like to take this opportunity to **support** HB366 making it unlawful to knowingly capture or kill a manta ray within state marine waters.

As one of the Founders of MPRF, perhaps my support of the Bill is obvious. However as someone intimately involved with the status of manta rays worldwide, I know what their threats are and know that protecting them is of paramount importance. Also, as someone who has worked on the ocean in the past, taking people diving and snorkeling with these great creatures, I know their greatest impact is on people. Having taken many people out into the dark black waters of the night, held their hand, and showed them a very up close and personal look at one of the great underwater creatures, I also know first hand their immediate emotional connection to the ocean and wanting to care for all it's creatures. I have heard directly from so many people, that their manta experience was one of their more cherished experiences of their lives and they have become champions of ocean preservation. **I believe that broader ocean stewardship is one of the most important outcomes from manta preservation.**

In 2002, MPRF conducted a survey of the Kona Dive and Snorkel Operators to determine the economic impact of the manta night dive on the local economy. At that time, the mantas brought in approximately \$2.5 million dollars in direct revenue to the operators. As a Director of MPRF, I have recently finished the 2007 survey and our preliminary results show that this number has certainly increased, perhaps by 20% or more. There is no question that the value of a manta ray continues to increase and provides jobs and money to the local economy and is thereby recycled into the whole community. Our statistics show that there is an 80% chance of seeing a manta ray in Kona on the dive and this very high number brings in tourists, year round, from all over the world to experience it first hand. Kona is probably the only place in the world where snorkeling with mantas is a viable option making the potential audience even greater and not just limited to scuba divers. Seeing people of all ages and physical capabilities, overcome their primal fears and jump in the black water to snorkel with manta rays, is one of the most rewarding experiences for me, and certainly for those who have participated. Their complete enthusiasm for the experience continues when they get home and the cycle continues. I have seen this myself, many times.



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96745-3227

info@mantapacific.org  
www.mantapacific.org  
808.325.1630

While it is true that there are no known plans to start a manta ray fishery, it is clear to me personally that should one start up, they would be such an easy take that the population would suffer losses that they would unlikely be able to return from. You have probably seen the research giving their long life spans, low reproductive levels, and the lack of replenishment from other areas. If fishing were to start, there would be no possible way to protect them fast enough to make a difference. We currently have many different levels of protection for many of our large ocean animals (charismatic megafauna) that inhabit the Hawaiian waters, and mantas are one of the last unprotected ones. I believe now is the time for manta ray protection as we continue on the road to protecting the oceans beauty and inhabitants in general, but it is only a step on the continual path.

The aquarium trade in Hawaii has been a long and contentious one in the legislative halls and I'm sure you are more aware of this than I. It's my belief that the Hawaii manta rays are available for all to see and experience in the ocean. With the increased technology available to researchers, and with MPRF's help, we have shown that Hawaii manta rays, if studied in their own environment, can benefit the world's population of manta rays. At the manta ray summit in Montreal this past July, we heard mixed results from organizations that had manta rays held in tanks. As an individual, it was clear to me that researchers learned very little more from tank watching than I did from watching them in the ocean. Hawaii is blessed with a consistent, small population of manta rays that has not yet even begun to be studied in situ. We could learn so much from watching them in their natural environment, especially with the latest technological advancements, that capturing for tank viewing seems frankly, inconsequential. I encourage you to consider stopping the aquarium trade before it starts in this case and protecting manta rays from being captured or killed for any reason.

Please give mantas protection in Hawaii as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Jan McLaughlin



31<sup>st</sup> January 2009

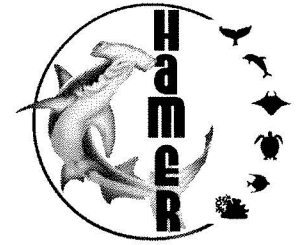
To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Guy Stevens and I am the founder of the Maldivian Manta Ray Project; a non-profit research, conservation and education organization established in 2006 to study all aspects of the manta ray population here in the Republic of Maldives. The Maldives has a thriving resident population of many thousands of mantas which generate US\$10 Million to the country's economy through direct revenue from dive and snorkel excursions each year. The Maldivian government realize the value of their natural heritage and have created laws which prohibit the export of any rays from the country. I therefore strongly support any government bill which would create greater protection for the manta rays of Hawaii at the earliest possible time.

Manta rays are amazing animals which captivate and enthrall divers and snorkelers all over the world wherever they are encountered. The small population which exists within Hawaii is a huge asset to the State, one which it should be proud to have, and endeavour to protect. Not only is passing this bill the right thing to do ethically, it is also the right thing to do economically. Any fisheries or live capture of mantas for the aquarium trade from Hawaii's manta population would only result in the short-lived profits for a few individuals. Whereas the annual financial benefit for protecting the mantas in Hawaii will continue to exceed several million dollars.

Yours Truly

Guy Stevens  
Maldivian Manta Ray Project  
Landaa Giraavaru  
Baa Atoll  
Republic of Maldives  
[www.maldivianmantas.com](http://www.maldivianmantas.com)



## **Testimony in Support of HB366 to Protect Manta Rays in Hawaii**

February 22, 2009

Attn: Hawaii State Legislature  
Judiciary Committee

Dear members of the Judiciary Committee,

As the director of the Hawaii Association for Marine Education and Research, Inc., and University of Hawaii Ph.D. candidate studying manta rays in Maui for the past 5 years, I am asking you to support HB366 to protect manta rays in Hawaii. I hope the following information will stress the urgency of passing this bill, and will address any concerns that you may have.

### **Are Manta Rays Threatened?**

- 1) The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the world's main authority on the risk of extinction to a species, classifies manta rays as near threatened, meaning a species that may be threatened with extinction in the near future.
- 2) Small, island-resident populations exist in Hawaii. Two populations that have been studied by University of Hawaii doctoral students include The Big Island with less than 150 manta rays, and Maui County with about 300 manta rays.
- 3) It takes a female 10 years to reach sexual maturity and she only has a single pup every 2-3 years. This means that populations grow very slowly and can be negatively impacted by the removal of just a few individuals.
- 4) There is a demand for manta rays in East Asia for their gill rakers, and for their fins to be

used in shark fin soup. This demand has led to the exploitation of manta rays causing populations to be decimated in places like South China, Philippines, Indonesia, and Mexico.

- 5) Aquariums on the mainland and abroad are seeking to extract manta rays from Hawaii for public display. Aquariums in the U.S. have been unable to keep manta rays alive in captivity for longer than a few months.

#### **How are manta rays currently protected in Hawaii?**

- 1) Currently no laws in Hawaii protect manta rays from being captured or killed.
- 2) Under current laws, any person with short-term financial motives and the proper equipment, could visit any of the manta ray aggregation areas in Hawaii and remove/kill as many manta rays as they wanted. Since manta rays often aggregate in numbers of 20 or more, moving slowly near the surface at the same shallow water locations every day, one could easily kill one quarter of the population in a matter of days. One could easily kill the entire population in a matter of months.

#### **What about collecting manta rays for educational and research purposes?**

- 1) Any person with legitimate research or educational objectives that would contribute to the long-term protection and preservation of manta rays would be allowed to apply for a special "take" permit, allowing the removal of a manta ray from its natural environment. This permit process makes the permit holder accountable to insure that the goals of the research are met. The permitting process would also ensure the sustainable management of manta rays extracted from the population.

#### **What about letting DLNR manage this species under the Administrative Rule Process?**

- 1) In 2006, House Resolution 30 was passed requiring DLNR to take action for manta protection within one year. To date, no progress has been made.
- 2) Members of the DLNR have clearly expressed on many occasions that although they agree that manta rays should be protected, they are simply too overwhelmed with other work to dedicate any time to manta rays.

#### **Why should we care about manta rays in Hawaii?**

- 1) Manta rays are Hawaii's largest marine resident. With wingspans reaching over 12 ft across, they are found in our near shore waters all year-round.
- 2) They are a valuable source of revenue for the state of Hawaii. The manta ray dive industry in Kona alone brings in 2.5 million dollars annually.
- 3) Hawaii is one of a handful of places in the world where one can reliably see manta rays in their natural habitat attracting millions of visitors to the state each year.
- 4) Our children and grandchildren should also have the opportunity to experience these majestic animals in their natural habitat.

HB366 would insure that the people of Hawaii could continue to benefit from the long-term, sustainable, economic value of Hawaii's manta rays. This law would insure that visitors continue to flock to one of a handful of places in the world where they can reliably see manta

rays in the wild. This law would insure that our children and grandchildren have the opportunity to experience these majestic animals in their natural habitat.

Knowing that manta rays are listed as near threatened by the IUCN, and knowing that Hawaii's manta ray populations are small and island-specific, and knowing that these populations could be decimated in a matter of weeks, and knowing the huge economic benefits mantas bring to Hawaii, please ask yourself why anyone would oppose the protection of this extremely vulnerable and valuable resource?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deakos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "E".

Mark H. Deakos

Director of The Hawaii Association for Marine Education and Research, Inc.  
Member of the Maui Nui Marine Resource Council  
Ph.D. Student, University of Hawaii at Manoa  
Marine Biologist



January 30, 2009

State of Hawaii Legislature

Dear House of Representatives,

The Manta Network, its Manta Science Advisory Board and the more than 1,000 members worldwide would like to submit our support for House Bill 366.

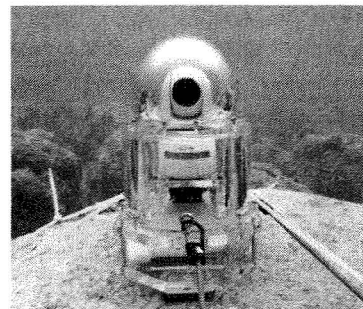
The Manta Network is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to research, education, conservation and protection of manta and mobula rays worldwide. TMN includes most of the world's manta biologists, research affiliates in more than 40 countries and volunteers and supporters around the world. Manta Network's Science Advisory Board includes Dr. Bob Rubin, Dr. Heidi Dewar, Dr. Ellen Freund, Tim Clark, M.S. and Robert Aston, M.S.

