

**TESTIMONY**  
**HB366 HD2**

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 Senate Committee on  
WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2009  
3:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**In consideration of  
House Bill 366, House Draft 2  
RELATING TO MANTA RAYS**

House Bill 366, House Draft 2 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

March 18, 2009

Testimony To: Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, Hawaiian Affairs  
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair

Presented By: Tim Lyons, CAE  
Executive Director

Subject: H.B. 366, HD 2 – RELATING TO MANTA RAYS

Chair Hee 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.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2009 11:52 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** open15@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jeannie Openshaw  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 75-6009 Alii Dr. S-23 Kona, Hawaii  
Phone: 909 720 2244  
E-mail: [open15@aol.com](mailto:open15@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 3/14/2009

**Comments:**

I strongly agree with this legislature and feel th e Manta's must be protected for future generations. I am a scuba diver and there is nothing more magical than observing these magnificent creatures in the oceans surrounding the Hawaiian islands. Please support this bill.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2009 2:03 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** rick.pacific@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Rick Gaffney  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [rick.pacific@gmail.com](mailto:rick.pacific@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/14/2009

**Comments:**

Please pass HB366HD2 to assure more protection for Hawaii's manta ray population. They are an important tourism asset and their local population is isolated and not large enough to allow for harvest, collection (especially for aquaria, or depletion of their numbers in any way.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2009 6:23 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** spycatcher74@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Rahnne Tranter  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Flat 20, 276 Handford Road Taigum, Brisbane, QLD, Australia  
Phone: 0061 73216 5986  
E-mail: [spycatcher74@hotmail.com](mailto:spycatcher74@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/15/2009

**Comments:**

I would like to submit my testimony in support of the HB366 Bill to the Senate WTL Committee. Manta Ray protection is so important on many levels. Protecting manta rays allows this magnificent creature to live freely as we desire to do so. On our honeymoon, my husband and I swam with these wondrous creatures off the Kona Coast, the Big Island. It was the most amazing thing because they were wild and free and gave us the most precious gift - to behold their majesty. The thought of these beautiful creatures being kept in tiny tanks or butchered for "scientific research" breaks my heart. Plus, the mantas bring in tourist dollars. Please make Hawaii stand out as being ecologically aware and caring for our sentient beings!

*The Hawaii Association for Marine Education and Research, Inc.*



4993 L. Honoupiilani Rd  
Lahaina, HI, 96761, USA  
Phone: 808-280-6448  
Fax: 808-669-8998  
Email: deskos@hawaii.edu  
www.hamerinhawaii.org

March 15, 2009

Attn: Senate Committee  
Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs

**Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB366 to Protect Manta Rays in Hawaii**

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs:

Manta Rays are Hawaii's largest marine resident, some with wingspans of 20 ft or more. Much like our beloved humpback whales, our manta rays draw visitors from all over the world who come here, one of only a handful of places worldwide, where manta rays can be seen reliably in their natural habitat. The dive industry in Kona alone brings in over two and a half million dollars a year in sustainable revenue. The value of even a single manta ray living in our coastal waters, which can live well over 20 years, has great economic and aesthetic value.

Unfortunately, manta ray populations in Hawaii are small. The population off Kona is estimated around 150 animals. The population I have studied for the past 5 years in Maui as part of my Ph.D. research is estimated around 350 animals. Unfortunately, manta rays are also very slow growing. A female manta ray will take close to 10 years before she has her first pup, and will contribute a single new pup only about every 2-3 years. But the most unfortunate thing of all is that we have absolutely no laws protecting these manta rays here in Hawaii.

The frightening reality is that under current Hawaii law, I could take any one of you to one of these rare aggregation areas that exist around Hawaii, where manta rays are seen regularly in shallow waters, and extract a quarter of the population in a matter of days. In a matter of just a few months, we could eliminate the entire population.

This has already been done in places like South China, Philippines, Indonesia, and Mexico where population have been decimated, and nothing prevents this from happening here in

Hawaii. These target fisheries are fueled by markets in East Asia paying large sums of money for manta ray fins to be used in shark fin soup, and for their gill rakers, to be used in controversial medicine.

Aquariums from the mainland and abroad are in the process of preparing to remove manta rays from Hawaii to put on display, even though most aquariums have been unable to keep manta rays alive for more than a few months. When populations are small and slow growing, they can be extremely vulnerable to the removal of even just a few individuals.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the world's main authority on the risk of extinction to a species, now classifies manta rays as near threatened, meaning a species that may be threatened with extinction in the near future.

In these tough economic times, Hawaii needs to protect each and every one of our most valuable, long-term, sustainable resources. Mexico and Yap have recently enacted laws to ensure the protection of their unique manta ray populations.

The implementation of a "no kill, no extraction" law would provide Hawaii's manta rays the protection they need. This law would insure that the people of Hawaii 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, knowing that Hawaii's manta ray populations are small and island-specific, knowing that these populations could be decimated in a matter of months, and knowing the huge economic benefits mantas bring to Hawaii, why would anyone oppose the protection of this extremely vulnerable and valuable resource?

Sincerely,

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

*Dedicated to Preserving Hawaii's Marine Resources through Education and Research*

*Dedicated to Preserving Hawaii's Marine Resources through Education and Research*

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 2:53 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** edrob@maui.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Ed Robinson  
Organization: Ed Robinsons' Diving Adventures  
Address: PO Box 616 Kihei, HI  
Phone: 808-875-0364  
E-mail: [edrob@maui.net](mailto:edrob@maui.net)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

I wholeheartedly support the adoption of HB366 and the protection of manta rays. Please pass this bill. The reef thanks you.



## Testimony

To: Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice-Chair,  
WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, and HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

For: hearing Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 3:00 p.m.

Conference Room 329, 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

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**From:** EConn@ngs.org  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 6:09 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Subject:** Re: Manta Ray Protection needs urgent help.  
**Attachments:** Senate Testimony HB366, HD2.sit

**From:** Mr. Edwin J. Conn  
**Position:** Western Region Manager, National Geographic Traveler  
**To:** Committee On Water, Land, Agriculture And Hawaiian Affairs  
**Hearing:** Wednesday, March 18, 2009  
**Time:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Measure:** HB366, HD2  
**Place:** Conference Room 229, State Capitol  
**Copies:** One

I am the Western Region Manager handling the marketing and advertising for National Geographic Traveler in the Western United States, including Hawaii and Alaska. The health, viability and most importantly the sustainability of the Hawaiian cultural, environmental and economic elements is critical for a strong tourism industry, one of the key factors in the Hawaiian economy. I believe a healthy and protected marine life is a paramount issue for Hawaii to consider vis a vis the tourism industry.

