

Testimony in support of SB1240, Senate Committee on Water and Land, February 14, 2017

Dear Chair Rhoads and Committee Members:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i strongly supports SB124 in order to protect coral reefs and reef wildlife. As the endangered species capitol of the world, we must do better for ourselves and future generations.

Now is the time to take action, especially, given what we know about climate change, ocean acidification, pollution and the decline in many of our rare plant and animal species. In addition, the commercial extraction of our reef wildlife for aquarium collectors should end now, given the shockingly high mortality rates and myriad values reef wildlife resources provide. There are alternatives — we don't need to take wildlife out of the wild; we can grow the fish ourselves and create new industries. Yet there is little incentive to invest if it is legal to extract reef wildlife for free.

As background, the State of Hawai'i allows massive live export of reef wildlife—benthic and pelagic species, vertebrate and invertebrate, often rare, exotic and vanishing species. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) has authority but does not have the resources or inclination to manage, regulate or enforce these commercial extraction activities. Meanwhile, biodiversity in Hawaii is declining despite more scientists coming forward with data to show that the exportation of reef species from Hawai'i contribute significantly to habitat loss and species decline. Even the Environmental Council (made up of a broad spectrum of industries and interests) urged DLNR and the Governor to issue a moratorium for commercial aquarium collection in October 2015.

Negative impacts begin with the fact that unique species are targeted and extracted from the wild. Other reef wildlife species and habitat depend on those targeted species. The capture process also damages reefs with chains, nets, anchors and foot traffic; many of these behaviors may be illegal but the rules are unenforced. With cumulative effects and increasing devastation, entire near-shore ecosystems now look like graveyards.

This destruction caused by Hawai'i reef wildlife extraction occurs underwater and is, therefore, largely unnoticed. If collectors took flora and fauna from any local forests for commercial sale, like Hawaiian honeycreepers, it would be unimaginable, likely illegal. And, in fact, reef habitat (rocks and coral) removal is illegal in Hawai'i. Yet the very wildlife that helps the corals to thrive can be extracted, shipped, sold and most likely, "killed by accident" in undocumented numbers (while a permit is required to collect fish, there is no limit on the number of permits issued).

Not so long ago, before climate change, ocean acidification and catastrophic coral bleaching, the aquarium trade in Hawai'i seemed harmless. Today, all nearshore reefs in the main Hawaiian Islands are compromised; risks and threats are at an all time high. We must end the practice of selling our reef wildlife at enormous cost to all of us, the public trust and future generations. Please support and strengthen SB1240.

Mahalo for providing the opportunity to testify.

Jessica Wooley

Member, Democratic Party of Hawai'i Environmental Caucus

**The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii hopes that
you will join us in securing an environmentally sustainable future for
Hawai'i and its Ohana.**

627 South Street Honolulu, HI 96813

website: hawaiigreencaucus.org email: ecodemhi@gmail.com

Protect Hawaii's Coral Reefs!

LATE

To Whom it May Concern:

Subject: Support SB1240 being heard on
2/15/2017 at 3pm

My name is Caitlin Brady and I am from Maui. I am writing to urge your strong support of SB1240 which aims to place a moratorium on the issuance of commercial aquarium fish permits to allow the department of land and natural resources to define "sustainable" and establish sustainable collection practices and limits, for legislative adoption, to ensure the sustainability of Hawaii's native near shore aquatic life.

I am the owner of a small dive company on Maui and I am a reverent visitor to Maui's shore reefs almost daily. In the years I have spent scuba diving in coastal waters I have seen the degradation of Maui's coral reefs first hand. Much of this is attributed to the lack of regulation regarding coastal fishing. Shallow

reef fishes are intrinsic to the health of the delicate ecosystem. Yellow tang (the most widely exploited fish in the aquarium trade) is necessary to control algae growth and maintain healthy photosynthesis for the corals.

Future generations of Hawai‘i have the right to experience the beautiful diversity of sea life and healthy coral reefs. Currently, there is no restriction to the amount of fish one is able to take from coastal waters or when species can and cannot be fished. This bill will not only be a step forward in protecting our fragile and finite reef system, but will give us greater insight into the impact that unregulated fishing has on Hawai'i's coastal waters.