HB366 would make it illegal to capture or kill manta rays in Hawaii. No fishery has ever existed in Hawaii. However, aquariums are now targeting Hawaii as a location where they can capture manta rays for husbandry experiments and for display in tanks. Without legislative protection, these aquariums would be able to take as many individuals from the population as they want, and not have to report on the fate of the individuals they take.

Hawaii has a healthy population of manta rays, but information on the life history and movement rates suggest that they would be highly susceptible to over fishing. If we are going to protect manta rays in Hawaii, we need to do it now before fishing starts.

Kona is one of the best locations around the world to see manta rays in the wild. Manta rays are observed on 80% of the dives at Garden Eel Cove each year. Each year, manta ray ecotourism generates over 2.5 million dollars in revenue for the state of Hawaii. The economic benefit in tourism depends on a healthy population of live manta rays in Hawaii.

Manta rays do not have to be in aquarium for researchers to learn more about them. Hawaii is a perfect location for researchers to study manta rays in the wild. In addition, with today's Internet technologies, it is now possible to maintain live video cameras to provide real-time manta encounters directly to aquarium exhibits. The MantaCam, as develop by Ocean Presence Technologies, is now being deployed at manta cleaning stations in the Pacific Ocean. This approach is not only more cost-effective than husbandry but also has no negative impacts on the species.



There is currently no protection for manta rays from any type of fishing, collection, or capture in Hawaii. They are worth much more to Hawaii alive and swimming in the Hawaiian waters.

The Manta Network, its advisors and members urge your legislative body to pass HB366!

Signed respectively yours and on behalf of the Manta Science Advisory Board,



Robert Aston  
Executive Director  
The Manta Network  
Email: [Robert@mantas.org](mailto:Robert@mantas.org)  
Office: 831-426-4400

Headquarters:  
326 Pacheco Ave.  
Santa Cruz, California 95062  
USA

Web Address: [www.Save-the-Mantas.org](http://www.Save-the-Mantas.org)  
Also see: [www.OceanPresence.com](http://www.OceanPresence.com)

Manta Science Advisory Board

Dr. Bob Rubin  
Dr. Heidi Dewar,  
Dr. Ellen Freund  
Tim Clark, M.S.  
Robert Aston, M.S.



Legislative Testimony  
**HB 366, HD 1, RELATING TO MANTA RAYS**  
House Committee on Judiciary

February 24, 2009  
Room: 325

2:05 p.m.

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS, with amendments**, H.B. 366, H.D. 1, which would amend Chapter 188, Hawaii Revised Statutes and prohibit persons from knowingly capturing or killing manta rays within State marine waters.

OHA believes that the intent of this bill is a proactive step toward protecting manta rays ahead of any potential threats posed by commercial fishing, poaching and wanton killing.

OHA's only recommendation is that the bill be amended to include a provision that would develop an appropriate process to allow for the use of manta rays for any identified traditional and customary purposes.

Therefore, OHA urges the Committee to PASS H.B. 366 with the above mentioned recommendation as an amendment. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



# Conservation Council for Hawai'i

Testimony Submitted to the House Judiciary Committee

Hearing: Tuesday, February 23, 2009

2:05 pm

Room 325

Support for HB 366 HD 1 Relating to Manta Rays

Aloha. My name is Marjorie Ziegler, and I am testifying on behalf of the Conservation Council for Hawai'i and its 6,000 members.

We support HB 366 HD 1, which establishes fines and penalties for any person who knowingly captures or kills a manta ray within state marine waters. Protecting manta rays now may prevent further declines and listing as a threatened or an endangered species.

We recommend that the effective date be July 1, 2009 or as soon as possible.

Please pass this bill out of you committees.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



Working Today for the Nature of Tomorrow!

Telephone/Fax 808.593.0255 • 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 Leialoha • Vice President: Nelson Ho • Secretary: Douglas Lamerson • Treasurer: Kim Ramos

Directors: Maura O'Connor • Melora Purell • George Robertson • Executive Director: Marjorie Ziegler



*For the Protection of Hawaii's Native Wildlife*

## **HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY**

850 Richards Street, Suite 505, Honolulu, HI 96813-4709

Phone/Fax: (808) 528-1432; hiaudsoc@pixi.com

www.hawaiiudubon.com

**TO: Committee on Judiciary**

**Representative Jon Riki Karamatsu, Chair, Representative Ken Ito, Vice Chair**

**HEARING: Tuesday, February 24, 2009; 2:05 P.M., Conference Rm. 325**

**Re: HB366, Relating to Manta Rays**

### **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

Chair Karamatsu, and Vice Chair Ito, and members of the Committee on Judiciary. My name is George Massengale and I am a long time member of the Hawai'i Audubon Society, during session I serve as their legislative analyst. **The Hawaii Audubon Society fully supports HB366, which would offer substantial protection to the Manta Ray through a penalty and fine mechanism.**

Founded in 1939, the Hawai'i Audubon Society is Hawai'i's oldest conservation group, with over 1,500 dedicated members statewide. The Society's primary mission is the protection of Hawai'i's native birds, wildlife & habitats, our ocean resources, and restoration of ecosystems and the conservation of natural resources through education, science and advocacy in Hawai'i and the Pacific. The Society has an established and active partnership with the Pacific Fisheries Coalition, and together we've advocated for various measure that would further protect our oceans and coastal waters from the Big Island of Hawai'i to Kure in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

Manta rays are an integral part of Hawaii's marine ecosystem and are essential in promoting and sustaining Hawaii's growing marine tourism industry, one of the states primary sources of revenue. Manta ray night dive operations off Kona, Hawaii, produce over 2.5 million dollars in revenue annually for this small community. However, sustainability is the key to long-term prosperity for both the manta rays and the community.

A recent demand in East Asia for manta ray gill arches to be used in medicine poses the greatest immediate threat to the manta rays. This has caused a dramatic increase in fishing pressure throughout Southeast Asia and Eastern Africa and has led to significant population declines in the Philippines, Mexico, Sri Lanka, India and Indonesia. Although a fishery directly targeting manta rays

in Hawaii does not currently exist, no laws prevent the establishment of one. Such a fishery has the potential to cause local population extinctions within a matter of months.

We would urge the committee to pass this measure onto the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony here today.

Sincerely,

George Massengale, JD  
Legislative Analyst

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2009 11:21 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** richkersten@mac.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Richard Kersten  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [richkersten@mac.com](mailto:richkersten@mac.com)  
Submitted on: 2/20/2009

Comments:

## karamatsu3-Leanne

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:09 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** tctatum@hawaiiintel.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Tom Tatum  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 75 6026 Alii Drive Apt 5307 Kailua Kona  
Phone: 8083262726  
E-mail: [tctatum@hawaiiintel.net](mailto:tctatum@hawaiiintel.net)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

### Comments:

I support this bill for the following reasons; 1. DLNR opposes the bill because they think it should be under Administrative Rules. However, this is the same argument they made in 2006 when HR 30 was passed directing them to come up with rules. Since then no progress has been made in protecting manta rays, while two organizations have made inquiries into collecting manta rays in Hawaii. Manta rays need protection now, and the legislative process is the only way they can get immediate protection.

2. The aquarium industry opposes the bill because they would like to be able to collect manta rays for display. A reputable aquarium or research institution would still be able to apply for a collecting permit under DLNR, but this bill would allow such collections to be regulated so that there is no negative impact to the population.

3. Other than the above, this bill is unopposed.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:08 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** stevedives@maui.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Stephen C Juarez  
Organization: Hawaiian Rafting Adventures Inc.  
Address: 1223 Front Street Lahaina, HI 96761  
Phone: 808-661-7333  
E-mail: [stevedives@maui.net](mailto:stevedives@maui.net)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

Please protect Mantas in Hawaii they are being devested by over fishing and no protection all over the world. Lets Protect Mantas in Hawaii so they have at least one safe place to survive and reproduce.



**karamatsu3-Leanne**

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:18 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** kauaidionne@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Dionne Miller  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Ahakea St. Kapaa, HI  
Phone: 808-634-4338  
E-mail: [kauaidionne@hotmail.com](mailto:kauaidionne@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

I support protecting Manta Rays. They are beautiful creatures that bring joy to whomever sees them alive & free in the ocean.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 11:21 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** dougmillerhawaii@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Doug Miller  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Ahakea St. Kapaa, HI  
Phone: 808-634-4335  
E-mail: [dougmillerhawaii@hotmail.com](mailto:dougmillerhawaii@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

I want our mantas saved from being caged, tortured, and inhumanly treated. They are a sentient loving being that deserves our protection. If you have ever been in the presence of these amazing creatures you would know what I mean.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:02 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Tina Owens  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

Please pass this bill. Right now there is no fishery and we don't want one to start. As it is, no one is put out of a job and a precious resource, both culturally and economically, is protected. The mantas bring in millions of dollars a year to Kona in visitors and a lot of people will lose their jobs, their businesses, etc. if some idiot goes out and traps them all.