At the top of my life list as a diver was the opportunity to dive with the mantas, and no better place to do that than my favorite island, Hawai'i. I brought my fiance and her newly certified diver son, Aaron, to join me in this experience of a lifetime. And it far exceeded our expectations.

There was a little trepidation on Jacqui and Aaron's part, as this was their first night dive. The pre-diving briefing about the mantas and how to avoid any negative impact on our encounter was extremely helpful. The mantas began to congregate around the boats that were the first to tie up.

We waited for the night sky to set in and began our descent. We took our place around the "campfire" of lights set up to attract the plankton which of course, invites the mantas for their evening meal. 5 mantas were on display that night, and I can only say, they were truly the most magnificent creatures I have ever encountered. They gently glided over our heads, and displayed their distinct markings, which are photographed and catalogued by divers to keep track of the mantas as they mature in the Hawaiian waters.

When we learned later that the mantas have no legal protections in Hawai'i, I could not believe my ears. The idea that these gentle giants could be molested for food or taken by aquariums was appalling. We look at the mantas as icons of the Islands. To not protect them, would be akin to letting hunters freely shoot at Bald Eagles on the mainland. Please pass HB 366 and protect our mantas.

Ed Conn

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER  
Western Region Manager  
9100 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 455 E  
Beverly Hills, CA 90212  
310-734-2240 main  
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KELLERKONA1@aol.c  
om

03/15/2009 04:15  
PM

EConn@ngs.org

To

cc

Subject

Manta Ray Protection needs urgent  
help.

Aloha Ed,

Great to have your support as we try to get manta rays protected in Hawaii.  
Manta Ray Protection needs urgent help.

HB366 passed the House of Representatives on March 10 and is now going to be heard by the  
Senate Committee On Water, Land, Agriculture And Hawaiian Affairs on March 18, 2009, at 3p.m.  
If you'd like to send your testimony for the Manta Ray Protection bill now called HB366, HD2  
please write to:

WTLTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Testimony is due no later than 3p.m. Tuesday, March 17th.

Below and attached is what I sent.

Part 1, cover letter.

Part 2, who I am.

Part 3, bullet points

Aloha and thank you for allowing me to testify and endorse H.R.366, HD2 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 cited 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 nonprofit dedicated to the conservation and study of manta rays. I am a husband and father of three children ages 5, 9 and 12 years.

### Manta Rays Need Legal Protection

- Manta Rays are rare and unique creatures.
- HD366, HD2 Establishes protocol for stewardship of Manta Rays in Hawaii.
- HD366, HD2 Requires no funding.
- Legal protection is required to protect and manage this valuable resource.
- Slow reproduction. One pup per litter. Late reproductive age.
- Long gestation.
- Do not migrate in Hawaii and have limited natural predators.
- Fisheries in Mexico, Indonesia and Philippines. New markets emerging.
- No fishery in Hawaii.
- Manta rays vulnerable to exploitation.
- Eco-tourism attraction. In 2007 over 30,000 visitors. 3 million dollars.
- Eco-tourism growing. Does not deplete resource. Renewable.
- Green.
- Hawaii is top manta ray destination in the world.
- Manta Rays in aquariums popular in Okinawa, Osaka, Georgia, Atlantis & Dubai.
- New demand creates new industry to capture live manta rays. Big Money.
- Captured manta rays have high mortality rate.
- More than 5,600 signatures on petition for manta protection.
- Unanimous support for manta protection by West Hawaii Fishery Council in 2004.
- House Bill 960 never got out of committee in 2005.
- House Resolution 30 passed committee and directed DLNR to act in 2006.
- Administrative protection sought in 2007 and 2008. No results.
- House Bill 366, HD2 and Senate Bill 394 will protect manta rays.
- House Bill 366 passed House on March 10, 2009

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 6:44 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** sherry\_klassen@scotiamcleod.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: sherry klassen  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 426 East 6th Street North Vancouver, BC  
Phone: 604 986-4539  
E-mail: [sherry\\_klassen@scotiamcleod.com](mailto:sherry_klassen@scotiamcleod.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

Please care and protect the Mantaray before there are none to protect. They are amazing and important to our world.

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

March 16, 2009

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawai'ian Affairs

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. The West Hawai'i Fishery Council has 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 are convinced that HB366 will go a long way toward avoiding this kind of problem in Hawai'i. We would greatly appreciate your kind consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,



John Kellam  
Friends of Pebble Beach



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)

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 8:27 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** naberm@svusd.org  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Michele Naber  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 20916 Shellfish Lane Huntington Beach, CA  
Phone: 714-654-4610  
E-mail: [naberm@svusd.org](mailto:naberm@svusd.org)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

The removal of Manta Rays should be closely monitored and regulated so that the Hawaiian ecosystem is not disrupted by the excessive removal of these beautiful creatures. HB 366 should be passed and enforced.



1

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 8:46 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** cogliandro@msn.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Nancy ~~& Chris~~ Cogliandro  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 136 East Harrisville Road Dublin, NH 034444  
Phone: 603-563-8852  
E-mail: [cogliandro@msn.com](mailto:cogliandro@msn.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**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.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 8:46 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** cogliandro@msn.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: ~~Nancy &~~ Chris Cogliandro  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 136 East Harrisville Road Dublin, NH 034444  
Phone: 603-563-8852  
E-mail: [cogliandro@msn.com](mailto:cogliandro@msn.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

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.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 8:48 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** lancesmi@hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 8:49 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** hay\_patricia@yahoo.fr  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Patricia Hay  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [hay\\_patricia@yahoo.fr](mailto:hay_patricia@yahoo.fr)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

My name is Patricia Hay (35, Paris), I am a mere french citizen who was incredibly lucky to visit manta rays in Hawa#239; once in her life.  
I found them so incredibly beautiful that I cried under water.  
I now have 2 little boys and I promised to myself that one day I will take them to Hawa#239; to visit manta rays in open waters.

I heard that 2 important bills regarding manta rays were going to be voted this year in Hawa#239;. and that the manta rays' survival is at stake.

Hawaii has now been targeted by aquariums 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 mantas as they want. As a consequence, manta rays would be highly susceptible to overfishing.  
If we protect mantas once fishing starts it will be too late.

