



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
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by
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HB 1442 – RELATING TO FISHING

Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Nakashima, and members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo is pleased to have this opportunity to testify regarding HB1442 which directs the Pacific Aquaculture and Coastal Resources Center (PACRC) to study the options for enhancing the Big Island fishing industry including feasibility of a commercial fishing village.

The fishing industry and the seafood it produces are a major part of the Big Island's cultural and economic heritage. Unfortunately, the industry has been facing a number of challenges in recent years including decreased catches, increased costs, increased regulation and lack of infrastructure. This bill will provide the baseline information and suggest management and infrastructure improvements that will lead to a sustainable and safe seafood supply. Further, specifying the PACRC as the implementing organization is appropriate as it excels at the broad community-based and multi-disciplinary approach required by the bill.

Notably, 85 to 90% of PACRC operating funds are obtained from restricted grants and contracts, the Center will not be able to conduct the study without funding.

We support the overall concept of this bill as it includes initiatives supportive of our goals and objectives, but given the state's tight resources we are concerned about the cost implications generated by this bill.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.