Please pass HB 366

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:06 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Bob Owens  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

My wife and I have been blessed to have many underwater interactions with mantas. Often they'll cruise by just off the edge of the dropoff and we both always just stare in awe at their beauty. They really deserve protection because they don't reproduce rapidly and these gentle giants can be wiped out by a few people. That would be criminal. So please make it criminal to do so.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:09 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position:  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jim Kerr  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

I don't own a dive shop by I work at one and I can testify that a large percentage of our income is generated by people who come from all over the world to see the mantas. The mantas are not touched or harassed in the slightest and they continue to come back, night after night, on their own. It's a wonder of the underwater world and brings in a lot of income. In these economic times, if somebody decides to make a few buck offs of killing a manta, the loss will be huge economically for the community and a shame for our state.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:12 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Janice Kerr  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

I can't tell you how many times I've been on the manta ray night dive and each time is still a wonder. Big, beautiful, graceful animals. Please don't let anyone take them or kill them or harass them. The mantas are a symbol of Kona and need to be protected.

Please pass HB 366. Thank you.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 12:48 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** Smith6849@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Bob Smith  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [Smith6849@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:Smith6849@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

Please protect Manta Reys before it is too late. The population is small and vulnerable.  
Mahalo.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 3:11 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** tlclark2@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Thomas Clark  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 51 Shoreline Ln Gulfport, MS 39503  
Phone: 228-897-1010  
E-mail: [tlclark2@bellsouth.net](mailto:tlclark2@bellsouth.net)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

As all know in 2006, a resolution was passed requiring DLNR to take action within one year, to protect the manta ray. To date no protection is provided. It appears that you now are the only ones who can provide protection for the mantas!



## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 5:58 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** douglasperrine@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Doug Perrine  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 76-223 Haa Street Kailua Kona HI 96740  
Phone: 808-329-4523  
E-mail: [douglasperrine@yahoo.com](mailto:douglasperrine@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

### Comments:

Please pass HB366 to protect Hawaii's mantas. DLNR has failed to protect them by administrative rule, and they are in urgent need of protection due to merchants seeking manta parts for Chinese medicinal trade, recent incidents of vandals spearing large marine animals for no apparent purpose, an influx of new residents from countries where mantas are routinely consumed for food, and parties seeking to collect them for husbandry experiments on behalf of oceanariums. If anyone tries to tell you that Hawaii's manta populations are large enough to support removal of some animals - please ask them to produce the studies which support those statements (there are none), and ask them to state for the record whether or not they have any business dealings with any large aquariums. Thank you.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 7:46 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** liquidmirror@hawaiiantel.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Wayne Levin  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 6801 Hapuna Pl. Honolulu, HI 96825  
Phone: 808-938-4109  
E-mail: [liquidmirror@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:liquidmirror@hawaiiantel.net)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

Manta Rays are an important resource to Hawaii. People visit the islands (particularly Kona) to swim and dive with the Manta Rays. Recently there have been those who wish to capture these amazing creatures. The number of Mantas is very limited. If we allow unregulated collection of Manta Rays, this valuable resource will disappear from Hawaiian waters.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 9:58 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** konapam@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Pamela Higgins  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 68-1748 Akaula St. Waikoloa, HI  
Phone: 808-883-8253  
E-mail: [konapam@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:konapam@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

**Comments:**

The Mantas that live in our waters stay in our waters. They are slow to reproduce and would be easy prey. After the recent spear gun shootings of an Eagle Ray in the Harbor and a White Tip in Puako it is now more important than ever to protect this valuable resource. They bring hundreds of people every year to these shores and deserve our protection. Pamela Higgins

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 21, 2009 10:01 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** suzi\_anne19@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Suzanne Whitehead  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [suzi\\_anne19@hotmail.com](mailto:suzi_anne19@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/21/2009

Comments:

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:04 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** joepam@itexas.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Joe Brown  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 5693 Weatherford Granbury, Tx 76049  
Phone: 8175788552  
E-mail: [joepam@itexas.net](mailto:joepam@itexas.net)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

A very timely and thoughtful Bill.

It is a shame that we must pass laws to protect our various species but this is a much needed bill, I have read that some countries use the tip of the Manta "wings" instead of shark fins for "shark fin soup".

But mainly we need to study this harmless creature and enjoy his flight in the Ocean.

Joe Brown

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:41 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** octopus@maui.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Rene Umberger  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [octopus@maui.net](mailto:octopus@maui.net)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:33 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** brngt76@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Richard Bosselmann  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 75-6155 Nakukui Dr. Kailua-Kona, HI  
Phone: (808) 895-5914  
E-mail: [brngt76@aol.com](mailto:brngt76@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

Dear Judiciary Committee,  
Please vote to pass HB366 and protect the manta rays in Hawaiian waters. It is a great opportunity to support a diverse ecosystem which is not only good for our economy but great for the Earth. There should be places on this planet where gentle giants like these can live in peace without fear of a spear being thrust through their chests for the sake of sport.  
Sincerely,  
Richard Bosselmann

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:19 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** ashiels4@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Aaron Shiels  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Palolo Avenue Honolulu  
Phone: 956-3938  
E-mail: [ashiels4@hotmail.com](mailto:ashiels4@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I support the bill to make it illegal to kill or capture manta rays in State waters.



**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 8:50 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** dspaffor@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: David Spafford  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 55 S Judd St Honolulu, HI 96817  
Phone: 808 383-0942  
E-mail: [dspaffor@gmail.com](mailto:dspaffor@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

Dear Sylvia Luke

You are my Representative. I believe in you.  
Please save the Mantas. They are truly wonderful animals and endangered. Do everything you can. HB 866 will help.

Aloha  
David Spafford

## Testimony

To: Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu, Chair, Rep. Ken Ito, Vice-Chair,  
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

For: hearing Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 2:05 p.m.

Conference Room 325, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

Please make 25 copies for distribution

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 366, relating to Manta Rays

As the year 2009 begins, Hawaii is known among ocean enthusiasts as the best place in the world to see the magnificent living “flying carpets” known as manta rays. The Kona population of manta rays alone brings millions of tourism dollars into our struggling state economy each year. Local residents consider the mantas as “ohana” and know each one by name and by individual color patterns and other characteristics. The loss of any single “family member” would be considered a tragedy to those who dive with these animals nightly and always look out for familiar individuals.

In the 1950’s the most famous place for mantas was Bimini, Bahamas. Tourists flew to Bimini on seaplanes to hunt the “sea monsters” with harpoons. By the 1970’s, and likely earlier, the giant mantas of the Bahamas had vanished. I made hundreds of dives in Bimini and never saw a manta, nor have I ever heard of anyone seeing a manta ray anywhere in the Bahamas in the last 35 years. With their low reproductive rate, they have never been able to recover from the slaughter.


In 2006, the island of Saipan was considered the best place in the world to see graceful eagle rays. There was a diver attraction known as “Eagle Ray City” where divers came from all over the world to see the rays, just as they come to Ho’ona Bay in Kona to see manta rays. But that year some residents began to spear eagle rays for food. Divers pressured the government and a bill was passed in 2007 to protect the eagle rays – but it was too late. The rays had already abandoned the site, and did not return in 2008. The goose that laid the golden eggs had been killed.

In 2008, we also had an incident of vandals spearing an eagle ray in Kona. There were inquiries from merchants wanting to buy manta ray parts from Hawaii for sale in Asia, and a contract was issued by a mainland aquarium for the capture of Hawaiian mantas to be transported out of state. This collecting will commence in 2009 if legislation is not passed during this session. For the divers who know these animals, this would be like having someone come into your home to snatch the beloved family dog. Except that you can always buy another dog, but a manta ray cannot be replaced.

We have a very clear choice. We can grant total protection to these lovely, harmless residents of our waters that give so much joy to visitors and residents alike, and provide so much benefit to our economy. Or we can do nothing and watch them go the way of Bimini’s mantas and Saipan’s eagle rays. We can do nothing and continue Hawaii’s proud tradition as the extinction capital of the Western Hemisphere. We can do nothing and ignore the advice of biologists who tell us that mantas have very low reproductive rates and that Hawaiian mantas live in small localized colonies that are not replenished by immigration. We can do nothing and worry later about how to explain to the keiki why we let the Hawaiian manta go the way of the Hawaiian flightless duck. The Philippines, Mexico, and Yap have all recognized the value of mantas as living resources and the fragility of their populations and protected them.

Already, collectors are building a pen to hold manta rays to be shipped out of state. At this moment Hawaii is still the most famous place in the world to see manta rays in the wild. Will it still be that way in a few years? Your vote in favor of HB366 can help keep it that way forever.

Mahalo,



Doug Perrine, 76-223 Haoa Street, Kailua-Kona HI 96740, (808) 329-4523, perrine@hawaii.rr.com

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:27 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** cogliandro@msn.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Nancy & Chris Cogliandro  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [cogliandro@msn.com](mailto:cogliandro@msn.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

The Manta Rays are a beautiful reason that my husband and I visit Hawaii every year. We specifically visit Kona to dive with the Manta Rays. Every year we look for Lefty. If, one year, Lefty became missing due to trapping or fishing, it would be like losing a long time friend. We beg of you to help protect the Manta Rays in Hawaii. Please don't wait until 2020. The Manta Rays need protection now.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:29 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** lancesmi@hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Lance W Smith  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [lancesmi@hawaii.edu](mailto:lancesmi@hawaii.edu)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

### Comments:

Dear Hawaii Legislature: I would like to express my support for protection of manta rays in Hawaii. I am a marine biologist with extensive work experience in the Pacific and an academic background at the University of Hawaii.

Protection of manta rays should begin immediately for the reasons listed below:

- \* There is currently no protection for manta rays from any type of fishing, collection, or capture in Hawaii.

- \* Kona is one of the best locations around the world to see manta rays in the wild. Manta rays are observed on 80% of the dives at Garden Eel Cove each year.

- \* Manta ray ecotourism generated over 2.5 million dollars per year in revenue for the state of Hawaii in 1992. The increase in tourism over the last seven years suggests even more is generated today. This depends on a healthy population of live manta rays in Hawaii.

- \* Individuals can be identified by their unique spot patterns on their belly. These pigment patterns have allowed residents to name and keep track of individuals, and has shown that many are long-time residents at certain sites.