I hope legislators will make the right choice for future generations.

thanks for your attention.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 8:54 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** scubamendy@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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 committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs. Wednesday March 18 @ 3:00pm

No matter 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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 8:56 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** gregkarenj@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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. &gt;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



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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 8:59 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** CAGRUBE@portfoliorecovery.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM  
**Attachments:** Hawaii House Bill 366.doc

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Craig Grube  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [CAGRUBE@portfoliorecovery.com](mailto:CAGRUBE@portfoliorecovery.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

## 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

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:00 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** wetphoto@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:00 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** wetphoto@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:01 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** cperritt@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:01 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** joshtemes@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:02 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** barbett@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:02 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** barbett@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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



March 16, 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 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 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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:06 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** rich@seaparadise.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Richard Kersten  
Organization: Sea Paradise  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [rich@seaparadise.com](mailto:rich@seaparadise.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:  
Please pass HB366, as we fully support this!!

Richard Kersten  
Operations Manager  
Sea Paradise  
Ph. 808-322-2500  
FAX. 808-322-2760  
[www.seaparadise.com](http://www.seaparadise.com)

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:07 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** bluemanta@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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 Eyles

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:07 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** bluemanta@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:08 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** dolphin.dancer@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:11 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** konajambo@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

Time is of the essence. We can't wait for another year with the impending risk to the capture of the island's manta rays.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:11 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** kristy.martin@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

n 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



---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:12 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** bluewater.ong@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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

To the Senate WHL committee:

Please support HB 366 to protect Manta Rays in Hawaii. This bill would prevent fishery for mantas and require special activity permits to collect mantas for aquarium and scientific purposes. These organisms are vulnerable to over-harvesting since the population is small and have low fecundity. Manta Rays are important to Hawaii's ecosystem and provide monetary support to Hawaii's economy since many tourists dive in Hawaii's waters to see these animals in the wild. In addition, I support the provision to allow parties to get a special permit from the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to collect manta rays for scientific, education, management, or propagation purposes. This gives DLNR the ability to approve permits for manta ray capture and will give transparency to the process of collection by all interested parties, including aquariums.

Sincerely,  
T. Erin Cox

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:13 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** amakuavideo@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:14 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** kimtice@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:31 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** karenh@austin.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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 inquires 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)

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:32 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** ian@pbrc.hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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

March 16, 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

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:35 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** timrock@doubleblue.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Tim Rock  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [timrock@doubleblue.com](mailto:timrock@doubleblue.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:  
Testimony:

I have traveled the world photographing manta rays.

Manta ray populations are extremely susceptible to predation. Please support protection measures for mantas as I do.

Tim Rock  
--  
Tim Rock  
P.O. Box 24666 GMF  
Barrigada, Guam 96921 USA  
671-734-6825



---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:36 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** sabbath999@mac.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Ken Mitchell  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [sabbath999@mac.com](mailto:sabbath999@mac.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

My wife and I are both divers, and one of the things that draws us back to Kona is the manta rays. We have traveled from Missouri to Kona 3 times in the last two years, and the highlight of our last trip was observing mantas in a diving situation that is safe for both the divers and the animals.

Mantas annually draw tens of thousands of tourists to Hawai'i, and MUST be protected if for no other reason than the vast economic value of these creatures vs. the virtually nonexistent value of killing them.

I was absolutely shocked when our boat captain said that the mantas are not protected in Hawaiian waters, because I could not believe that the state would risk losing a major tourist draw over simply banning fishing for this one type of non-game species in a limited area.

Please protect these animals in your waters, if not for their sake then for the sake of your economy.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:38 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** barb@cmorgray.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/16/2009

**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

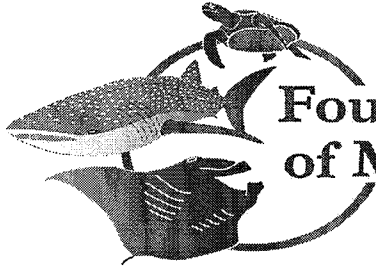
---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:42 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** sharkbait88@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM  
**Attachments:** Manta Ray Protection Hawaii.pdf

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Andrea Marshall  
Organization: Foundation for the Protection of Marine Megafauna  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [sharkbait88@yahoo.com](mailto:sharkbait88@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:



## Foundation for the Protection of Marine Megafauna

March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

As an American and a researcher studying manta rays full time, I find myself compelled to address the concern of their protection and conservation in the Hawaiian Islands.

Manta rays are by their very nature a vulnerable species to exploitation. Their reproductive parameters alone make them a candidate for immediate concern and protection. Manta rays are a reproductively conservative species, they reach maturity at a large size and late age, they typically have only a single offspring every two to three years in the wild, and they characteristically have small population sizes.

As the senior author for the most recent IUCN Redlist assessment on this species, the available scientific information clearly indicates that manta rays are vulnerable to extinction in areas where their natural mortality is altered or influenced by man. Most often threats to this species come in the form of fishing pressure, with animals being targeted for consumption and trade. However manta ray populations also face other threats such as unregulated eco-tourism industries, critical habitat degradation and global warming.

For all of the above reasons, manta rays should not be targeted for consumption, trade, sport fishing, or scientific experimentation. If we are to reverse current trends and build more comprehensive management and conservation programs for them at major aggregation sites, we must firstly enforce this primary and vital step.

I fully support and stand behind efforts to protect manta rays in Hawaiian waters.

**Dr. Andrea Marshall**

**Director of Research**

**Foundation for the Protection of Marine Megafauna**

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Foundation for the Protection of Marine Megafauna  
Manta Ray & Whale Shark Research Center- Tofo Beach, Inhambane, Mozambique  
Casa Barry Landline (Moz): +258 29329007 E-mail: [andrea@giantfish.org](mailto:andrea@giantfish.org)  
Africa- Mobile (Mozambique): +258 84 730 1190 Mobile (South Africa): +27 82 478 9251

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:51 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** living.in.question@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Amber  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 87 Kawailani Circle Kihei, HI 96753  
Phone: 808-283-8488  
E-mail: [living.in.question@gmail.com](mailto:living.in.question@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

The beautiful manta rays of Hawaii are a rare, slowly-reproducing population. They are also a major source of tourism so badly needed in our islands. For ecological and economic reasons, we cannot afford to lose them!

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 10:15 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** kauaidionne@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Dionne Miller  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [kauaidionne@hotmail.com](mailto:kauaidionne@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

I have been a Hawaii resident for 20 years. Seeing a Manta Ray in the water has been one of the highlights of my time in Hawaii. They are truly beautiful creatures that must be protected from predation and capture for any reason. The Manta Ray that I saw had beautiful eyes that looked right at me as it swam around me. I support Manta Ray protection.