I propose an amendment to the bill to include vulnerable shark species such as white tip and black tip reef sharks that reside in shallow reef beds.

Hawaii's biodiversity generates millions of dollars yearly for its tourism industry. There is more benefit to promote a healthy ecosystem

than exploiting it for a niche trade. I urge you to support SB1240. Thank you for considering my testimony in strong support of this measure.

Kind Regards,
Caitlin Brady

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 11:07 AM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: Rick@BonefishHawaii.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM



SB1240

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rick Lee	Bonefish Hawaii	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Hawaii State Legislature, Bonefish Hawaii, a licensed and permitted Hawaii eco-tourism company strongly supports SB 1240. Mahalo, Bonefish Hawaii

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 5:50 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: cathyg@animalrightshawaii.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017
Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cathy Goeggel	Animal Rights Hawai'i	Support	Yes

Comments: Committee on Water and Land hearing: February 15, 2017 3:00 pm Room 414 Hawai'i State Capitol Chair Karl Rhoads Vice Chair Mike Gabbard and Members of the Committee re: SB1240 position: support One of the most beautiful aspects of Hawai'i is our ocean. It surrounds our island state .This is what brings tourists and is a significantly important aspect of our economy. Hawaiian culture is historically embedded in respect for the sea and its beauty and bounty. Sadly, there are those who are raping our reefs in their own interest, capturing huge numbers of our reef fish to sell to mainland companies. A large number of these fish perish en route. The survivors live usually short lives in tanks far from their Hawaiian home. Hawaiian philosophy has been widely broadcast on TV- "take only what you need." This needs to be considered regarding the industry that is reaping money from animals who are resident of Hawaiian waters. Please pass this bill. With aloha, Cathy Goeggel President

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 5:06 AM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: fathia.rosatika@yahoo.co.id
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

LATE

SB1240

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Fathia Rosatika Sutiono	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments: YES, I support SB1240. The aquarium is killing Hawaii reefs. The world is dying right now. Don't make this accelerate the process.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 4:19 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: honeygirlschaarx@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
siena schaar	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: I support this bill to place a moratorium on aquarium fish permits until a definition of "sustainable" and sustainable practices and limits are proposed to the legislature and enacted. Currently the take of ornamentals from Hawaii's reef ecosystems is a free for all and is not sustainable at all... this is not just opinion, but is evident in a slew of recent and past scientific journal studies conducted on Hawaiian reef species. Please help save Hawaiian reefs and pass this bill. Aloha.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 3:54 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: stevetchudi@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM



SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephen Tchudi	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support the ban on aquarium trafficking in Hawaii. Preserve the fish in our beautiful state. The modest economic benefits are certainly not worth the financial and ecological costs.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 6:24 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: HAWAII TROPICAL FISH CO@HAWAII.RR.COM
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017
Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
TODD SHIRAKI	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I strongly oppose this as it would put a lot of peoples livelihoods at stake. If passed this could basically put my self and others out of business. thank you

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 6:43 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: Justin.ahenry@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017
Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Justin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Ive been on Island for 2 years and have been an avid free diver, the beauty in the ocean needs to be preserved. Ive learned that the Hawaiian culture values the ocean as a necessity for life. Place restrictions. The island is already over fished... now people are taking the fish out and killing them... BS

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 7:00 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: dalejamison3179@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM



SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dale Jamison	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: As a frequent visitor to Hawaii I support the moratorium on aquarium fish permits until a definition of "sustainable" and sustainable practices and limits are proposed to the legislature and enacted. I support SB1240.

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Committee on Ocean, Marine Resources & Hawaiian Affairs
Senator Karl Rhodes, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Hearing: Friday Feb. 15, 2017 at 3pm



Testimony in Opposition to HB 1240

Thank you for reading my testimony.

This bill would like to see a moratorium on AQ permits until the sustainability of the fishery can be studied by the DLNR.

The DLNR has been studying and documenting the amount of near shore fish that are collected by AQ fishermen on the West Coast of Hawaii for several decades. The DLNR 2014 Report shows success in maintaining and a robust and vibrant fishery.

