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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the House Committees on
OCEAN, MARINE RESOURCES, & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
&
WATER & LAND

Tuesday, March 21, 2017
9:35 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

In consideration of
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 73/HOUSE RESOLUTION 38
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO
CONDUCT STATEWIDE PUBLIC OUTREACH REGARDING THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A NONCOMMERCIAL MARINE FISHING REGISTRY,
PERMIT, OR LICENSE SYSTEM IN HAWAII

House Concurrent Resolution 73/House Resolution 38 urge the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to conduct statewide public outreach regarding the establishment of a noncommercial marine fishing registry, permit, or license system in Hawaii. **The Department supports the intent of these resolutions to provide for public outreach to gather feedback on how a noncommercial marine fishing registry, permit, or license system would benefit or adversely impact the State of Hawai‘i and its people to the extent that resources allow to conduct such outreach.**

Hawaii’s fisheries are indispensable to the State’s environment, economy, food security, and culture. Hawaii’s fisheries require well-informed management with an adequate capacity to ensure that the resources exist for future generations. The Hawai‘i State Legislature has periodically examined what a non-commercial marine fishing license may be able to offer to address these needs. Hawai‘i remains, however, the only coastal U.S. state without a mandatory non-commercial marine fishing registry, permit, or license (RPL) system, because previous attempts to enact an RPL system have been unsuccessful.

To better understand the issues relevant to an RPL system, a study group was formed to undertake a fresh examination of the RPL system issues and to gather and analyze information to better understand the implications of any prospective RPL system. Their report can be found on the Department’s Division of Aquatic Resources’ website at <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/dar/> and is

titled: Feasibility of a Non-Commercial Marine Fishing Registry, Permit, or License System in Hawaii—Study Group Final Report December 2016. The Study Group focused on evaluating any potential RPL system based on its ability to meet three primary objectives: (1) provide additional and more robust data to support fishery management; (2) foster two-way dialogue between fishers and managers by identifying the universe of non-commercial fishers in Hawai‘i and developing approved communication pathways; and (3) create a source of independent, continuous funding to support effective fisheries management. The Study Group examined several RPL system options, including those enacted by other states that might meet the above-stated objectives and sought to analyze the respective advantages and disadvantages of each. The group also reviewed the results of legal and financial analyses of some or all of these RPL system options, interviewed fisheries managers in other coastal states, and focused outreach efforts on certain unique stakeholders and rights-holders.

The Study Group did not identify a preferred alternative; however, the Study Group concluded that there are no legal or constitutional barriers in Hawai‘i that would prohibit the implementation of a new RPL system, and that it is possible, subject to further consultation regarding implementation, to design a system that does not violate Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights protected under Hawai‘i law. The Study Group further concluded that some form of fee-based license or permit system would address all three primary objectives.

These resolutions capture the issues that should be publically discussed before legislation is considered to give the Department authority to act on this matter. Our only hesitation in fully supporting these resolutions is that resources for community outreach by the Department are extremely limited. Nevertheless, we will do our best to accomplish what is asked for in this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these measures.

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Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HCR73 on Mar 21, 2017 09:35AM*

HCR73

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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