Dionne Miller  
Po Box 574  
Lihue, HI 96766  
808-634-4338

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 10:17 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** kauaidionne@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Douglas Miller  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [kauaidionne@hotmail.com](mailto:kauaidionne@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

The manta rays need our protection from senseless slaughter, capture for display, and experimentation. They are benevolent and intelligent creatures that deserve to be left alone and just be.

From: Douglas Miller  
Po Box 574  
Lihue HI 96766

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 3:00 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** mike@tortuga-web.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Mike Roberts  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 300 Olani Place Kihei, HI  
Phone: 808 891 0082  
E-mail: [mike@tortuga-web.com](mailto:mike@tortuga-web.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

Please help Hawaii sustain all of our natural resources in the sea and leave the mantas alone.



---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 3:19 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** lmullens@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Leslie Mullens  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [lmullens@yahoo.com](mailto:lmullens@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 3:20 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** rfair7@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Richard  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 33 Lokelau PL Haiku, Hi  
Phone:  
E-mail: [rfair7@earthlink.net](mailto:rfair7@earthlink.net)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

**Comments:**

The reefs around Maui are completely decimated. Protection of the Marine Life is almost non-existent.

Please pass this bill and consider protecting other marine life.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 4:17 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** pt@philipt.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Philip  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Maui, Hawaii  
Phone:  
E-mail: [pt@philipt.com](mailto:pt@philipt.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:  
Please fully protect manta rays in Hawaiian waters.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 4:25 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** severns@mauigateway.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Pauline Fiene  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [severns@mauigateway.com](mailto:severns@mauigateway.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 5:21 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** kmalasky@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Kathleen Malasky  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Kailua-Kona  
Phone: 8083298357  
E-mail: [kmalasky@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:kmalasky@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

Kona Hawaii is just now becoming an internationally recognized location to see manta rays and experience their beauty while on scuba or snorkeling. The number of snorkelers has increased dramatically in the last few years. If we don't protect manta rays, it would be a major loss to the struggling economy in our community. We have read about areas in the world where the manta ray population has disappeared due to fishing. We can't afford to let that happen here. Please protect the manta rays.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 5:22 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** bota83@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: B Ota  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [bota83@hotmail.com](mailto:bota83@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

Nancy W. Sweatt  
75-5822 Pelekila Pl.  
Kailua Kona, HI 96740  
[nws@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:nws@hawaii.rr.com)

March 15, 2009

Committee On Water, Land, Agriculture And Hawaiian Affairs  
Conference Room 229, State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: HB366, HD2

**I completely support HB366,HD2. Protection of our marine resources is essential for Hawaii.** The Economical, environmental, and social aspects of this Island is greatly dependent on the diversity and quantity of marine life and the Manta Rays are a vital part of that, here in Kailua Kona. The balance of our coral reefs is dependent that **all** species of fish and invertebrates must be present. If "take" of our Manta Rays is allowed, the abundant life along the Kona coast could be gone. The visitor industry is dependent on the special marine life such as the Manta Ray. They are beautiful to watch and the Manta Rays seem to enjoy all the visitors observing it's beauty. Our lifestyle, those of us who live in Hawaii, do depend on the ocean for our income, recreation, entertainment and the blessing of the beauty to sooth our souls. Manta Rays must have reasonable and intelligent protection; allowing humans and Manta Rays to encounter one another and enjoy each other, and disallowing aquarium collectors or harvesters to "take" our Manta Rays. At the moment a few selfish individuals are stealing this resource, and selling them.

The best way for humans to begin to understand and appreciate the Manta Rays is to have close, supervised contact in their ocean environment; where the Manta Rays are wild and free to come and go as they desire.

I question the added **Amendment 187A-6 Special activity permits:** Collecting Manta Rays for "scientific, educational, management, or propagation purposes". Too often aquariums collect marine life under the disguise of science or educational – when the real intent is to put the marine life captive in a glass pool so people can look at them. It is so much better for the marine life when people come and learn about them in the wild. **I oppose amendment 187A-6.**

Thank you for your consideration.  
Respectfully,

*Nancy W. Sweatt*

.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 5:55 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** teridiver@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Teri Leonard  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Kihei  
Phone: 8082682628  
E-mail: [teridiver@earthlink.net](mailto:teridiver@earthlink.net)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:



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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 6:31 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** zitoon1@cox.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Linda Anderson  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [zitoon1@cox.net](mailto:zitoon1@cox.net)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 6:36 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** annf@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Ann Fielding  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [annf@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:annf@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:  
This is a very important effort to protect Hawaii's manta rays!

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 7:45 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** mmmmahalo2000@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Mike Moran  
Organization: Individual  
Address: Kihei, HI  
Phone:  
E-mail: [mmmmahalo2000@aol.com](mailto:mmmmahalo2000@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2009 9:51 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** tako-belle@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Linda Jerome  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [tako-belle@hotmail.com](mailto:tako-belle@hotmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/16/2009

Comments:

Elizabeth Kraft  
75-5822 Pelekila Pl.  
Kailua Kona, HI 96740

March 15, 2009

Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs  
Conference Room 229, State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: HB366, HD2

**I completely support HB366,HD2. Protection of our marine resources is essential for Hawaii.** The Economical, environmental, and social aspects of this Island is greatly dependent on the diversity and quantity of marine life and the Manta Rays are a vital part of that, here in Kailua Kona. The balance of our coral reefs is dependent that **all** species of fish and invertebrates must be present. If "take" of our Manta Rays is allowed, the abundant life along the Kona coast could be gone. The visitor industry is dependent on the special marine life such as the Manta Ray. They are beautiful to watch and the Manta Rays seem to enjoy all the visitors observing it's beauty. Our lifestyle, those of us who live in Hawaii, do depend on the ocean for our income, recreation, entertainment and the blessing of the beauty to sooth our souls. Manta Rays must have reasonable and intelligent protection; allowing humans and Manta Rays to encounter one another and enjoy each other, and disallowing aquarium collectors or harvesters to "take" our Manta Rays. At the moment a few selfish individuals are stealing this resource, and selling them.

The best way for humans to begin to understand and appreciate the Manta Rays is to have close, supervised contact in their ocean environment; where the Manta Rays are wild and free to come and go as they desire.