This fishery is the most regulated fishery in the State of Hawaii. This report shows that the numbers of targeted fish in the areas along the West coast of Hawaii have increased in the open areas (areas in which all the fisherman that take from the ocean; bottom fisherman, spearing, shore fisherman, throw nets.). The areas where AQ fisherman cannot collect have seen an even higher increase in the number of fish. To compensate for the taking of certain fish by different groups, several new rules were instated by the DLNR to limit the size and numbers of these fish by the AQ collector. We fill daily catch reports that document the amount and size of several species taken.

Before a moratorium on new Aquarium permits or a limit of the number of permits, the State needs to look at the big picture and evaluate the impact by other users on our near shore fish life. Snorkeling has a huge negative impact on the health of our reefs. You can teach and educate the visitors and locals on the proper techniques of protecting the coral while snorkeling or scuba diving non-stop. But, put an inexperienced person in the ocean and a little water in their snorkel and you get panic and they end up standing on the reefs. Stamped, damaged coral leave the fish without places to hide, are then eaten by more aggressive fish. Then there are the introduced fish that have multiplied and grown large due to the fact they have few predators.

This Bill mentions the herbivores beneficial effect on the health of the reef and in particular - the yellow tang as the most exported fish in Hawaii, and the effect on the reef of its removal. Ninety % of the herbivores found on our reefs are not collected by AQ fisherman. Please see Dr. Walsh's last report on the health of our fishery and the increase of the numbers of fish in all areas.

Also, please view the DVD that was produced by Dr. Bruce Carlson concerning the sustainability of our fishery. If you don't have access to a copy, you can view it on YouTube. Search "Hawaii Sustainable Fishery".

I am opposed to Senate Bill 1240, as it is not necessary.

Bertha F Basabe
AQ Collector, License 8525
Retired RN, HHSC
Naalehu, Hawaii 96772

LATE

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 7:42 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: clange98@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017
Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ronald Lange	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: We have been annual visitors to the islands since our wedding in 1998. We have purchased multiple units and now travel the entire month of July to Maui to dive and enjoy the magical waters surrounding the islands. Two certified rescue divers in the family with a third in training. It has been sad over the years to see the reefs deteriorate and the fish population dwindle. We need to do everything we can to protect this beautiful treasure for generations to come. Please work to find a sustainable process for removing the wildlife from the reefs before you allow further commercial exploitation. Thanks for considering the most precious resource we have to share with our children. Aloha Ronald F Lange

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 6:41 AM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: rjstar@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

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SB1240

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruth Roudiez	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Add sharks as well!

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 4:39 AM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: Mtwdemigod@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM



SB1240

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Wurzburg	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Yes I support SB1240...End the aquarium trade now.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 12:04 AM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: a.c.meyer@gmx.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

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SB1240

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ann Meyer	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am requesting to also include sharks.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 9:29 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: shannonkona@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

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SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Strongly Support!!!

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 9:07 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: acurrie@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM



SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ana Currie	Individual	Support	No

Comments: YES, I very strongly support SB1240. No more aquarium permits. Freeze existing permits until DLNR can develop a comprehensive, sustainable management plan. The time to act is now before the damage to our reef ecosystems becomes any more severe.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 8:59 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: nahacky@ilhawaii.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

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SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ulla	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Please read the complete State report on the Aquarium Fishery referred to in SB 1240 before voting on this bill. There is an incredible amount of work and monitoring that was undertaken to produce a non biased report so that the legislature could make informed decisions. Please do not vote to pass this bill. Thank you, Ulla Carmiencke

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 8:51 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: nahacky@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM



SB1240

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anthony Nahacky	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Clearly this bill targets one specific group of fishermen that have in place state management that is based on scientific research undertaken by DAR. Further this bill does not provide accurate information about the fisheries or the environmental issues it seeks to address. To improve and protect our ocean resources it is critical to base regulations and bills on scientific studies and monitoring and not on statements used out of context from those studies that distort the results. Please oppose this Bill. Thank you, Anthony Nahacky

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 10:45 AM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: scoleman@surfrider.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM



SB1240

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stuart Coleman	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Dear Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard & Committee Members, My name is Stuart Coleman, and I am a resident of the Diamond Head area and I swim and surf in the ocean as often as I can. I have witnessed a dramatic decline in the number of fish in the area; so I support this measure to put in place a moratorium on fishing for aquariums until it is determined what is sustainable. Mahalo for your consideration. Aloha, Stuart

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 12:38 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: jessrevelas@comcast.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB1240 on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM

SB1240

Submitted on: 2/15/2017

Testimony for WTL on Feb 15, 2017 15:00PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Revelas	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I live in Olympia, Washington and I am a frequent visitor to Hawaii. My family and I so much appreciate the beautiful reef wildlife that we can see in your state. The idea that people are allowed to mine and deplete the reefs for a quick profit in the aquarium industry is sickening. Please use your power to do everything you can to preserve Hawaii's incredible reef wildlife. It's so important not just for people who live there, but for all of us who visit your beautiful state.

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From: [Christina Skaggs](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT SB1240
Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 10:19:25 PM



Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard and Committee Members, I write in strong support of SB1240.

Sent from my iPad

From: [Tessa](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT SB1240
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 7:03:23 AM



Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard and Committee Members, I write in strong support of SB1240. Although I live in California, I have family that lives on Molokai. We often visit, and love to snorkel around the islands. We noticed a decline in the fish population last year that looks scary. Please protect the ocean and all its creatures.

Mahalo!

Tessa Nicholls
1514-30th Ave
San Francisco, Ca
94122

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sammie Stanbro](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT SB1240
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 7:57:55 AM



Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard and Committee Members, I write in strong support of SB1240.

I live and work near these areas. I have worked in the past with fish counts in the 1990s and. Reported to UH the work was a sad but necessary accounting of the decline of reef fish. Kona is the area I worked in. Thank you for your vote for these creatures that cannot speak for themselves by the way. The whole system is effected.
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sammie Stanbro](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT SB1240
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 7:58:57 AM



Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard and Committee Members, I write in strong support of SB1240.
Sorry did not sign my last statement. Sharron Stanbro

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sandra Moore](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: Perspective on Hawaii SB 1240
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 3:55:44 AM



Sandra Moore
P.O. Box 758
Gibsonton, FL 33534

February 15, 2017

Dear HI Senate Water and Land Committee,

The State of Hawaii is considering a moratorium on the issuance of commercial aquarium fish permits. This is “to allow the department of land and natural resources to define ‘sustainable’ and establish sustainable collection practices and limits, for legislative adoption, to ensure the sustainability of Hawaii’s native near-shore aquatic life”.

The impetus of this effort is stated to be the 2014 department of land and natural resources (DNLR) report, “Report on the Findings and Recommendations of Effectiveness of the West Hawaii Regional Fishery Management Area”. The Bill states this report indicates “populations of native near-shore species have disappeared as increasing threats from climate change, ocean acidification, habitat degradation, and pollution diminish prospects for their proliferation”.

Our company is in the aquarium trade. Although our operations include one of, if not the largest, ornamental fish aquaculture/captive breeding programs in the world, we are dedicated to, and support, sustainable wild fishery operations globally. Hawaii is one of those fisheries. We will not support trade or conduct business in areas with questionable practices or science-based adverse environmental impact. Doing so would be contrary to ours (and everyone’s) long term stability and success.

We see this “moratorium” as being inappropriate for the stated problem. The State of Hawaii can very easily develop and refine their definitions without an action that disrupts or destroys its native industry. The agency can workshop issues such as “sustainable collection practices and limits” using data as well as input from stakeholders. This can be accomplished on a parallel path both allowing ongoing trade and legislative rule development.

We believe there is time to do this based on observations, analysis, and consideration of the available facts pertaining to Hawaii’s native marine ornamental fishery. These indicate that the fishery is not facing imminent doom. Please consider the following points.