- \* Manta rays are very long lived. One individual (Lefty) has been a resident in Kona since before 1979, when she was first identified as a full grown adult female.

- \* Only 154 manta rays have been identified along the Kona Coast since 1992, suggesting very small population sizes.

- \* No individual has ever been documented migrating between Kona and Maui, despite two separate photo-identification studies and two acoustic tracking studies. This suggests that each island has its own distinct population, and overfishing on one island will not be alleviated by migration of new individuals from another island.

- \* Manta rays have extremely low reproductive rates. Only 2-3 new pups are observed in Kona each year. It would take a long time for captured manta rays to be replaced by natural reproduction.

- \* Manta rays do not have to be in aquarium for researchers to learn more about them. Hawaii is a perfect location for researchers to study manta rays in the wild.

- \* There is no reason we should allow our local manta rays to be sold to generate income for outside parties. They are worth much more to Hawaii alive and swimming in our local waters than dead or stuck in a tank on the mainland.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lance Smith  
1708 Wilhelmina Rise  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
(808) 221-8297

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:34 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** scubamendy@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jim (JJ) Mendenhall  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [scubamendy@earthlink.net](mailto:scubamendy@earthlink.net)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

My Name is James Mendenhall (JJ) 808-895-0076

I am a coast guard licensed boat captain and scuba instructor working on the Kona side of the Big Island.

I am writing regarding HB 366 coming up before the Judiciary Committee Tuesday, February 24 @ 2PM.

No mater how you may feel about manta rays personally it is clear that tourism drives Hawaii's economy and the resident mantas represent a significant draw for visitors here on the Big Island and Maui as well. The Manta Ray Night Dives are known worldwide and thousands of divers and snorklers participate annually at an average rate of about \$100 each.

We don't know all there is to know about mantas but what we do know is that if undisturbed they live a long time and reproduce slowly. The resident population numbers in the hundreds and not in the thousands so even a few removed from the islands may have a detrimental effect on the tourism product. Under the current economic down turn it is unreasonable to leave this resource unprotected. A lost or dead manta has zero value to the state and the people of Hawaii. I urge you to pass HB 366 and preserve this valuable resource for now and the future.

Thank you

Captain James Mendenhall (JJ)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to give my dearest support to SB394 and HB366. This bill is designed to give protection to one of nature's most incredible creations, the manta ray. I have had the pleasure to scuba dive with these majestic creatures along your coast, and I can think of no better experience I have had in my 17 years of life. Scientists have found them to be quite intelligent creatures, and after looking one in the eye, I would have to agree. They may not be in any immediate danger at the moment, but would be decimated by any exploitation of their population. Because of the great amount of money the tourist industry brings in for diving with these creatures, over 2.5 million dollars in total, each living manta would be worth at least \$16,000 to the Hawaiian economy yearly. This said, you cannot really put a price on any one of these majestic creatures, which have a right simply to be aloud to live. Please be responsible in representing the people of Hawaii and the world, who benefit greatly from manta rays. Please support this bill to help ensure the protection of these creatures immediately so they may continue to thrive on into the future.

Sincerely,

Noah Michael Schlager

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:37 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** gregkarenj@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Karen Johnson  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [gregkarenj@aol.com](mailto:gregkarenj@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I am sending this testimony to hopefully help get protection NOW for the manta ray!! It is IMPERATIVE that they get the protection now before it is too late.

In August of 1994, my family went on vacation to Maui where my husband and I went scuba diving off Molokini Island. We did a wall dive and while on the dive something told me to look out behind me to the great expanse of water rather than focusing on the wall. To my amazement and awe there, all by him/herself, was a manta ray with a wingspan of about 15-20 feet. I screamed through my regulator and my husband turned around to look. We got the attention of the dive master and all of us went swimming over to the manta. He put on a spectacular show: flipping and moving gracefully through the water. I was so touched and mesmerized I still think of the experience to this day. They are magnificent, gentle creatures. I learned more about them from a PBS special a few years ago about a group who go on an annual research trip to study the manta off the tip of Baja. >From this I learned how smart these creatures are. The researchers became acquainted with the mantas and they remembered them year after year. I was fascinated to learn that the manta could recognize the researchers by looking in the masks of the divers to see their eyes. How intelligent they must be!!!

Please do something NOW to protect these very special marine animals!!

Thank you,  
Karen Johnson  
Carlsbad, CA



## Manta Testimony

I have been to Hawaii for a total four weeks over the last several years, principally to have my family dive and snorkel with manta rays. I have been diving in many parts of the world and there is no creature more majestic or mysterious in my mind. Any bill that can be passed that will aid in the preservation of these amazing creatures is worthy of passage. I live in Virginia and travel a long way to enjoy watching the manta ray's in their habitat. If protective measures are not passed and the manta's disappear from the water's of Hawaii, I will not be the only tourist who finds other places to spend vacation dollars. While I say that, please don't pass protective measures simply to attract tourism, pass the measures for the sake of preserving one of our ocean's greatest living creatures. The time to act is now and to provide protection immediately. With no sense of urgency, these Manta's could disappear in the blink of an eye.

Thanks for listening,

Craig Grube

844 S. Atlantic Ave.

Virginia Beach, VA 23451

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:42 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** wetphoto@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Wayne & Geri Joseph  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [wetphoto@aol.com](mailto:wetphoto@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

My wife & I are frequent visitors to Kona. We are avid SCUBA divers & our main reason in visiting the big island is to dive with the manta rays. They are truly majestic & beautiful creatures who are just as curious about us as we are about them. There are too many other areas in the South Pacific where there is no control & the populations of sea life are diminishing quickly. We also have been visiting Maui since 1980 & have seen the population of turtles greatly increase since they have been protected. Please help to sustain & hopefully increase the populations of these animals. As more of them appear, you surely will get more divers to Hawaii to observe them.

Wayne & Geri Joseph

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:44 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** cperritt@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Chris Perritt  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [cperritt@yahoo.com](mailto:cperritt@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I support a law to protect Hawaii's manta rays. The law should prohibit killing or capturing of manta rays and it should include penalties if the law is broken. Further studies are not needed.

Please protect our manta rays now before it is too late.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:46 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** joshtemes@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Josh Temes  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [joshtemes@gmail.com](mailto:joshtemes@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

### Comments:

I very strongly support HB366 and SB394. Manta rays are the most majestic, amazing, and fantastic animals I have ever seen in my life. This past summer, I participated in a manta ray night dive in Kona, Hawaii. As soon as we disappeared into the dark, amazing waters, we began to see manta rays. Huge, amazing, majestic manta rays. For about an hour we watched these manta rays frolicking around and gorging themselves in plankton. My manta ray dive in Hawaii was definitely the most amazing experience of my life. Every day, i reflect on how amazing these creatures are; and every day I can barely wait to get back to Hawaii to visit these creatures again. After I returned to the mainland, my home, I began to become very passionate about manta rays. I did many school projects on them and learned a lot. After learning there is no current protection for mantas in Hawai'i, I was astounded. These amazing animals, could simply be hunted down? Only 154 manta rays have been identified along the Kona Coast since 1992. Even one or two of these mantas being killed or taken to aquariums could be devastating. Lefty, of of the signature manta rays you can see while diving, has been around for more than 20 years. Seeing these amazing animals in Hawaii has without a doubt impacted the rest of my life. I hope to see these animals fully protected for their safety and security.NOW. Not in 2020, for all we know, the animals could be wiped off the face of the plane by then. we need protection ASAP. Watching these fantastic creatures die is unthinkable. Thank you.

Josh, Palo Alto, CA

4

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:47 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** barbett@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Barry & Betty Fackler  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [barbett@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:barbett@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

Please give your consideration to passing HB366. Manta Rays are an important part of Hawaii's eco-system. Additionally, for us on the Big Island, they are of great economic benefit for the tourism dollars they generate. Please keep our Manta Rays free from human predation whether it be in the form of commercial fishing or aquarium imprisonment.

Respectfully,

Barry Fackler  
Betty Fackler

February 17, 2009

Aloha,

My name is Adam J Clark; I am a resident of Washington State and a property owner in Kailua-Kona, HI.

I am writing you with great interest and concern about HB366 relating to Manta Rays in Hawaii. I began visiting the Islands over 20 years ago and have not missed an opportunity to visit at least once if not 2 or 3 times annually for the past 15 years. I love this land and these waters so much my wife and I felt motivated to purchase property here in 2006. Our property is often rented to vacationers/divers wanting to explore the great diving that exists in Kona waters. A large part of the attraction to Kona for vacationers/divers is the Manta Ray. They know this is the place to come for an experience like no other. As a PADI Dive Master Professional as well as a PADI Master Diver, I believe these beautiful creatures provide a strong economic drawn for Kona and Hawaii. Think about how much the Mantas contribute to our local economy, dive shops, hotels, restaurants, car rentals, etc... By having a hearing and passing HB366, you will protect this invaluable natural resource for generations to come. In addition history has proven time and time again when humans disturb nature no good can come of it, the Manta Rays need this protection. Please, I strongly urge you to set up as hearing and to pass HB366.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Adam J Clark  
6619 132<sup>nd</sup> AVE NE  
PMB 150  
Kirkland, WA 98033

78-7054 Kamehameha III RD  
Unit #1102  
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

Cell 425-246-2210

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:53 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** bluemanta@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Carlos and Margaret Eyles  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [bluemanta@earthlink.net](mailto:bluemanta@earthlink.net)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:  
Dear Sir or Madam

Across the globe animals are loosing their birthrights to their space on this planet. Humans have exploited them into extinction. I have personally witnessed this in the manta ray population of Mexico that once graced the Sea of Cortez in the thousands, today not a single manta ray has survived the human onslaught in that region. Please do not let this happen in Hawaii where we hold a higher place for all living things indigenous to our lands and seas. Please vote for manta ray protection as outlined in bill HB 366.

Thank you

Carlos and Margaret Eyles

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:54 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** dolphin.dancer@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Denise Stuart  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [dolphin.dancer@yahoo.com](mailto:dolphin.dancer@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

Dear Legislators:

I am writing regarding the Manta Protection bill, and to express my interests in protecting one of Hawaii's greatest natural resources.

The Manta Rays are an important part of Hawaii's Ocean Eco System, and need to be protected. They also bring millions of dollars into the local economy, which also needs protecting in these hard economic times. The Mantas currently have no protection from fishing or collecting. This needs to be changed now.

There are only two groups in opposition to legislation - the DLNR and Aquarium Collectors. The DLNR made the same argument in 2006 that it is making now, and when they were told to come up with administrative procedures they failed to do so. Obviously we cannot trust the DLNR to take action in a timely manner. The agenda of the aquarium collectors is obvious. They do not want the Mantas protected so they can come and collect at will.

PLEASE - Take a close look at what is driving, or in the case of the DLNR -not driving- these two organizations, and weigh that against all the support this matter has received from your constituents. It is time for you to be the voice of the people living here in Hawaii and protect one our greatest Natural Resources - the Manta Ray.

My question to you is will you bow to the DLNR who has proven itself incapable of writing administrative procedures to protect the mantas, or to the aquarium collectors who's agenda is obvious, or will you stand up with your constituents and vote to protect these magnificent creatures?

The time to act is NOW! Our Manta rays need protection NOW! We have a duty to protect them so they are here for future generations to enjoy. We have a duty to protect the delicate eco-system we all enjoy here in our beautiful state.

Don't wait until they are nearly gone, or all gone to do something. Please vote to protect our Manta Rays NOW!

Sincerely  
Denise Stuart



75-217 Nani Kailu #143  
Kailua Kona, HI 96740  
808-315-8656

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:56 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** eirulttam@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Matthew Lurie  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [eirulttam@hotmail.com](mailto:eirulttam@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

HB 366 is a necessary means to secure the safety of Hawaii's Mantas in coastal waters.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:57 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** kristy.martin@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Kristy Martin  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [kristy.martin@gmail.com](mailto:kristy.martin@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

In 2005, my husband and I had the privilege of seeing a group of manta rays feeding one evening off the Kona coast. It was truly an awesome sight to see these magnificent animals in the wild. Our guide for the evening provided information and insight into the ray's lives that we had never heard before.

We avidly support the passage of bill HB366. It is crucial that these rays are protected and that laws are placed to prevent anyone from capturing, killing, or otherwise harming manta rays within Hawaii state waters.

Sincerely,  
Kristy Martin

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:01 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** bluewater.ong@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Ling Ong  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [bluewater.ong@gmail.com](mailto:bluewater.ong@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I fully support the bill to protect manta rays in Hawaii. These creatures are long lived and have slow reproductive rates which make them vulnerable to overfishing and slow to recover from its effects. Let us learn from mistakes made in other locations and other countries, which have found that manta rays cannot be harvested without harm to their populations. Let Hawaii set the example and not repeat the mistakes made by others. We are fortunate to have an unexploited population of manta rays that can now be protected and enjoyed by generations to come.

Ling Ong, Phd  
[bluewater.ong@gmail.com](mailto:bluewater.ong@gmail.com)  
Individual  
19 Ala Kimo Drive,  
Honolulu HI 96817  
Tel: 218-2239

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 10:04 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** amakuavideo@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Thomas Gorgas  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [amakuavideo@gmail.com](mailto:amakuavideo@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:  
Dear Sirs & Ladies -

I wholeheartedly support the HOUSE BILL 366 to make it illegal to capture, harm or kill any Manta Rays in our Hawaiian Waters.

I have worked with these grand animals since 2001 at different occasions, mostly in the capacity as an underwater cameraman, and thereby also supporting research to learn more about their natural behavior. Knowing about marine eco-systems and the economical value of those animals in our waters through tourism are reasons enough for me to support this bill.

Please consider my participation in this petition as an important voice, which also represents many others who have not heard about BILL 366, and/or who cannot respond to this petition in time.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration ~

Thomas Gorgas, PhD.

Video Producer  
Deep Ocean Drilling Scientist

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 11:53 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** bileet@prodigy.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: William Leet  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 11-3927 eleventh street Volcano, HI  
Phone: 8089859125  
E-mail: [bileet@prodigy.net](mailto:bileet@prodigy.net)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:00 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** derway@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Duane Erway  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 77-6455 Princess Keelikolani Kailua-Kona, HI 96740  
Phone: 808 324-4624  
E-mail: [derway@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:derway@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

Please support HB366

:

The state Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) has said they support manta protection but are against the Bill because they believe manta protection should be under the Administrative Rules process. In 2006, House Resolution 30 was passed requiring DLNR to take action for manta protection within one year, however they have made no progress to date. Legislative protection is the only way to get immediate protection for manta rays.

DuaneErway

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 12:22 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** keller@mantapacific.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM  
**Attachments:** 2. Bullet Points

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Russell Laros  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 73-4337 Napala Place HI  
Phone: 808-895-1791  
E-mail: [keller@mantapacific.org](mailto:keller@mantapacific.org)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

### Comments:

Testimony of Keller Laros, founder of the Manta Pacific Research Foundation February 2, 2009

Aloha and thank you for allowing me to testify and endorse H.R.366.  
I want to introduce myself, describe my experience and explain why I support manta ray protection in the State of Hawaii.

My name is Keller Laros. I live in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. I made my first scuba dive in Hawaii in 1984. I made my first manta ray dive in 1985. Since 1985 I have been a PADI Scuba Instructor. In 1993 I authored and began teaching a PADI sanctioned class called Manta Ray Diver. To date I have 8,286 logged scuba dives. During my scuba career I have logged dives in Hawaii, California, Washington, Mexico, US Virgin Islands, British Virgin Islands, British West Indies, Republic of Palau, and Midway Atoll. I have been sited and or interviewed in books, magazine articles, television programs and internet broadcasts about diving and marine ecology. I have issued more than 750 scuba certifications to all levels as well as 196 Manta Ray Diver certifications. I am the founder of the Manta Pacific Research Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to the conservation and study of manta rays. I am a husband and father of three children ages 5, 9 and 12 years.



## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:44 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** kimtice@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Kimberly Tice  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [kimtice@gmail.com](mailto:kimtice@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:  
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to voice my support for HB 366 and SB394. These bills create penalties for anyone who captures or kills a manta ray in marine waters, effectively preventing the development of a manta ray fishery here in Hawaii. Hawaii has never had a manta fishery, although these are common in other locations throughout the Pacific. Because mantas in Hawaii have never been fished, they still have relatively healthy populations, unlike other populations that have been decimated due to over fishing.

Mantas are extremely sensitive to fishing pressure because of their life history. Female only give birth to a single pup at a time, once every one to three years. Fecundity is low, but natural adult survival is high, allowing populations to remain stable. A fishery quickly throws this equation off balance, as young mantas cannot replace quickly enough the adult mantas that are being caught and killed.

Not only are mantas amazing creatures, they are also a boon to Hawaii's economy. Many tourists come to the Big Island, especially, to have the opportunity to dive with these majestic creatures, injecting cash into the economy. The revenue that can be gained from tourism and the protection of these animals is much greater than what would be gained from a fishery to catch and kill them. I strongly urge you to pass HB366/SB394.

Sincerely,

Kimberly A. Tice  
4340B Lanihale Pl.  
Honolulu, HI 96816  
(808) 343-6329

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 3:46 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** karenh@austin.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Karen Herrington  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [karenh@austin.rr.com](mailto:karenh@austin.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I am writing in support of HB366. It is crucial that the manta rays of Hawaii receive legislative protection at this time. Scientifically they are one of the best known and studied populations in the world and they are completely vulnerable to indiscriminate killing or capturing. In addition to the scientific value of this population, the scuba diving industry does a very substantial business taking tourists to see the manta rays, and the loss of these animals would decimate this important source of tourism income, not to mention giving Hawaii a bad rap for failing to protect such a unique and special creature.

DLNR opposes this bill because they think it should be under Administrative Rules. However, this is the same argument they made in 2006 when HR 30 was passed directing them to come up with rules. Here we are three years later and no progress has been made in protecting manta rays. In the meantime two organizations have made inquiries into collecting manta rays in Hawaii. Manta rays need protection now, and HB366 is the only way they can get immediate protection.

The aquarium industry opposes the bill because they would like to be able to collect manta rays for display. A reputable aquarium or research institution would still be able to apply for a collecting permit under DLNR, but HB366 would allow such collections to be regulated so that there is no negative impact to the population.

There is no other opposition to the bill. Now is the time to protect Hawaii's manta rays. Later may be too late.

Karen Herrington

Karen Herrington  
512-336-0258 office  
512-336-0259 fax  
512-797-1771 cell  
[karenh@austin.rr.com](mailto:karenh@austin.rr.com)

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 5:10 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** johnfitz@hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: John Fitzpatrick  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 3338 Paty Drive Honolulu, HI 96822  
Phone: 808-268-1073  
E-mail: [johnfitz@hawaii.edu](mailto:johnfitz@hawaii.edu)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

Comments:

January 28, 2009

Dear Hawaii State House of Representatives,

I am writing in strong and urgent support of bill HB366 to protect Hawaiian Manta Rays from fishing for live export in the aquarium trade, and export as a food/homeopathic medicinal product. I have been privileged to see these magnificent animals off the Kona coast on the Big Island as well as off of the southern shores of Maui. Being just feet away from these animals as they soar in circles through the water is an exhilarating experience. Many visitors, residents, and the tourism industry will agree that these spectacular animals are worth more alive than dead. Manta Ray ecotourism generated **2.5 million** dollars in 1992, and it is prospected that this will only increase as stories are told around the world. There are currently no laws protecting these fascinating animals from fishing.