I question the added **Amendment 187A-6 Special activity permits:** Collecting Manta Rays for "scientific, educational, management, or propagation purposes". Too often aquariums collect marine life under the disguise of science or educational - when the real intent is to put the marine life captive in a glass pool so people can look at them. It is so much better for the marine life when people come and learn about them in the wild. **I oppose amendment 187A-6.**

Thank you for your consideration.  
Respectfully,

*Elizabeth Kraft*

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 3:30 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** jacooper1@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jane Cooper  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 31541 Millstone Estates Gravois Mills, Missouri  
Phone: 573-372-0855  
E-mail: [jacooper1@earthlink.net](mailto:jacooper1@earthlink.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

While in Maui scuba diving, I had one of the greatest experiences of my life and it was about photographing one of the beautiful manta rays. They need our help and protection so they can continue to give others a chance to enjoy their beauty. They and all of the rest of the marine animals should be left in their natural state.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 5:01 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** tlclark2@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Tom Clark  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [tlclark2@bellsouth.net](mailto:tlclark2@bellsouth.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

I am expressing concern about the amendment added to HB366 by the House that would allow the collection of manta rays.

Special activity permits issued by DLNR are usually issued to researchers who must have them to do their studies. The studies by the researchers usually do not impact a species population.

Even the very well known population of manta rays in Kona appear to be small, while the size of rarely seen populations such as on Oahu are unknown. Even in small numbers the collection and removal from such a population risk its depletion.

The DLNR has neither the staff nor budget to conduct the population studies necessary in any area where manta rays might be taken.

Without this knowledge how could they in good conscious issue or deny a permit?

Special guidelines should be developed for manta rays.

Tom Clark, MD, Gulfport, MS

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 5:14 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** nonidolphin@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Leona Roberts  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [nonidolphin@yahoo.com](mailto:nonidolphin@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

Comments:

HB366

I spend a lot of time in the ocean, (10 to 20 hours per week, about 42 weeks a year). During the last half a century, I've seen the waters around our Islands go from plentiful to barren in comparison to what it was like back then.

I optimistically estimate the total current population of 90% of Hawaiian species of fish, including pelagic and reef species around the Big Island, versus 1959 to be less than 1/250,000th of what it once was. If you ever gazed into the waters of the old Kailua-Kona pier or Kawaihae Harbor back in those days, you'll know I'm not exaggerating. I have very fond childhood memories of the boat harbors and beaches around Big Island being filled with seemingly-endless schools of countless, tiny, silver fish and below them, schools and schools of colorful reef fish.

I've seen all of the various species diminish, some considerably more than others.

Many species seemed to have disappeared completely from our shorelines.

Mantas and other rays are no longer plentiful. Manta Rays can live a long time, but have very few offspring.

It appears that the aquarium industry and collectors may be one of the main reasons why pups are rarely seen through adulthood.

Protection for Manta Rays in Hawaii is desperately needed before it's too late. Please don't delay.

Please begin protecting mantas as soon as possible by approving bill HB366.

Thank you.

Leona N Roberts



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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 6:00 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** howard\_morrison@msn.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Howard Morrison  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 76-6225 Alii Drive Kailua-Kona HI  
Phone: 808-854-1350  
E-mail: [howard\\_morrison@msn.com](mailto:howard_morrison@msn.com)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

The Island of Hawaii has one of the top 10 dive sites in the WORLD with its manta ray diving. By protecting the manta rays will allow 100s of thousnads of divers, snorklers and tourists to view the mantas in their natural environment. Some tourists come to Kona just because they know they will see manta rays. This brings revenue to the State.

If you do not pass this bill, the manta rays could be wiped out which in turn could effect part of the tourist industry which in these difficlt times needs all the help it can get.

I sincerely request that you pass this Bill HB366

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 6:23 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** barracuda13@sbcglobal.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Deborah Telesmanic  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [barracuda13@sbcglobal.net](mailto:barracuda13@sbcglobal.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

Not only are Hawaii's manta rays one of Hawaii's most amazing creatures, they are known by ocean lovers throughout the world and the world is watching how Hawaii chooses to caretake them.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 7:57 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** lynn.all@maui.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Lynn Allen  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [lynn.all@maui.net](mailto:lynn.all@maui.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

Comments:

3

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 7:57 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** marenrachel@sbcglobal.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: maren springer  
Organization: Extended Horizons SCUBA  
Address: Makawao, Hawaii  
Phone:  
E-mail: [marenrachel@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marenrachel@sbcglobal.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

Protecting the manta rays is not a choice. It simply must be done. We cannot let these animals be taken out of our waters.

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 8:05 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** nadineo@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Nadine Ornborg  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 40 Lamy Downs Lamy, NM  
Phone: 505-466-6164  
E-mail: [nadineo@earthlink.net](mailto:nadineo@earthlink.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 8:06 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** paul.c.anka@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Paul Anka  
Organization: Kapalua Dive Co.  
Address: Makawao, Hawaii  
Phone:  
E-mail: [paul.c.anka@gmail.com](mailto:paul.c.anka@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 8:09 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** hulaboy244@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Charles Yaeger  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [hulaboy244@aol.com](mailto:hulaboy244@aol.com)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

I strongly support legislation that would protect manta rays in Hawaiian waters. Protecting our ocean resources is important for this and future generations. Please pass this Bill.

Thanks

**Senate Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee**

I am writing in support of HB 366 and amendment 187A-6 to legally protect manta rays in Hawaiian waters. Hawaii's healthy population of manta rays is one of the reasons that make the coastal waters unique and a destination for divers and ocean enthusiasts. Data on the life history and movement rate of this local population indicate that they would be highly susceptible to over fishing. This bill and amendment is a sound way to offer protection to this species and allows for education and scientific research regulated by local management authorities.

As a researcher of marine fishes and PhD candidate at the University of Hawaii, Manoa I fully support this House and Senate Bill. I hope that your committee will support HB 366.

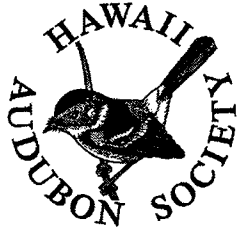
Sincerely,

Kelly S. Boyle  
Department of Zoology  
University of Hawaii  
2538 McCarthy Mall, Edmondson 152  
Honolulu, HI 96822



My name is Cheryl Squair and I am a graduate student studying marine biology at the University of Hawaii – Manoa. I strongly support passage of Bill HB366. Manta rays in Hawaii have very small populations and low birth rates. This means that populations grow very slowly, if at all. Consequently, any decrease in the number of breeding adults could have devastating consequences on the ability of a population to maintain itself and could result in a rapid crash and ultimate extinction. These factors make manta rays extremely vulnerable to fishing. Please protect the manta rays, so that Hawaii's future generations will have the same opportunities that we do to observe these magnificent creatures in the wild.

