

January 30, 2010

TESTIMONY SUBMISSION
HOUSE BILL # 2669

OPPOSE

ROBERT FRAM

President

Garden & Valley Isle Seafood INC.

225 North Nimitz Hwy. #3

Honolulu, HI. 96817

By passing Bill# 2669, you will not only penalize an industry that has strengthened and popularized this little known fish. But you also take away additional income that is extremely important to our state.

Fraud and mislabeling is the biggest culprit of the sale and distribution of Walu (Escolar). Misinformation from sellers has penalized this fish. "Hawaiian Butterfish" and "White Tuna" are just a few names that sellers use to help their misguiding sales for their own personal gains. Public awareness and education would be more beneficial then banning Walu (Escolar) forever.

Proper labeling and enforcement of this practice is the correct way to protect the public, not outlawing. Citing wholesalers, vendors, and fish peddlers whom mislead the public should be the ones whom are penalized.

I don't believe any other state has banned the sale and possession of Walu (Escolar). The prohibition of this product will hurt the economy of the state even more.

Walu (Escolar) is extremely popular in mainland restaurants. The exportation of Walu (Escolar) has increased its demand and correct preparation of this "fine dining" fish is here to stay. These restaurants will just have to go outside of the state of Hawaii in order to purchase this product.

Sustainability should also be looked upon. Walu (Escolar) will still be caught from Hawaii's long line fishing vessels. If these thousands and thousands of pounds of fish are brought up dead on the hook, dumping this overboard would benefit no one.

Therefore, "Walu prohibition" in Hawaii is NOT the way to protect the public. This will not only hurt the economy of the state, it would penalize vendors as well as consumers who understand and appreciate Walu (Escolar). Proper labeling enforcements and public awareness is the way to go.

From: Tony Costa, Hawaii Nearshore Fishermen
Testimony in opposition to HB2669
To:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2010

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, & OCEAN RESOURCES

Rep. Ken Ito, Chair
Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Monday, February 1, 2010
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
PLACE: Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Testimony in Opposition to HB2669

HB2669 proposes to prohibit fishing for, posses, or selling *walu* or *lepidocybium flavobrunneum* otherwise known as *escolar*.

While the oil content of this species does cause some individuals discomfort, for others, this fish is a delicious addition to the culinary choices for seafood – whether in lau lau or even eaten as a main dish.

Walu can, if consumed in large amounts potentially cause digestive discomfort in certain individuals.

HNF would like to note that there are many things in our lives that can *potentially* cause ill side effects and to legislate a ban such as this would begin a slippery road (no pun intended) to legislate our lives every move.

Too many prunes, too much mineral oil etc can also cause discomfort.

The common guideline for *walu* is to consume no more than 4oz to 6oz at the most. Perhaps labeling by the retail and restaurant markets that sell *walu* would alert the unaware public to correct identification and consumption guidelines for this particular fish species.

We recommend deferring this bill in its current form.

Respectfully,

Tony Costa