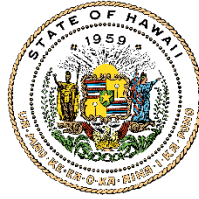


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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
FINANCE**

**Monday, February 26, 2024
3:30 PM**

State Capitol, VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Conference Room 308

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2478, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE PACIFIC MARINE FISHERIES COMPACT**

House Bill 2478, House Draft 1 proposes to authorize the Governor to execute a compact on behalf of the State to cooperate in the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) and establishes procedures for selection and succession of commissioners. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this bill and provides the following comments and recommended amendment.**

The Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) is an interstate compact agency that helps state resource management agencies and the fishing industry sustainably manage Pacific Ocean resources, particularly those that cross jurisdictional boundaries. The PSMFC's mission is "to promote the better utilization of fisheries – marine, shell, and anadromous, which are of mutual concern, and to develop a joint program of protection and prevention of physical waste of such fisheries in all of those areas of the Pacific Ocean over which the compacting states jointly or separately now have or may hereafter acquire jurisdiction." This mission closely aligns with the mission of the Department to work with the people of Hawai'i to manage, conserve, and restore the state's unique aquatic resources and ecosystems for present and future generations.

Although the PSMFC has no regulatory or management authority, it serves a number of vital functions that are relevant to Hawai'i. These include providing a forum for the discussion of interstate fisheries resources management; coordinating research and management projects related to interstate fisheries and making this data available to the public; and dispersing federal fishery disaster funds. Two areas of particular interest to Hawai'i, which the PSMFC has dealt

with recently, are understanding the impacts of offshore wind energy projects on fisheries and preventing and responding to the spread of aquatic invasive species.

The State of Hawai‘i would greatly benefit from becoming a member of the PSMFC as membership would facilitate improved management of state and regional marine fishery resources through increased collaboration with other Pacific states. This increased collaboration increases access to other fisheries scientists and managers with expertise in matters that the state currently lacks. Membership in the PSMFC could also potentially open avenues for federal funding that could be used directly to enhance the management of Hawai‘i-based fisheries projects.

Although the PSMFC is an interstate compact, it works with indigenous groups on fisheries issues where appropriate. For example, the PSMFC disbursed CARES Act funding for tribes and territories, works directly with west coast tribes on fishery disasters, and assists tribes in the Columbia River basin with fisheries data collection and other needs. While the PSMFC does not focus on fisheries issues solely within a single state’s jurisdiction, such as Hawai‘i nearshore fisheries, the Commission could benefit from having a Native Hawaiian fisher perspective among its membership.

The Department recommends amending the “Hawaii Representatives” section (beginning on p.10, line 19) to read:

§ -3 **Hawaii representatives.** In furtherance of the compact provisions, there are three members of the commission from the State of Hawaii, the chairperson of the board of land and natural resources serving in an ex officio capacity, and two commissioners who are representatives of the fishing community with wide knowledge of and interest in marine fisheries issues, to be nominated and, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, appointed by the governor in accordance with section 26-34 [-]; provided that at least one commissioner shall have knowledge of native Hawaiian cultural fishing practices and shall serve as a representative of the native Hawaiian fishing community.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

HB-2478-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 11:34:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Philip Fernandez	Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HFACT supports Hawaii becoming a member of the Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission.

Membership in the PMFC will help the Department of Land and Natural Resources better manage the marine resources of Hawaii and will help protect Hawaii from the threat of marine invasive species that may be carried in ballast water of ships that come to Hawaii. Additionally, membership will help DLNR representatives network with marine regulators from the west coast and will be able to gain a more broader perspective in the management of ocean resources.

Please support this bill to help the sustainability of Hawaii's marine environment.