Sincerely,  
Cheryl Squair



*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.hawaii-audubon.com

**TO: Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs  
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Jill Tokuda, Vice Chair**

**HEARING: Wednesday, March 18, 2009; 3:00 P.M., Conference Rm. 229**

**Re: HB366, HD2, Relating to Manta Rays**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

Chair Hee, and Vice Chair Tokuda, and members of the Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity for the Hawaii Audubon Society to offer this testimony in support of HB366, HD2, 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, restoration of ecosystems, and the conservation of natural resources through education, science and advocacy in Hawai'i and the Pacific.

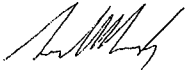
Manta rays are an integral part of Hawaii's marine ecosystem and are essential in promoting and sustaining Hawaii's growing marine tourism industry, one of our state's primary sources of revenue. Manta ray night dive operations off Kona, Hawaii, produce over 2.5 million dollars in revenue annually for 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, there are no laws preventing the establishment of one. Such a fishery could have the potential to cause our local manta ray population to become nonexistent 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Massengale". The signature is stylized and cursive.

George Massengale, JD  
Legislative Analyst



**RESEARCH FOUNDATION**  
Research • Education • Conservation

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

info@mantapacific.org  
www.mantapacific.org  
808.325.1630

To: Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs Committee  
Senator Clayton Hee, Chair and,  
Senator Jill Tokuda, 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.**

The House Judiciary Committee added an **amendment** to the Bill to allow special permits for manta ray capture to be issued by the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Since there is no federal protection for manta rays (as there is for other charismatic species), there are no existing guidelines for DLNR to use in the process of granting these permits, and there is the possibility that it could become more of a political process than a scientific process. While I support the permitting process, I believe that the DLNR should be given a mandate to provide the terms required, specifically for manta birostris, before being given the authority to grant permits.

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



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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.

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

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 9:30 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** bryce@livingoceanproductions.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Bryce Groark  
Organization: Living Ocean Productions  
Address: PO BOX 390555 HI  
Phone: 808 345-4538  
E-mail: [bryce@livingoceanproductions.com](mailto:bryce@livingoceanproductions.com) Submitted on: 3/17/2009

Comments:

I am writing in the hopes of getting HD366 to pass - or at the very least be heard by the Judiciary Committee. It's seems so simple, so obvious, yet so important. Since Hawaii is one of the best spots to see manta rays in the world, simply means they need to be protected. With their slow birth rate and slow time to sexual maturity, allowing countries, organizations and aquariums to take/kill mantas is ridiculous. I feel crushing this bill could be extremely detrimental to the small population that exists in our waters. From a financial standpoint, their value is far greater alive in the wild in Hawaii versus in an aquarium or being sold in the Asian markets.

We need to protect such an important asset to the state and set an example. The burden of proof should lie on those wanting to defeat this bill - to prove scientifically first that keeping the waters open to fishing mantas would not be detrimental to their species population.

PLEASE PASS HB366!  
Aloha,  
Bryce Groark  
Living Ocean Productions  
Kona, Hawaii

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 9:31 AM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** jen@livingoceanproductions.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Jen Groark  
Organization: Individual  
Address: PO BOX 390555 HI  
Phone: 808 345-4537  
E-mail: [jen@livingoceanproductions.com](mailto:jen@livingoceanproductions.com)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

I am writing in the hopes of getting HD366 to pass - or at the very least be heard by the Judiciary Committee. It's seems so simple, so obvious, yet so important. Since Hawaii is one of the best spots to see manta rays in the world, simply means they need to be protected. With their slow birth rate and slow time to sexual maturity, allowing countries, organizations and aquariums to take/kill mantas is ridiculous. I feel crushing this bill could be extremely detrimental to the small population that exists in our waters. From a financial standpoint, their value is far greater alive in the wild in Hawaii versus in an aquarium or being sold in the Asian markets.

We need to protect such an important asset to the state and set an example. The burden of proof should lie on those wanting to defeat this bill - to prove scientifically first that keeping the waters open to fishing mantas would not be detrimental to their species population.

PLEASE PASS HB366!  
Aloha,  
Jen Groark  
Living Ocean Productions  
Kona, Hawaii

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.

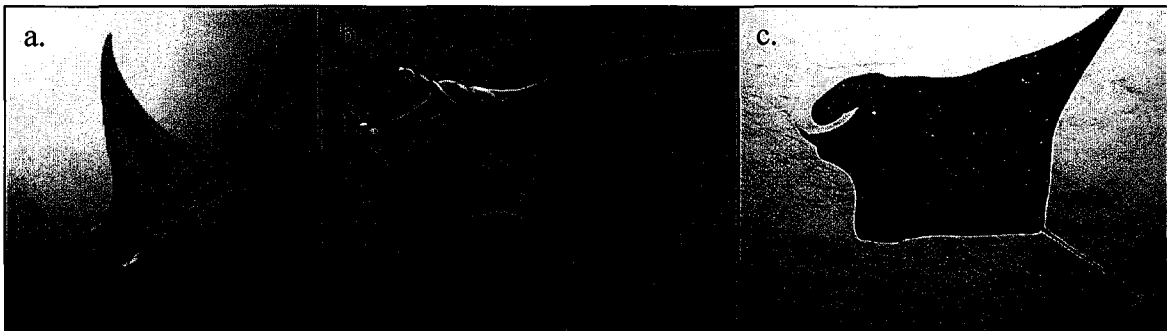


Figure 1 – Species of manta rays in Hawaii include the common coastal *Manta birostris* (a), the pelagic *Manta sp.* (b), the Black manta hybrid (c), and *Mobula sp.* (not shown).

### Discovery curve - Kona Coast

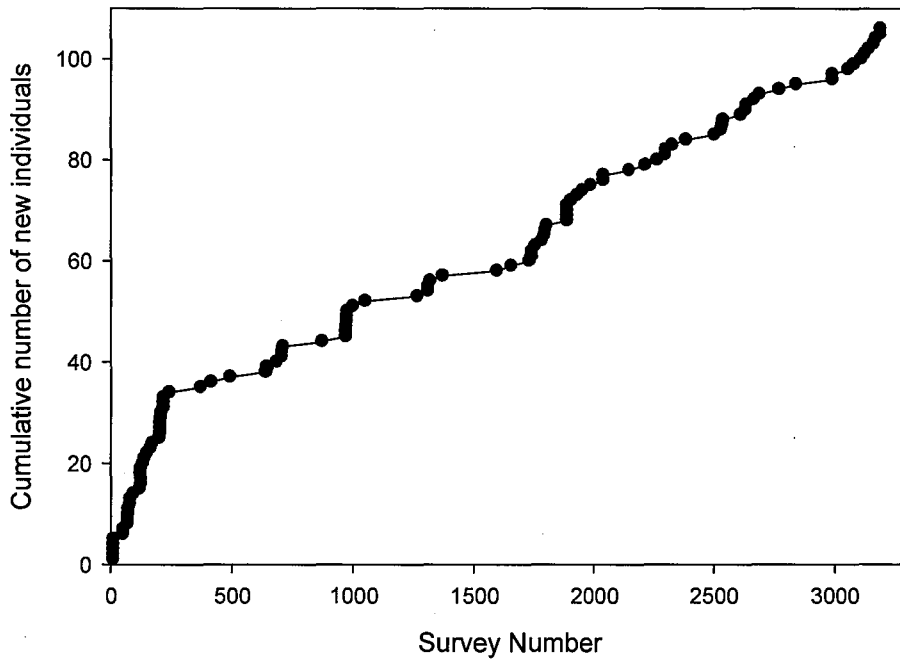


Figure 2 – Cumulative number of manta rays identified along the Kona Coast of Hawaii from 1992 through 2007.

### Number of Unique Individuals per Year

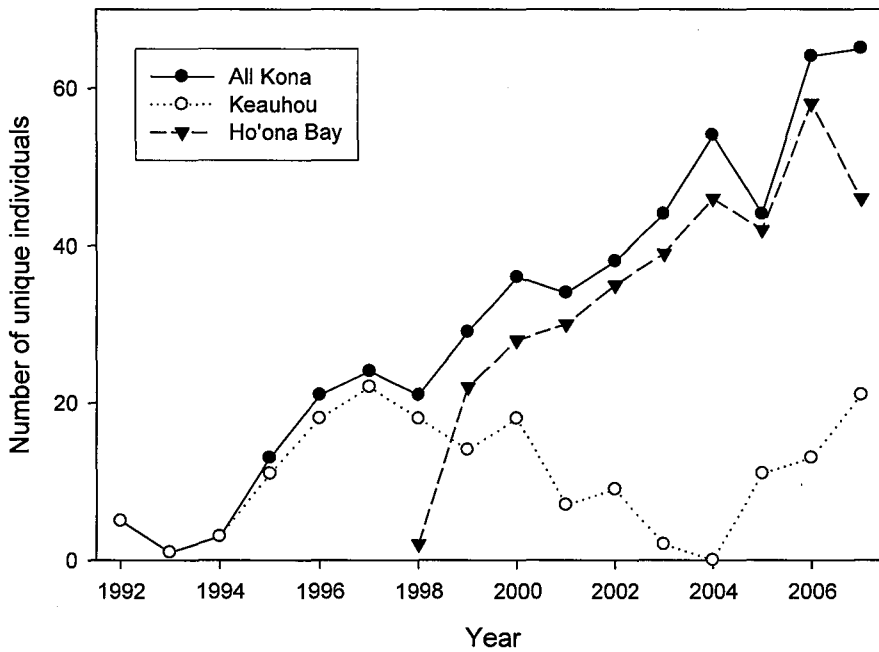


Figure 3 – Number of unique individuals encountered each year along the entire Kona Coast, Keauhou and Ho'ona Bay.

### Discovery Curve - Kona pups

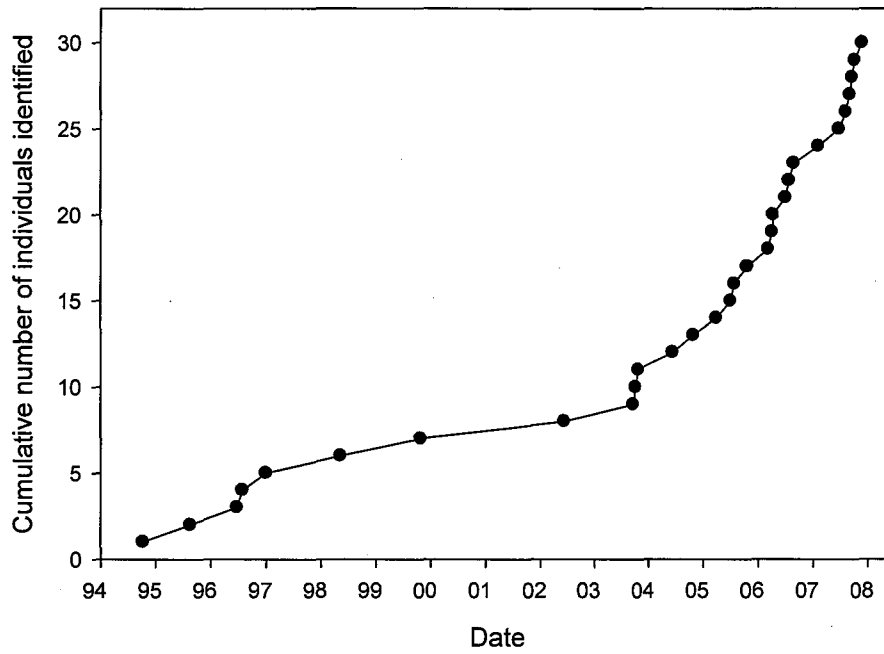


Figure 4 – Cumulative number of new pups entering the Kona population per year.



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.

March 17, 2009

Committee On Water, Land, Agriculture And Hawaiian Affairs  
Conference Room 229, State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii

RE: HB366, HD2

**I support HB366,HD2. Protection of our marine resources is vital for Hawaii.**

The economic, environmental, and social condition of Hawaii Island are greatly dependent on the diversity and quantity of marine life and the manta rays are a vital part of that. Balanced life on coral reefs is dependent that **all** species of fish and invertebrates must be present. If "take" of our manta rays is allowed, the abundant life along the Kona coast could be gone. The visitor industry is dependent on the special marine life such as the manta ray. They are beautiful to watch and this is valued by our guests. Our lifestyle, those of us who live in Hawaii, do depend on the ocean for our income, recreation, entertainment and the blessing of the beauty to soothe our souls. Manta rays must have reasonable and intelligent protection; allow humans and manta rays to encounter one another, and disallowing aquarium collectors or harvesters to "take" our manta rays. At the moment a few selfish individuals are stealing this resource, and selling them.

The best way for humans to begin to understand and appreciate the manta rays is to have close, supervised contact in their ocean environment where the manta rays are wild and free to come and go as they desire.

