

In Support HB 377

Feb.15, 2011

Aloha Rep. Hanohano and Hawaiian Affairs Committee Members,

This bill is a win-win for communities as well as the State. It will generate lease revenue on State fishponds which goes uncollected due to the overgrown and often deteriorating conditions at many State fishponds. Allowing communities and nonprofits access to care for these historic sites will save the State money in maintenance costs.

HB 377 gives preference to those who use Hawaiian fishponds for their intended purpose and streamlines the application approval process. Since ancient times, fishponds have been designed to increase the abundance of fish. They also strengthen communities and provide outstanding educational opportunities. An additional benefit to Hawai'i is that fishponds safeguard water resources like springs which often feed into fishponds.

Mahalo nui loa,

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LATE TESTIMONY

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE & THE ARTS
February 16, 2011, 8:30 A.M.

(Testimony is 2 pages long)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 377 WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Aloha Chair Hanohano, Chair Wooley, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Chapter of the Sierra Club, with 8,000 dues-paying members and supporters, *supports* HB 377. This measure would wisely give state lease preference to Hawaiian fishponds.

Techniques for establishing and maintaining aquaculture have been increasingly criticized for their environmental impacts, including erosion, coastal degradation, and increased occurrence of harmful algal blooms (Maso & Garces 2006, Jayappa et al. 2006, Pergent-Martini et al. 2006). These environmental conditions have caused numerous ecological (i.e. fish die-offs, marine mammal strandings) as well as human health concerns, namely the consumption of infected fish and crustaceans and the ingestion of contaminated water (Sapkota et al. 2007, Vasas et al. 2007, Lopez-Rodas et al. 2006, Maso & Garces 2006).

Ironically, Hawai'i is cited as the home of an environmentally sensitive method to raise food for human consumption. Internationally, Hawaiian fishponds are being actively studied as a successful model for adoption (Chopin 2006, Troell et al. 2003). These systems were built to be self-sufficient, and used to grow a variety of fish, invertebrates, and algae. Fishponds, besides being steeped in cultural tradition and offering the potential of an environmentally sensitive source of food, can be a home to endangered marsh birds and other birds, fish and aquatic animals.

In short, we believe the state could encourage the preservation and restoration of new Hawaiian fishponds by giving preference to these projects when leasing state land.

Proposed Amendment:

The phrase “developers of Hawaiian fishponds” on page 1, line 6, is somewhat ambiguous. It might be presumed this measure is intended to encourage the restoration of numerous historic fishponds. To this end, better language might be “preference is given to the reconstruction, restoration, repair, or use of Hawaiian fishponds pursuant to chapter 183B,”

We respectfully request this committee advance this measure.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony.