



KO'OLAUPOKO HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB

April 13, 2009

TO: Rep. Ken Ito, Chair
And Members
House Committee on Water, Land & Ocean Resources

FROM: Mahealani Cypher, President
Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club

SUBJECT: HCR251/HR220 – Urging the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources, to Consult and Confer with Licensed Specialized Fishing Practitioners Prior to Implementing Revised or New Regulations Affecting These Styles of Near-Shore Commercial Fishing and To Seek Advise from and Work Collaboratively with them on any and all Future Regulations Relating to Commercial Fishing

Aloha mai kakou.

The Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club wishes to extend our mahalo to the introducer of these resolutions, as we feel it was draft in the best spirit of ensuring appropriate consultation with our cultural practitioners who both utilize and safeguard natural resources in near-shore waters around our islands.

However, we wish to express the following reservation regarding House Resolution 220 and House Concurrent Resolution 251: there is no entity currently with the kuleana – responsibility – of issuing licenses to cultural practitioners, whether for fishing or other cultural practices. Even if one were to be established today, it would take some time for such a licensing process to be put into place.

We would have preferred similar resolutions to be introduced that would call for consultation with cultural practitioners who are descendants of the inhabitants of the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778.

We therefore urge your committee to file these resolutions and to resubmit similar resolutions which address the concern we have raised above.

Mahalo for this opportunity to share our mana'o.

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HCR251, Committee on Water, Land, & Ocean Resources
Wednesday, April 15, 2009
Rm 325, 9:00AM
Tony Costa, Hawaii Nearshore Fishermen

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2009

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, & OCEAN RESOURCES

Rep. Ken Ito, Chair

Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair

Rep. Rida Cabanilla	Rep. Sylvia Luke
Rep. Jerry L. Chang	Rep. Hermina M. Morita
Rep. Pono Chong	Rep. Roland D. Sagum, III
Rep. Denny Coffman	Rep. Corinne W.L. Ching
Rep. Robert N. Herkes	Rep. Cynthia Thielen
Rep. Chris Lee	

From: Tony Costa, Hawaii Nearshore Fishermen
808-778-3133 Tel.

DATE: Wednesday, April 15, 2009
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

The Fishermen SUPPORT HCR251

The Hawaii Nearshore Fishermen here today represent the island of Oahu: Waianae, Haleiwa, Kahuku, Hauula, Kaneohe, East Oahu, and Honolulu.

We are Hawaii's Nearshore Fishermen. We represent an elite group of expert fishermen who practice a rare and unique form of fishing that islanders and markets have depended on for the last 50 years.

The backbone of these fishermen's fishing style has its roots in the Hawaiian method of surround and bag fishing. Surround bag net fishermen also practice aqua lung spear and trap fishing.

The fishermen represented here combine a total of over 500 years of expert knowledge about fishing in Hawaiian waters and conditions. Nowhere else on earth will you find the level of detail and knowledge

HCR251, Committee on Water, Land, & Ocean Resources
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of ocean currents, weather patterns, tides, conditions, and all Hawaiian marine resource conditions and relating fish behavior than through the eyes of the individuals you see here before you today.

The fishermen here have been quietly fishing sustainably in a manner taught to them by their elders – this ever evolving cultural practice, has been passed down through a sometimes painstaking “apprenticeship” that conservatively takes half their life to even start to master.

The importance of providing nearshore caught species fresh from the ocean to those who cannot catch fish themselves also traces its roots back to the Hawaiian way of “mahele” where the fishermen would share and divide the catch for dissemination to the community.

These Hawaii nearshore Fishermen interact and find balance with the earth’s cycles of abundance, seasons and weather every day. They live the ocean.

These fishermen have a connection to their environment that has afforded them a “consciousness” about fish stocks and the marine environment that even the highest degreed scientist could only surmise about.

Hawaii’s Fishermen are here today to respectfully and honorably let you know that they exist and that their profession is worth not only honoring but celebrating and due acknowledgement is just. Further to that, and most importantly we are here to support and embrace the spirit of cooperation that HCR251 speaks to.

These fishermen are here today to respectfully advise you that there are many conditions about fish stocks that go untold and are lost in the fast and fanciful and popular quest to end the harvesting of fish species from the ocean in the name of saving the environment.

We want you to know we have harvested in a sustainable manner by tradition.

We want you to know we see many good things about fish stocks as well as negative impacts to fish stocks.

We want you to know we know without doubt when it is necessary to regulate take – we should we do it daily. But we also want you to know we know when exaggerations about our nearshore are used to establish permanent fishing restrictions.

As stated earlier, we represent all districts of Oahu.

We provide Oahu markets, family, and community with nearshore caught species and we feel it is only reasonable that we are afforded fair and equitable recognition, treatment, and communication.

The Commercial Marine License holders provide the States only clear eye into the status of fish stocks. We are the only ones providing landings data being used by the departments Department of Aquatic

HCR251, Committee on Water, Land, & Ocean Resources

Wednesday, April 15, 2009

Rm 325, 9:00AM

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Resources. It would be only natural that the fishermen should be nurtured in this capacity and HCR251 urges just that.

The fishermen are very grateful for the support they do receive and would like to thank the legislature for supporting this resolution.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony Costa
Hawaii Nearshore Fishermen

Testimony for HCR251 on 4/15/2009 9:00:00 AM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2009 2:08 PM

To: WLOtestimony

Cc: [REDACTED]

Testimony for WLO 4/15/2009 9:00:00 AM HCR251

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: William Chang

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone:

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Submitted on: 4/14/2009

Comments:

I am a fisherman and feel HCR251 would help in the communication between DAR and fishermen to better manage fisheries.

Sincerely,

Bill Chang

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Testimony for HCR251 on 4/15/2009 9:00:00 AM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2009 2:06 PM

To: WLOtestimony

Cc: [REDACTED]

Testimony for WLO 4/15/2009 9:00:00 AM HCR251

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Neil Kanemoto

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone:

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Submitted on: 4/14/2009

Comments:

By working closely with both the Recreational AND Commercial Fishing sectors over the past 15 years, I have personally witnessed grave injustices imposed on our local fishermen of all types on behalf of our DLNR/Division of Aquatics reluctance to properly engage and communicate with the various stakeholders that may be affected by any given rule change.

I know for a fact that right now there are rule changes for commercial fishing methods currently being discussed within the Department and yet those who will be affected most will NOT repeat, will NOT be engaged until the regulations are already set in stone. The dept has a history of imposing regulations and then asking those affected matter-of-factly "oh by the way - what do you think of these new rules?".

In past years various (other) agencies have properly and effectively engaged with commercial fishermen and have yielded positive results i.e. the bottomfish T.A.C. (Total Allowable Catch - "quota" system). The communications and dialogue with the fishermen was so effective, when the media approached me to ask my assistance to locate fishermen to interview who opposed the T.A.C., my answer was "I can't - everyone I know supports it".

This is an example of how regulations should be reviewed by working with the commercial fishermen - not against them. It is only with the help of this committee that we can make progress towards ensuring proper cooperation between the DLNR/DAR and the resource users.

Please support HCR251 and help correct past and future injustices.

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