- Hawaii has a well managed aquarium fishery, closely monitored by the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources. Collectors are licensed by the State of Hawaii. There are managed areas where fish collections are permitted.
- The impetus of this legislative action is 2014 data, and the bill language justification state species “have disappeared”. However there is neither reference to the longer range trend of improving populations, nor more current data available on the 2015 report indicating that the populations have rebounded. These facts have to be considered in a science-based conclusion. Further, it brings in to question the accuracy of the statement that 2014 “populations disappeared”, while both the longer trends and the 2015 data indicating populations improving. “Disappeared” is obviously wrong or mis-stated if actual accelerated populations are reported the next year.
- The historical population data shows that the aquarium collection industry has not negatively affected any species of fish, with the exception of Kole Tang and Achilles Tang, which are also fished for by the food fish industry. Three years ago, as the aquarium industry became aware of the population decline, we supported placing limits on these two fish, as well as slot limits on yellow tangs, so that no corals are damaged by collecting fish that are too small, and to keep the breeding fish on the reef.

- SB1240 asserts that the risk of over-exploitation of marine species is high. This appears to be incorrect. The Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) found that the West Hawaii “no-aquarium collecting” Fish Replenishment Areas (FRAs), implemented in 1999, have been very successful in increasing populations of Yellow Tang (*Zebrasoma flavescens*) — the most heavily targeted aquarium fish accounting for 84% of the total catch. Fifteen years after closure, the population of Yellow Tang has increased 64.5% in the FRAs while their abundance in the Open Areas has not declined significantly.” Overall Yellow Tangs have increased substantially with a current population in excess of 3.6 million fish.
- Aquarium fisheries harvest the plentiful juvenile fish rather than mature adults, further protecting the ability of the different species to reproduce.
- The DLNR, based upon the effectiveness of the West Hawai'i FRAs for aquarium fish, recommends that it establish MPAs for non-aquarium fish species. This interest, and the data attest that Hawaii's current management practices are resulting in increased, not decreased, fish populations
- Hawaii's aquarium industry is considered one of the best regulated near-shore fisheries in the world. The DLNR, pursuant to State law, submits a report every five years to the legislature entitled “Relating to the West Hawaii Regional Fishery Management Area.” The 2015 Report found that the “The Hawaii marine aquarium fishery is currently the most economically valuable commercial inshore fishery in the State with FY 2014 reported landings greater than \$2.3 million.” The regulatory mechanisms covering the Hawaiian aquarium fishery supports the tenets of the sustainable use of renewable natural resources supported in the IUCN's Policy Statement on sustainable use.

We support responsible action and practice, both in industry and regulation. Based on known facts, and available science, we oppose SB1240. We ask that the Senate Committee on Water and Land either decline to take up, or defeat, SB1240.

Sincerely,
Sandra Moore

From: [denniskent](#)
To: [WTL Testimony](#)
Subject: SUPPORT SB1240
Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 3:18:33 PM

LATE

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard and Committee Members, I write in strong support of SB1240.

My name is Dennis Kent & I live in Miloli'i, on the Big Island. I too have watched the Yellow Tang population and other species diminish over the past 25 years, having been a diver, snorkeler and photographer exploring our local reefs. The fish collecting trade apparently has no compunction for catching everything they can with no regard for sustainability. They spread their nets over the reefs, breaking coral, walking on the live coral, and leaving nothing when they leave.

As a Air Freight agent for Pan Am for many years on the mainland, I received and shipped tropical fish on a daily basis. as there was little or no restrictions on fish collectors at the time, the fish were treated very poorly. Often left sitting on baggage carts in unheated warehouses when it was inconvenient for them to pick them up promptly.

When they did get picked up after this kind of treatment the collectors wouldn't even bother opening the box. They just rejected the shipment, knowing they didn't survive and letting the wholesaler pay the tab.

The only way the fish would survive was if an agent would take the time to scout the warehouse and bring pets, fish etc into the heated office.

If the fish are inadvertently placed in an unheated cargo compartment they would all arrive dead.

Many fish collectors use the state laws to get around import restrictions by shipping exotic animals & fish to neighboring states and drive them across state lines to sell them where they are illegal. (most common in my area: anteaters and piranha among many others).

Fish Collectors and exotic animal dealers are not well respected or accepted by others in the pet industry.

After dealing with them for years, I found them to be disreputable, and incapable of following the laws governing them.

Dennis Kent
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