

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS**

**Monday, April 3, 2017
1:35 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 450, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO CORAL**

House Bill 450, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to the University of Hawaii (UH) to conduct a study on the effects of sunscreen on Hawaii's coral reefs. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this bill provided its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget request.**

The measure would provide an unspecified amount of funds to UH to study the effects of sunscreens on corals and the potential impacts of mitigation measures on persons who use sunscreens. The Department welcomes studies, including review of existing scientific literature as well as outreach studies, which would provide more information about and suggest strategies to mitigate the potential harmful effects of certain sunscreen compounds on coral health and reproduction. Clearly identifying these would help target any actions needed to protect our marine resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

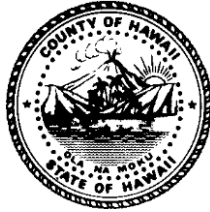
SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
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LAND
STATE PARKS

Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy., Bldg. C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

March 31, 2017

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Tokuda and Committee Members:


**RE: HB450, HD1, SD1
Relating to Coral**

If there is a scientific consensus that sunscreen containing oxybenzone is harmful to the environment, and that it is more damaging than the alternative sunscreen products available, I would urge the Legislature to ban the sale in Hawaii of products containing oxybenzone. Such legislation would not eliminate the problem entirely (tourists might still bring product in) but I would think that the use of the chemical in Hawaii would be dramatically reduced, far more than an education program ever could accomplish. And such a prohibition on sale would resolve the law enforcement problem DLNR would face if it tried to prevent use by individual boaters or beachgoers.

However, your decision should be based on science, and the Department of Health's earlier testimony, on this bill and on the Senate companion, suggests that science may not be ready to make that call.

If the Committee believes there is enough evidence on which to act, I would urge the Legislature to use HB450 as an appropriate vehicle to forcefully address the problem, as suggested above. If, on the other hand, you do not feel you have enough facts, then providing for a study, one that could generate more information, is worthy of your approval.

Respectfully submitted,


Harry Kim
Mayor

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, April 2, 2017 9:59 AM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: lisa.fohb@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB450 on Apr 3, 2017 13:35PM

HB450

Submitted on: 4/2/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 3, 2017 13:35PM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Bishop	Friends of Hanauma Bay	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Chair Tokuda and other distinguished members of the WAM Committee, please pass HB450. Our island state is dependent on a healthy marine environment so caring for our fragile coral reefs is imperative. Science has proven the devastating effect of oxybenzone on our reefs. A study of our reefs by our scientists will confirm it so we can move forward aggressively to protect and preserve them. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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[Your Name]
P.O. Box 1206
Kaunakakai, HI 96748
(808) 658-9670
zaidarene@gmail.com
April 1, 2017

Senator Jill N. Tokuda
Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB450 Relating to Coral
(Monday, April 3, 2017 1:35pm Conference Room 211)

Dear Hawaii House of Representatives WAM Committee:

Aloha! I am a lifetime resident of Molokai, Hawaii, and I am testifying against HB450. There is no money amount specified for this study and there have been studies done already. See one attached TIME magazine article dated 10/20/2015. The article can also be found online at <http://time.com/4080985/sunscreen-coral-reefs/>.

This study seems like a waste of money! I'd like to see money appropriated for reef restoration projects, not for studies on the effects of sunscreen on Hawaii's coral reefs. Here on Molokai, our reefs are dying due to sedimentation and introduced species.

In closing, I'd like to request that our tax dollars be appropriated where we can see results, and not for more studies!

With kind regards,

Zaidarene Place

TIME Science

ENVIRONMENT

How Sunscreen May Be Destroying Coral Reefs

Justin Worland

Oct 20, 2015

A chemical in sunscreen may be contributing to the destruction of the coral reefs as swimmers trying to protect their skin venture near reefs, according to new research.

Researchers behind the [study](#), published in the journal *Archives of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology*, found that the chemical oxybenzone has toxic effects on young coral that causes endocrine disruption, DNA damage and death of coral, among other the problems. Oxybenzone also exacerbates coral bleaching, a process by which coral reject symbiotic organisms and lose their color. Bleaching has been particularly prevalent in recent years due to rising sea temperatures.

Currently, somewhere between [4,000 and 6,000 tons](#) of sunscreen enters coral reef areas around the world each year, according to the U.S. National Park Service. That's a lot of sunscreen considering how little it takes to cause toxic effects. According to the new research, toxicity occurs at a concentration of 62 parts per trillion. That's the equivalent of a drop of water in an Olympic swimming pool, according to study author Omri Bronstein, a researcher at Tel Aviv University. "Current concentrations of oxybenzone in these coral reef areas pose a significant ecological threat," Bronstein said in a press release.

Read More: [Here's Why You May Soon Be Using Sunscreen in the Dark](#)

Researchers were careful to note that they are not advocating the swimmers stop wearing sunscreen, which protects against [skin cancer](#). Instead, they urged consumers to consider carefully what sunscreen they buy before swimming in the ocean. Sunscreens with titanium oxide or zinc oxide have not been found to harm reefs, according to the National Park Service. Additionally, swimmers can cover their upper body with long sleeve shirts or other apparel to reduce sunscreen use. Sunscreen is part of a long list of threats to coral reefs that includes pollution, overfishing and climate change. Beyond their impressive appearance, coral reefs play an important role for local communities and the world at large. For one, they contribute to local economies through tourism and sustain ecosystems where people can fish.

One [estimate](#) from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration put the economic contribution of coral reefs around the world at \$30 billion each year. Reefs also protect the global environment by serving as [carbon sinks](#), absorbing carbon dioxide that would otherwise contribute to global warming.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 5:44 PM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: launahele@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB450 on Apr 3, 2017 13:35PM*

HB450

Submitted on: 3/31/2017

Testimony for WAM on Apr 3, 2017 13:35PM in Conference Room 211

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

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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