

HCR 186/HR 133

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for your time on this matter. I, Tori Cullins of the Wild Dolphin Foundation and Wild Side Specialty Tours (Waianae) are in STRONG SUPPORT of this bill.

It seems regulations passed down by the government are rarely for the greater good, tending to be too point specific and by nature, usually miss the 'big picture'.

Aware of this, over 15 years ago the Waianae community began a grassroots effort to address resource and user issues along the coastline, mainly caused by an unprecedented growth of the number of tour boats focused on dolphin tours. These boats were both out of the Waianae Small Boat Harbor and the Ko Olina Marina.

With fishermen, surfers, beach users, tour operators, consultants, government officials and other community members at the table, the shared goal was for all users to be comfortable with tour boat procedures, and conservation of coastline resources. There was compromise from all sides, though not without multiple and sometimes heated meetings.

The outcome was the agreement that a baseline study was needed (and funded) to identify key resource areas and uses. The Waianae Baseline Study came about through these grassroots and stakeholder efforts to keep the legacy and resources of the coastline intact.

Until the studies were completed and guidelines completed, the Gentlemen's Agreement was resurrected and added onto, with consent by all to follow. As new tours, boats and captains were added, and for various other reasons (including the passage of time), it is now all but forgotten.

Speaking of regulations passed down by the government – and even more reason to complete and follow through with a baseline evaluation of the whole picture... NOAA instituted the voluntary "Dolphin Smart" program to address the now overgrown dolphin tour industry in Hawaii, and seems on the brink of passing it on as regulatory vs. voluntary. Dolphin Smart has yet to 'work' anywhere it has been instituted, as it does not take the whole picture into account, but rather relies on guidelines that work for whales (distance approach), as well as is heavily lobbied by the captive dolphin industry. However, the Dolphin Smart guidelines provably work neither for the Waianae situation, nor for the dolphin conservation. More on the

"Dolphin Smart" history and our views [here](#). As dolphins can be as culturally diverse as we humans are, what works in one part of the country may not work in another, as well as one island to the next. "Dolphin Smart" generically does not address Waianae-specific conflicts.

Please allow the Waianae community to obtain and follow through with deliberate actions to protect what they hold near and dear.

Thank you,

Tori Cullins
Wild Dolphin Foundation
Wild Side Specialty Tours