

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2009

LATE

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair  
Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair

Rep. Henry J.C. Aquino	Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto
Rep. Karen Leinani Awana	Rep. Roland D. Sagum, III
Rep. Tom Brower	Rep. James Kunane Tokioka
Rep. Isaac W. Choy	Rep. Jessica Wooley
Rep. Denny Coffman	Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita
Rep. Sharon E. Har	Rep. Kymberly Marcos Pine
Rep. Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran	Rep. Gene Ward
Rep. Chris Lee	

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, March 04, 2009  
TIME: 10:30 a.m.  
PLACE: Conference Room 308  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Re: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1665

From: Tony Costa  
Hawaii Nearshore Fishermen  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
540-1308 office

Testimony

HNF are in strong support of HB1665

Fishermen believe there is nothing more important you can do for our nearshore fisheries than rehabilitate the nearshore estuarine habitat – one most important first step component being the fresh spring water revival.

Much has been proclaimed over the past ten years or so about “resource decline” and failed fisheries or other negative assessments about our oceans and reef. Never before has so much attention been given to nearshore resource conditions.

As the various groups rush to promote favorite measures to “save the reef”, we note that habitat loss, fresh water diversion, siltation or pollution rarely gets any attention as an important component in the condition of the reef. Yet, most all State and Non-Governmental groups do seem keener to focus on and malign traditional fishing practices as the single most urgent thing to prohibit as a fix.

While we understand the shortsighted world view most lay people have regarding the nearshore, fishermen remain optimistic that the misunderstanding about our ocean environments and the fishermen themselves will in time, evolve into a better awareness that will eventually lead to a spirit of shared responsibility and coexistence.

The fishermen believe habitat loss is the primary culprit of any downside in fish population with recruitment being the important factor. Recruitment (new babies surviving) depends on many factors but condition of habitat surely is great. You can't have one without the other.

Biologists also tell us that recruitment is independent of spawning stock biomass (amount of pregnant egg bearing mothers). In other words, if conditions are just right (nursery habitat, water, temp, nutrients, stars lining up etc.) one single pregnant female can be responsible for millions of offspring (hypothetical).

When the *kalalimu* disappeared from Maunalua Bay due to the siltation associated from the dredging of Koko Marina in the 1950's, the *Kala* (fish) also disappeared -

We believe the single most effective thing you could do to help in recruitment of nearshore reef species and nearshore pelagic species would be to rehab the nursery grounds. One important ingredient in our nearshore nursery ground is the underground artesian spring waters that naturally percolate into our nearshore areas.

HB 1665 is one small step in insuring that some of these nearshore spring water systems remain not disturbed and as functional as possible by not allowing the sale of public fishpond lands.

Currently, there are public owned fishponds on Oahu, Maui, Molokai, Hawaii, and Kauai.

HB1665 would protect fishponds on all these islands in each of their respective districts.

For example, Oahu has 26 government owned fishponds. One in Kapalama, one in Kahana, two in Kaneohe, two in Moanalua, one in Waikeke, one in Waiale'e, two in Kualoa, one in Kailua, five in Halawa, one in Kalauao, one in Waimano, one in Honouliuli, one in Puuloa, one in Waikele, one in Waianae, one in Kahana, one in Kahauiki, one in Niu, one in Kuliouou, one in Kalihi (Mokauea).

For an inventory of all government owned and privately owned fishponds in Hawaii, I have a list documented by UH Manoa Department of Ocean and Resources Engineering available should you have further interest.

The Fishermen want to commend the efforts and energies by all legislators and community members who wrote and are in support of this bill.

We strongly support HB1665

Tony Costa  
Hawaii Nearshore Fishermen

# LATE

I am testifying in support of HB 1665, that restricts the sale of public lands on which government-owned Hawaiian fishponds are located.

Because of the unique geological conditions that have to coincide for particular fishponds to exist, these sites are rare. The combination of artesian freshwater and saltwater play an important role in fish breeding cycles, not unlike the way salmon leave the sea to spawn upstream. Take these sites away and our fisheries will be adversely affected.

These fishponds are an important part of our cultural legacy. Once they're gone they will be lost to history and future generations forever. It's in the best interest of the public that these sites be protected and preserved.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

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