A Manta Ray fishery in Hawaii will potentially wipe out the populations here. Manta rays are very site attached, which means they do not migrate between islands. Therefore if we wipe out manta rays in Hawaii, there is little chance of reintroductions from other regions of the world. There have been 154 manta rays identified off of the kona coast since 1992. Females can only give birth to one or two pups per year. If Manta rays are fished at low rates, there is a high chance that these animals can be wiped out in a very short period of time. Shark fisheries off the coast of Mexico have been wiped out very rapidly because of the high fishing pressure, and life history strategies. Because Manta Rays are closely related to sharks and have similar life histories, it is very likely that a Manta fishery in Hawaii will have negative effects on the populations here.

Once again, Manta Rays bring in over **2.5 million dollars** a year, **they are worth more alive in Hawaii** than dead, and there is no reason we should allow outside parties to generate income using Hawaiian Manta Rays with very little to no positive economic impact for the state of Hawaii.

I strongly urge my state representatives to vote for bill HB366 in order to protect Hawaiian Manta Rays from destructive fishing practices.

Mahalo Nui Loa

John Fitzpatrick  
Research Assistant  
University of Hawaii, Manoa  
Department of Zoology  
Email: [johnfitz@hawaii.edu](mailto:johnfitz@hawaii.edu)

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 6:34 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** barb@cmorgray.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Barbara Seymour-Gray  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [barb@cmorgray.com](mailto:barb@cmorgray.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I have recently heard about Bill HB366 and wish to add my comments in support of the bill to protect the Hawaiian manta rays . These beautiful creatures are one of the main reasons I travel to Hawaiian to dive. I have spent many hours watching them from above and below the water and it would be, in my opinion, detrimental to my visiting Hawaii (Kona in particular) if these animals were not in abundance. As a diver I can be assured of their nightly visits which is very important. I have so many fantastic memories of their graceful movements. Please do everything possible to protect these beautiful vulnerable creatures.  
Sincerely, Barbara Seymour-Gray, Vancouver BC Canada

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:35 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** mluzyjon@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jon Hopcia  
Organization: Individual  
Address: P.O. Box 424 Kealkekua  
Phone: 808-323-9529  
E-mail: [mluzyjon@yahoo.com](mailto:mluzyjon@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

**Comments:**

I am in support of HB366 and urge you to please pass this bill.

Hawaii, the Big Island in particular is world famous for its manta ray population and possible snorkeling or diving encounters with them. If you should pick up any diving publication, chances are you will find some reference or add beckoning travelers, tourist, and divers to actually see manta rays in Hawaii. Our mantas are a financial benefit to our state. If we loose them, we will loose a source of income for our state.

There are studies that show that the Kona manta rays have a localized population that do not migrate inter-island. With only 99 manta rays ever sighted on the Kona coast and only 70 along the Maui shores, it would be very easy to wipe out the entire population if anyone decided to fish for these rays, as Manta rays have a very low reproductive rate, only producing one pup every 3-5 years. We want this rule in place so it protects the existing animals. If fishing ever started, the population would easily be wiped out for our lifetime and that of our children's.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2009 9:41 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** ian@pbrc.hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Ian M. Cooke  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [ian@pbrc.hawaii.edu](mailto:ian@pbrc.hawaii.edu)  
Submitted on: 2/22/2009

### Comments:

The very slow reproductive rate of manta rays means that unrestrained fishing of these easily observed and caught animals will quickly result in their disappearance. These animals are accessible to study in the wild and removal to an aquarium should be restricted to qualified researchers with appropriate local facilities. Their capture for commercial purposes and for export from Hawaii should be strictly prohibited.

I recall my excitement and fascination at seeing my first manta ray at age 8 on a family vacation to Kona. I'm told that the rays still present a major visitor attraction there and at other locations. Their value to the State as a feature for ecotourism is enormously greater than as a commercial export item.

Please support the passage of legislation to protect this very limited resource.

Ian M. Cooke  
2000 Ualakaa Street  
Honolulu, HI 96822

HB366 Testimony  
Timothy B. Clark

I am the science advisor for Manta Pacific Research Foundation and a graduate student at the University of Hawaii. I have been conducting research on manta rays for over ten years. I am writing in support of House Bill 366 which would provide protection of manta rays in Hawaii.

I strongly urge you to support the protection of manta rays in Hawaii. We are lucky in Hawaii to have manta rays regularly visiting our coastline, attracting visitors from around the world who want to see these magnificent animals. Over 30,000 visitors per year come to Hawaii to swim and dive with mantas, generating over \$3.5 million/year in revenue for Hawaii residents. We have a unique opportunity in Hawaii for visitors and researchers to learn about and interact with manta rays in the wild. However, no protection currently exists for manta rays in our waters, despite the fact that there are fewer manta rays in Hawaii than many of the endangered species that we protect. This wild population and unique resource should be protected, as should the industry that depends on the animals continued health.

Hawaii has a healthy population of manta rays, but information on the life history and movement rates suggest that they would be highly susceptible to overfishing. Any take of individuals from our population should be regulated to insure that this valuable resource is not wiped out.

Some key points about manta rays in Hawaii:

- Only 154 manta rays have been identified along the Kona Coast since 1992, suggesting very small population sizes.
- In the last four years an average of 57 unique individuals have been seen per year.
- No individual has ever been documented migrating between Kona and Maui, despite two separate photo-identification studies and two acoustic tracking studies. This suggests that each island has its own distinct population, and overfishing on one island will not be alleviated by migration of new individuals from another island.
- Manta rays have extremely low reproductive rates. Only 2-3 new pups are observed in Kona each year. Sexual maturity is late, possibly 10-12 years of age. Females have a single pup at a time, with a year gestation period. It would take a long time for captured manta rays to be replaced by natural reproduction.
- Manta rays are very long lived. One individual (Lefty) has been a resident in Kona since before 1979, when she was first identified as a full grown adult female.
- Kona is one of the best locations around the world to see manta rays in the wild. Manta rays are observed on 80% of the dives at Garden Eel Cove each year.
- Manta rays do not have to be in aquarium for researchers to learn more about them. Hawaii is a perfect location for researchers to study manta rays in the wild.



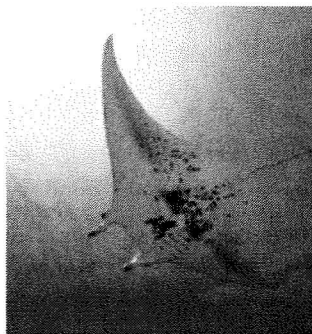
- There is currently no protection for manta rays from any type of fishing, collection, or capture in Hawaii.

While manta rays have been fished for years in Indonesia, Baja, the Philippines, Africa, and throughout Asia, no fishery has ever existed in Hawaii. However, there are no laws protecting manta rays from being fished. This year a spotted eagle ray was speared in Honokohau Harbor for fun, and a harmless whitetip reef shark was caught off of Puako. Besides fishing, this bill would also protect manta rays from this type of unwarranted killing. Additionally, aquariums have looked at Hawaii as a location where they can capture manta rays for husbandry experiments and for display in tanks. While aquariums provide unique opportunities for research and education, aquarium should have to obtain a permit before any take is allowed so that the state can monitor their activities.

Manta rays in Hawaii are a poor target for any fishery due to their small population sizes, lack of migration between islands, and low reproductive rates. Allowing any take of manta rays from Hawaii's populations could be detrimental for the health of the population, and to business that rely on having an abundance of individuals in Hawaii. I hope you will vote in favor of HB366. Please protect these amazing animals in our waters.

Mahalo,

Tim



Biology of the manta ray in Hawaii  
by Tim Clark  
Manta Pacific Research Foundation  
and University of Hawaii  
clarkt@hawaii.edu

The purpose of this paper is to review the scientific research related to the biology of the manta ray in Hawaii to give a general background to legislators related to protecting manta rays. Most of this data is being prepared for publication as part of my PhD research.

Manta ray is the common name used for several species of batoids around the world belonging to the genus *Manta* (currently one but most likely three species) and *Mobula* (nine species). These genera have a pair of fleshy appendages called cephalic fins projecting on opposite sides of the mouth that are used to funnel plankton into their oral cavity. The most commonly observed species in Hawaii is the coastal *Manta* species, *Manta birostris*. A second *Manta* species (*Manta sp.*) is also rarely observed here. This species is pelagic but occasionally comes near shore. What may be a hybrid of the two species also is rarely seen in Hawaii. This hybrid is commonly known as the “Black” manta due to its mostly black ventral surface (fig. 1). At least one unidentified species of *Mobula* has also been observed rarely in Hawaii.

Research in Hawaii has been on the coastal species of manta ray (*Manta birostris*). Individuals of this species are easily identified based on variations in their ventral pigmentation patterns. These patterns are stable throughout the life of an individual, allowing them to be used in photo-identification studies. Manta ray surveys have been conducted by recreational SCUBA dive instructors along the Kona Coast since 1992. From 1992 through 2007 a total of 3208 surveys were conducted, primarily at the Keauhou and Ho’ona Bay dive sites where manta rays congregate at night. Divers reported number of manta rays observed, identity of individuals if known, an index of plankton abundance, the number of vessels utilizing the site, and an estimate of the number of divers and snorkelers in the water.