I question the added **Amendment 187A-6 Special activity permits:** Collecting manta rays for "scientific, educational, management, or propagation purposes". Too often aquariums collect marine life under the disguise of science or education – when the real intent is to put the marine life captive in a glass pool so people can look at them. It is so much better for the marine life when people come and learn about them in the wild. **I oppose amendment 187A-6.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

*Jean*

Jean Bevanmarquez  
Resident of Honaunau  
PO Box 691  
Kealakekua HI 96750  
808-987-6249

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 2:37 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** keciamau@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Kecia Joy  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 24 Hooiki Place Kihei HI  
Phone:  
E-mail: [keciamau@yahoo.com](mailto:keciamau@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

Research is incredibly important to understand how to protect these species! Thank you!

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 1:31 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** helenpm1@verizon.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Helen  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 9219 Knights Branch St. Tampa, Florida  
Phone: 813-985-4012  
E-mail: [helenpm1@verizon.net](mailto:helenpm1@verizon.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

As a visitor to Hawaii every year for the last 20 years, and an avid scuba diver, I enjoyed the numerous sightings of Manta rays all around the islands.

There are not many places in the world where I can scuba, close to home, in my own country, and encounter as many mantas, as in the waters of Hawaii.

I hope the islands do everything they can to protect these majestic creatures.



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.

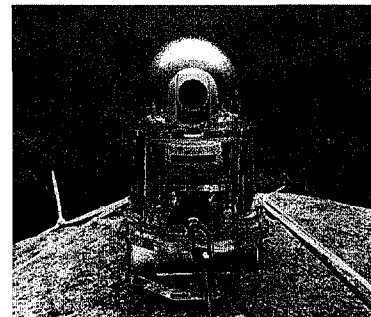
The Manta Network is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to research, education, conservation and protection of manta and mobula rays worldwide. TMN includes most of the world's manta biologists, research affiliates in more than 40 countries and volunteers and supporters around the world. Manta 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,

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 2:29 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** susankellam@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Susan Kellam  
Organization: Individual  
Address: 87-3208 Carissa Rd Captain Cook, HI 96704  
Phone: 8089895180  
E-mail: [susankellam@yahoo.com](mailto:susankellam@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

**Comments:**

I strongly support HB366 which will finally protect our manta rays. Regardless of what opponents to this bill might suggest, it is clear that the small population of manta rays will be decimated if something is not done to protect them. It is a fact that fishers from outside the USA have shown interest in coming to Kona to kill the manta rays and sell their parts. Please do not allow this to happen! Our mantas are beautiful, defenseless, and a treasure to our Kona coast. Please support and pass HB366. Mahalo nui loa.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 2:50 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** snv@hawaiiintel.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Sandra Bailey and ~~Victor Holmes~~  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [snv@hawaiiintel.net](mailto:snv@hawaiiintel.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

Comments:

In my experience in the ocean, I have found the Manta Rays to be an intelligent, beautiful animal that we should be protecting and not killing for bait or for consumption. I also don't believe they should be taken for aquariums, as they do not live long (if at all) in captivity.

Thanks for listening,  
Sandra Bailey  
Victor Holmes  
Makawao, Hawaii

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 2:50 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** snv@hawaiiantel.net  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: ~~Sandra Bailey~~ and Victor Holmes  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [snv@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:snv@hawaiiantel.net)  
Submitted on: 3/17/2009

Comments:

In my experience in the ocean, I have found the Manta Rays to be an intelligent, beautiful animal that we should be protecting and not killing for bait or for consumption. I also don't believe they should be taken for aquariums, as they do not live long (if at all) in captivity.

Thanks for listening,  
Sandra Bailey  
Victor Holmes  
Makawao, Hawaii

---

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2009 2:57 PM  
**To:** WTLTestimony  
**Cc:** david.j.maddox@juno.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB366 on 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM

Testimony for WTL 3/18/2009 3:00:00 PM HB366

Conference room: 229  
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: 3/17/2009

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to support the HB366 for manta ray protection in Hawaii.

The observation of these animals living in the wild generates millions of dollars in income through tourism. In spite of this great attention, published data can hardly be found on these animals in scientific journals.

I spent more years studying the neurobiology of several shark and ray species, -including Mobulids-, as well as studying the behavior of *Manta birostris* and *Mobula mobular*.

As I state in my recently published paper, Mobulids have some characteristic features in the astroglial system of their brain which resembles to that found in mammals (Ari and Kálmán, 2008). They also possess very high brain weight/ body weight ratio, large telencephalon and complex, highly convoluted cerebellum.

My recent behavioral experiments on a *Manta birostris* also showed some interesting, but preliminary findings on their developed sensory and learning abilities (Ari and Correia, 2008).

With these studies many interesting questions arised concerning the brain structure and the cognitive abilities of devil rays, which should be answered in the near future.

Future research should be directed to find correlation between the enlarged brain parts of Mobulids and their function by conducting comparative neuroanatomical studies as well as behavioral studies on wild specimens.

To learn more about the cognitive and sensory abilities of these creatures it is essential to ensure the maintenance of their natural behavior by keeping their populations intact.

Sincerely yours,  
Dr. Csilla Ari

March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009

To members of the Senate committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs,

I am writing to ask for your support of HB366 HD2, which establishes protection for manta rays in Hawaiian waters, while also providing provisions for granting take permits for scientific study. The only amendment I suggest of the present draft is to change SECTION 5 from "This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020" to "This Act shall take effect upon passage." If this law does not take effect until 2020, much damage can be done to the population of Hawaiian manta rays before that time.

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.

I have found little information on traditional Hawaiian practices of hunting manta rays. I suspect that if ancient Hawaiian's did hunt mantas, they would have decreased the manta population quickly enough that the practice proved unsustainable. Hawaiians are known for their conservation of aquatic resources and therefore probably would not have permitted the unchecked taking of manta rays. Although no one is currently fishing manta rays in Hawaii there is nothing to stop them from doing so. Sport fisherman like big fish and challenging battles, manta rays could provide both. Please prohibit this practice before it becomes a reality, do irreparable damage to the manta ray populations here.

A more immediate danger is that there has been interest in collecting Hawaiian 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 unfettered removal of manta rays from Hawaiian waters. HB 366 HD2 is a good bill, with its well-defined fines and provisions for granting permits for scientific, education, management, or propagation purposes. This will make sure that anyone wishing to take a Hawaiian manta ray must first demonstrate their ability to do so responsibly, in order to receive a permit.

The rays here are enjoyed by tens of thousands of SCUBA 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 HD2 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



**TESTIMONY**  
**HB366 HD2**  
**(END)**