The population of manta rays in Kona appears to be small, and probably numbers under 200 individuals though no formal mark/recapture analysis has been conducted. A total of 106 individuals were identified on the Kona Coast of Hawaii from 1992 through 2007 (fig. 2). Individuals were observed between 1 and 724 times over the course of the study. Not all individuals were sighted every year. The number of unique individuals per year ranged from 1 to 65 along the Kona Coast (Keauhou 1 – 22, Ho’ona Bay 2-58) (fig. 3).

The life history of manta rays is poorly known, but in general they appear to have characteristics similar to many shark species, with long life spans, slow growth rates, late sexual maturity, and low reproductive rates. The oldest known individual in Kona is a minimum of 30 years age, having been identified as a full grown adult in 1979. Age of sexual maturity is not known, but appears to be in the teens based on growth of claspers

in males (claspers in mature individuals extend past the pelvic fin). Manta rays are ovoviviparous, and only produce a single pup at a time. Gestation rates are approximately one year, as was confirmed recently by the birth of two manta ray pups in two consecutive years from a single female in captivity at Okinawa Charaumi Aquarium (gestation 374 and 366 day, respectfully). From 1994 through 2007 there were 30 new pups identified in Kona, given a birth rate of approximately 2 pups per year (fig. 4).

Migration between islands is limited. No individual has been observed migrating between Maui and Kona either through photo-identification studies on both islands or acoustic telemetry. Photo-identification studies have identified 106 manta rays in Kona though 2007, and over 200 on Maui (data not shown). No individual have been observed on both islands. Telemetry studies show that manta rays tend to be coastal in Hawaii, with no individual recorded in depths greater than 1,000 ft. Tracking in Kona shows that mantas make regular migrations between feeding areas and cleaning stations, but only utilize a small area of the coastline on a regular basis (fig. 5).

Manta rays are of economic importance in Hawaii as a part of the dive and snorkel industry. Regular manta ray dives have been conducted along the Kona Coast of Hawaii since the late 1970's and on Maui since the early 2000's. A survey of nine dive shops in Kona revealed that those shops took approximately 11,000 snorkelers and divers on manta ray tours in 2002. Direct revenue to the nine shops was approximately \$920,000. In 2002, the Department of Business and Economic Development estimated that the average diver spent \$220 per day on vacation expenses in addition to diving (hotel, food, ect.). If each manta ray tourist spent one extra day in Hawaii to observe manta rays, over \$2.4 million in additional revenue would be generated for businesses in Kona due to manta ray tourism.

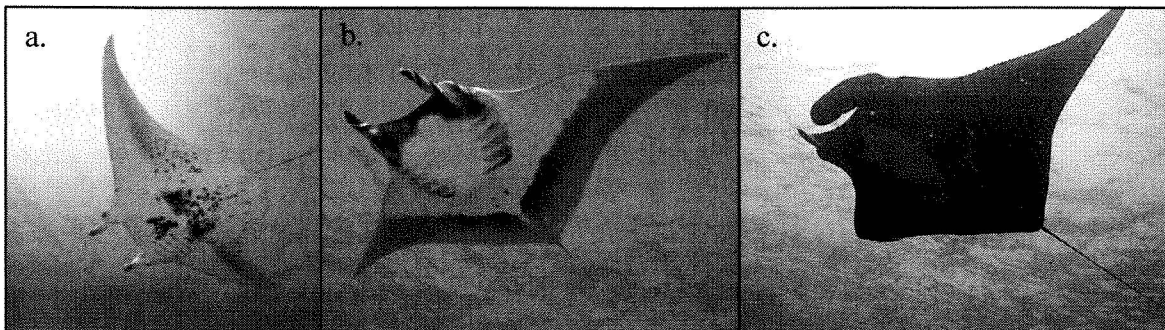


Figure 1 – Species of manta rays in Hawaii include the common coastal *Manta birostris* (a), the pelagic *Manta sp.* (b), the Black manta hybrid (c), and *Mobula sp.* (not shown).

### Discovery curve - Kona Coast

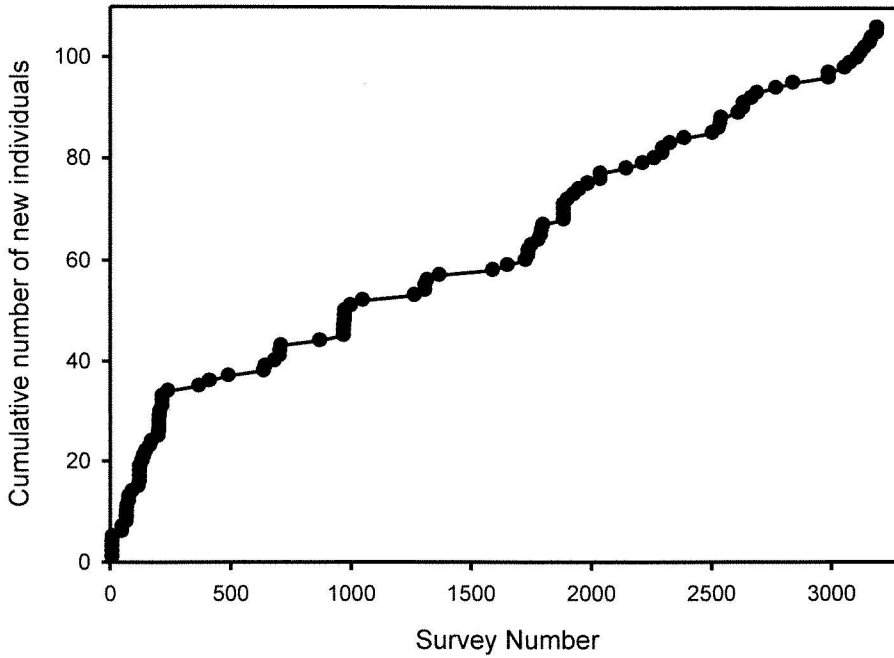


Figure 2 – Cumulative number of manta rays identified along the Kona Coast of Hawaii from 1992 through 2007.

### Number of Unique Individuals per Year

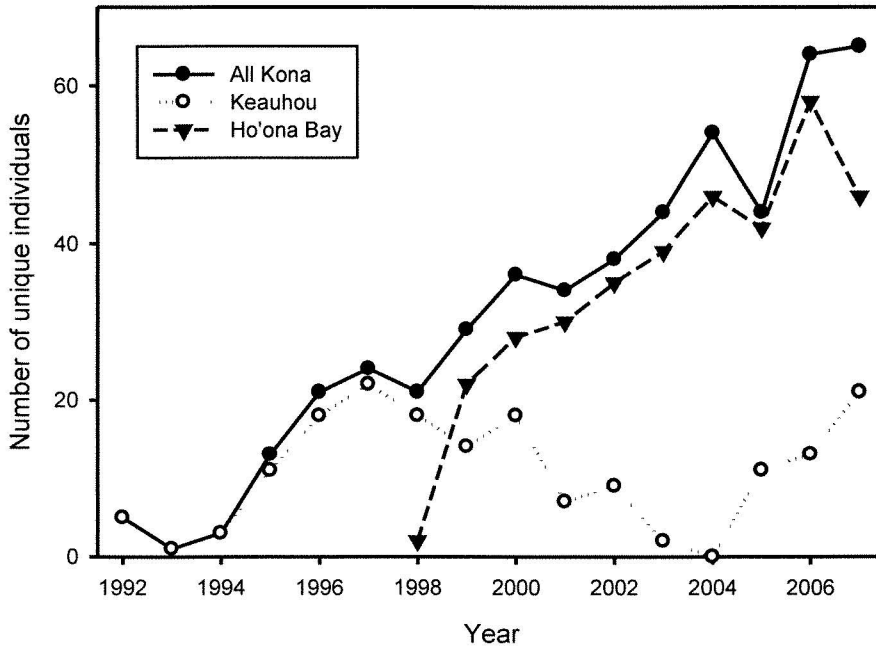


Figure 3 – Number of unique individuals encountered each year along the entire Kona Coast, Keauhou and Ho'ona Bay.

### Discovery Curve - Kona pups

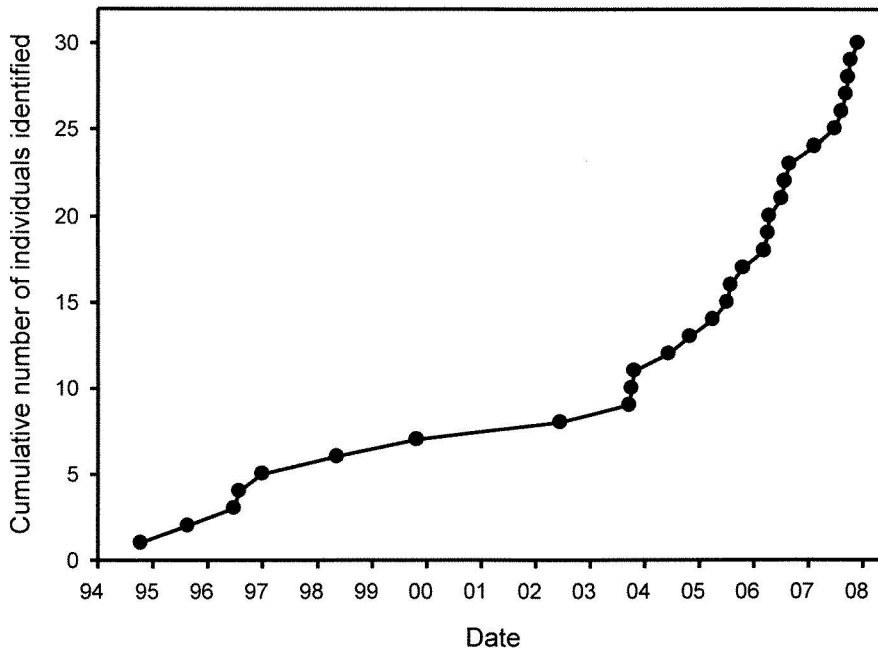


Figure 4 – Cumulative number of new pups entering the Kona population per year.



Figure 5 – Movement patterns of nine individual manta rays tracked for 3-10 days each along the Kona Coast of Hawaii. Each dot represents a 15 minute interval.

Feb. 22, 2009

To members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to ask for your support of HB366, which aims for protection of manta rays in Hawaiian waters. Manta rays are majestic creatures that have great economic value to the Hawaiian Islands. Hawaii has become world renowned as a SCUBA diving destination because of our manta rays. Recent surveys of the dive operators on the Big Island show that in 2007 almost \$3 million dollars was generated in direct charter sales for the dive industry. Adding the cost of housing, food, etc. will demonstrate that the actual contribution to the Hawaiian economy is far greater.

Manta rays have been targeted for fishing and aquarium collection in many places of the world, and unsustainable harvests have led to greatly diminished populations. With approximately 150-200 individual manta rays documented each on both Maui and Hawaii, the population of rays here is extremely small. There is evidence that manta rays do not migrate between islands. Their small and isolated populations make them very susceptible to fishing pressures. If manta rays are irresponsibly removed from Hawaiian waters it could easily take 100's of years to replenish the stock.

Although no one has yet attempted to fish manta rays in Hawaii, there has been interest in collecting these manta rays for aquarium stock. While aquariums do promote education about these wonderful animals, unchecked removal of rays from Hawaiian waters is dangerous. In Okinawa they have attempted to keep manta rays in captivity for over 15 years. In that time they have collected 19 rays, 4 of which survive today. With such a track record it is risky to allow the removal of manta rays from Hawaiian waters.

The rays here are enjoyed by tens of thousands of divers and snorkelers who come from around the world to see them each year. They are each named and people feel close relationships to these individual manta rays that are seen over and over again throughout the years.

I hope you support HB 366 as a preemptive measure to protect the beautiful rays and their ecosystem that we have in Hawaii. In doing so we can join other countries, such as Yap, Micronesia, and Mexico, in protecting these wonderful animals. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Eli Michael, PhD  
Manta Pacific Research Foundation  
Captain Cook, Hawaii

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:56 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** CherylTaylorrdh@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Cheryl Taylor  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [CherylTaylorrdh@hotmail.com](mailto:CherylTaylorrdh@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I am in support of HB366 and urge you to please pass this bill. Hawaii, the Big Island in particular is world famous for its manta ray population and possible snorkeling or diving encounters with them. If you should pick up any diving publication, chances are you will find some reference or add beckoning travelers, tourist, and divers to actually see manta rays in Hawaii. Our mantas are a financial benefit to our state. If we loose them, we will loose a source of income for our state. There are studies that show that the Kona manta rays have a localized population that do not migrate inter-island. With only 99 manta rays ever sighted on the Kona coast and only 70 along the Maui shores, it would be very easy to wipe out the entire population if anyone decided to fish for these rays, as Manta rays have a very low reproductive rate, only producing one pup every 3-5 years. We want this rule in place so it protects the existing animals. If fishing ever started, the population would easily be wiped out for our lifetime and beyond.



## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 5:09 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** Beavs2@msn.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Lindell Johnson  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Fairway Drive Albany OR  
Phone: 541-928-9994  
E-mail: [Beavs2@msn.com](mailto:Beavs2@msn.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

### Comments:

My husband and I are in support of HB366 and urge you to please pass this bill. Hawaii, the Big Island in particular, is world famous for its manta ray population and possible snorkeling or diving encounters with them. If you should pick up any diving publication, chances are you will find some reference or ad beckoning travelers, tourist, and divers to actually see manta rays in Hawaii. The mantas are a financial benefit to the state of Hawaii. If we loose them, we will loose a source of income for Hawaii. There are studies that show that the Kona manta rays have a localized population that do not migrate inter-island. With only 99 manta rays ever sighted on the Kona coast and only 70 along the Maui shores, it would be very easy to wipe out the entire population if anyone decided to fish for these rays, as Manta rays have a very low reproductive rate, only producing one pup every 3-5 years. We want this rule in place so it protects the existing animals. If fishing ever started, the population would easily be wiped out for our lifetime and beyond.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 9:38 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** dtalbot51@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Daniel Talbot  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 45 Brookside Drive Bailey, CO  
Phone: 307-921-2329  
E-mail: [dtalbot51@yahoo.com](mailto:dtalbot51@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

Comments:  
Please protect the Mantas. They are why I visit Hawaii.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 10:28 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** living.in.question@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Amber  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 87 Kawaiilani Circle Kihei, HI 96753  
Phone: 808-283-8488  
E-mail: [living.in.question@gmail.com](mailto:living.in.question@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I am in support of HB366 and urge you to please pass this bill. With only 99 manta rays ever sighted on the Kona coast and only 70 along the Maui shores, and as Manta rays have a very low reproductive rate, only producing one pup every 3-5 years, if fishing ever started, the population would easily be wiped out for our lifetime and beyond.

Hawaii is world famous for its manta ray population and encounters with them. Diving and travel publications have long brought divers here for this main purpose. If we lose our mantas, we not only lose the presence of this amazing species, but we also lose a source of income for our state.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:46 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** nickfenley@mac.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

**Categories:** Purple Category

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Nick Fenley  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Rietholzstrasse 9 Zollikerberg  
Phone: 0041797252020  
E-mail: [nickfenley@mac.com](mailto:nickfenley@mac.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

Protect the mantas whilst the population is stable and thus avoid the possibility of threat to their existence. This is a cause that can be actuated now and prevent a &quot;too little too late&quot; scenario if they are hunted, captured, harassed etc out of existence in the Hawaiian waters in the near future. They are a treasure to your islands.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 2:54 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** briannamcd1980@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Brianna McDowell  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 2680 E. Manoa Rd #F Honolulu, HI  
Phone: 808-428-0326  
E-mail: [briannamcd1980@yahoo.com](mailto:briannamcd1980@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I support House Bill 366, which would make it illegal to capture or kill a manta ray within state waters.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 3:37 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** teri@jacksdivinglocker.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Teri Leicher  
Organization: Jack's Diving Locker  
Address: 75-5813 Alii Drive Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96734  
Phone: 808-329-7585  
E-mail: [teri@jacksdivinglocker.com](mailto:teri@jacksdivinglocker.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

Aloha and Mahalo for considering HB366.

Our Hawaiian Manta Rays are an important species with long term economic benefit to our snorkel and scuba industries, not to mention they are part of Hawaii's unique ecosystem. Thousands of people come to the Kona Coast annually (as well as Maui) just to view these magnificent marine animals.

By passing HB366 it will protect these animals from industries that seek to collect them for profit or kill them for their gill rakers as is being done in other countries.

Accredited Aquariums (such as Monterey Bay) can still apply for a special permit to collect a specimen, but requests would be controlled by DLNR.

This bill will not require any funding but will add a layer of protection that will protect our limited number of local Hawaiian manta rays.

Mahalo, Teri Leicher  
managing partner: Jack's Diving Locker

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 4:25 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** betcc@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Mary E. Clark  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 51 Shoreline Lane Gulfport MS  
Phone: 228-897-1010  
E-mail: [betcc@bellsouth.net](mailto:betcc@bellsouth.net)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

I support HB 366 because mantas are an important resource in Hawaii and need to be protected. They bring in tourist dollars and will continue to do so. Their survival is fragile so fishing or collecting should not be allowed in Hawaiian waters. Let them be enjoyed in their natural environment.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 5:03 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** konajambo@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Bo Pardau  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 76-884 North Pueo Place Kailua-Kona, HI  
Phone: 808-327-9771  
E-mail: [konajambo@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:konajambo@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

### Comments:

DLNR opposes the bill because they think it should be under Administrative Rules. However, this is the same argument they made in 2006 when HR 30 was passed directing them to come up with rules. Since then no progress has been made in protecting manta rays, while two organizations have made inquiries into collecting manta rays in Hawaii. Manta rays need protection now, and the legislative process is the only way they can get immediate protection.

The aquarium industry opposes the bill because they would like to be able to collect manta rays for display. A reputable aquarium or research institution would still be able to apply for a collecting permit under DLNR, but this bill would allow such collections to be regulated so that there is no negative impact to the population.

No one else opposes the bill! Please give this measure the immediate attention it deserves. Mahalo.



## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 23, 2009 6:10 PM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** tommcd88@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Thomas McDonald  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 78-7045 Kaluna St., #303 Kailua-Kona, HI  
Phone: 808-322-8056  
E-mail: [tommcd88@yahoo.com](mailto:tommcd88@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 2/23/2009

**Comments:**

Please pass HB366. Manta Rays are magnificent creatures, vital to the tourist industry in Hawaii. They should be protected from being captured or killed and HB366 does just that.

## karamatsu3-Leanne

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009 5:18 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** jodie\_0606@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jodie Salz  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Seattle, WA  
Phone:  
E-mail: [jodie\\_0606@hotmail.com](mailto:jodie_0606@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/24/2009

**Comments:**

As a highly trained wildlife biologist I understand the need to immediately provide legal protection for manta rays to the greatest extent possible. As a slowly reproducing species, with little known about its population structure, we must prevent as many sources of loss as possible. Irriversable damage could otherwise happen in a very short period of time. As a victim of our declining economy, I know the importance of protecting mantas as a key source of tourism dollars. As a person that loves wildlife, I know that these inspirational creatures should be protected for their own intrinsic reasons.

**karamatsu3-Leanne**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 24, 2009 5:43 AM  
**To:** JUDtestimony  
**Cc:** david.j.maddox@juno.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for JUD 2/24/2009 2:05:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: David Maddox  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [david.j.maddox@juno.com](mailto:david.j.maddox@juno.com)  
Submitted on: 2/24/2009

Comments: