SB2441 SD1

LINDA LINGLE GOVERNOR OF HAWAI





STATE OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

POST OFFICE BOX 621 HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of LAURA H. THIELEN Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Wednesday, February 24, 2010 11:00 AM State Capitol, Conference Room 016

In consideration of SENATE BILL 2441, SENATE DRAFT 1 RELATING TO ENDANGERED SPECIES

Senate Bill 2441, Senate Draft 1 would establish the knowing or intentional taking of any endangered species as a class C felony with a fine of up to \$50,000, would allow civil suits to be filed for any alleged violation of the state's endangered species law, Chapter 195D, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), or rules adopted under that law, and would allow awards for the costs of the litigation. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) **opposes this bill** in its current form because it would also create these same strict penalties for the take or harm of hundreds of other endangered species, for which malicious take is not a serious problem, but for which harsh penalty language would likely scare away private landowners that may otherwise assist with recovery efforts.

The broad language in this measure may instill fear of being liable for a \$50,000 fine and felony conviction for take of endangered species when they know endangered species occur on their property, or will occur if they allow reintroductions, but they cannot control potential harmful actions of grazing livestock, uncontrolled pets, or workers and visitors.

For example, there are 274 endangered plants species that are not commonly known and that few people would even recognize as endangered. Education and outreach to instill a sense of value, ownership and protection of these resources that will promote their recovery and restoration is a much more needed and appropriate approach at this time for this suite of species.

The Department is also opposed to the provision for citizen suits which could lead to significant increase in litigation and result in suits against landowners in which alleged take is unintentional, ambiguous, or undeterminable. The Department is also concerned about provisions that make

LAURA H. THIELEN
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RUSSELL Y, TSUJI FIRST DEPUTY

KEN C. KAWAHARA

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOAT ING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BURRALI OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND CRESTLY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESER VATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

the Department liable to suit for failure to carry out any act or duty required under Chapter 195D, HRS, when clearly there are insufficient funds and staff to address all the pressing endangered species issues according to the standard and agenda of the litigant.

The Department recognizes the need for better deterrence and stricter penalties for harassment or taking of monk seals and other species for which malicious take is a problem and is occurring and can support the bill if narrowed to only pertain to malicious take of monk seal, where there is a current problem.



Conservation Council for Hawai'i

Testimony Submitted to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Affairs

SB 2441 SD 1 Relating to Endangered Species Hearing: Wednesday, February 24, 2010 11 am, Room 016

In support of SB 2441

Aloha. Conservation Council for Hawai'i supports SB 2441 SD 1, which establishes the intentional or knowing taking of an endangered species as a class C felony, and provides a private right of action to enforce conservation of aquatic life, wildlife, and land plants laws.

We are deeply saddened by the recent intentional killings of endangered Hawaiian monk seals on Kaua'i and Moloka'i. These actions clearly indicate that the existing penalty for taking an endangered species under state law is insufficient to deter similar actions in the future.

We support the increased penalty and other provisions in SB 2441 SD 1 that make the state law more consistent with the federal Endangered Species Act. We also support the bill's proposed measures to make it easier for concerned citizens and community groups to protect endangered species and help enforce the law. Such public-private efforts are necessary because endangered species and other natural resources belong to all the people, future generations included, and we all have a stake in making sure these resources are protected. Private action is also necessary at times because government cannot, or will not, do it all, especially in these tough economic times.

Please pass SB 2441 SD 1. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

Majnie Ziegler

Marjorie Ziegler



Hawai'i's Voice for Wildlife - Ko Leo Hawai'i no na holoholona lohiu



SENATOR BRIAN T. TANIGUCHI, CHAIR SENATOR DWIGHT Y. TAKAMINE, VICE-CHAIR SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2441, SD1 RELATING TO ENDANGERED SPECIES

February 24, 2010, 11:00 a.m. Conference Room 016

Good morning Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the committee:

My name is David Lane Henkin, and I am an attorney with Earthjustice. We appreciate the opportunity to offer this testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 2441, SD1, which will help ensure the protection of Hawai'i's critically imperiled native plants and animals, preserving these irreplaceable public trust resources for future generations.

SB 2441 accomplishes this important purpose by bringing H.R.S. chapter 195D in line with the federal Endangered Species Act, which has long provided stiff criminal penalties for knowingly killing or harming endangered species and authorized citizens to take action to protect imperiled species. See 16 U.S.C. § 1540(b)(1), (g).

SB 2441's provisions regarding citizen suits are particularly important. In enacting the federal Endangered Species Act, Congress recognized that, whether due to budgetary limitations or lack of political will, government wildlife agencies alone could not be relied on to ensure adequate protection of imperiled species. Accordingly, Congress authorized citizens to supplement government enforcement through actions seeking prospective injunctive relief that would prevent future harm to endangered and threatened species.

Particularly in these difficult economic times, with government services being cut back across the board, it is vital for the Legislature to authorize Hawai'i's citizenry to assist in preventing harm to our imperiled plants and animals.

For the foregoing reasons, we respectfully urge you to pass SB 2441, SD1. Thank you again for the opportunity to offer this testimony.



Save Our Seal Campaign Organizations

Marine Conservation Biology Institute * The Snorkel Bob Foundation * Firedoll Foundation * Conservation Council for Hawaii * KAHEA The Hawaiian-Environmental Alliance * Maui Tomorrow * Center for Biological Diversity * Surfrider Foundation Sierra Club * Hawaii Audubon Society * Earthtrust Hawaii * Lost Fish Coalition * Malama O Puna * Save Our Seas * Life of the Land Greenpeace Foundation Hawaii * Hanalei Watershed Hui * Hui Ho'omalu I ka Aina

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations Wednesday February 24, 2010 Conference Room 216

Dear Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Takamine and members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Keiko Bonk and I am here today to ask you to approve SB2441. I represent a consortium of conservation and cultural groups and individuals who support the recovery of the critically endangered Hawaiian monk seal. The Save Our Seal Campaign supports SB2441 that will up the penalty for harming or killing our Hawaiian monk seal and other endangered species. Passing SB2441 will send a message to all Hawaii residents and visitors that the State of Hawaii has protection laws that care for our endangered natural life and that it is a serious offense to intentionally harm or kill Hawaii's endangered animals and plants.

This session opened with many speeches of a shaky economy and the need to be frugal and lean in governing our state's affairs. As you work to determine what is essential to Hawaii, I urge you to think of our natural resources as not only essential, but also irreplaceable treasures. Hawaii's unique location, our unique geography, unique flora and fauna drive our spirit and all our economic engines. We must insure the best management practices of Hawaii's natural resources to secure a long-term quality life for Hawaii's people.

As elected leaders, you are stewards of Hawaii's assets. We entrust you to care for all our wildlife and their habitat. Please lead the recovery of the Hawaiian monk seal and ask all Hawaii residents and visitors to be an integral part of saving the Hawaiian monk seal as well as the other 333 endangered species of Hawaii by passing SB2441. Everyone who frequents the shorelines and ocean of Hawaii are responsible for this 13 million year old mammal, found nowhere else on earth.

Building a responsible culture is a first step towards caring for Hawaii's species. Bill 2441 establishes a serious law that is meant to develop a culture that takes responsibility to manage our flora and fauna. And it is also a good start to acknowledge the serious and complex environmental challenges we face ahead.

It is important to learn to pursue our long-term interests based on facts. For us in Hawaii, one of those unpleasant facts is that Hawaii has the dubious distinction of being the endangered species capital of the world. Hawaii's terrestrial and marine environment is still breath-takingly beautiful, but it is not healthy. In fact it is very, very sick. Pretending otherwise, and delaying dramatic and

systematic intervention, will only insure that our environmental illness progresses from critical to terminal.

We know the world can probably survive without Hawaii's many unique species, but we are here to remind you that what threatens Hawaii's endemic species, threatens the very health and survival of the human species. For this reason we have chosen to focus on a campaign to assist in the recovery of the critically endangered Hawaiian Monk Seal, a species that shares many of our best characteristics and none of our worst. Perhaps if we can save the seal, it will inspire us to believe we can save ourselves.

The Hawaiian Monk Seal represents Hawaii's struggle to survive the challenges of a rapidly degrading global environment, a process of degradation that is of our own making. The Hawaiian Monk Seal is like Hawaii itself, unique and threatened. It is the only endemic marine mammal in Hawaii and one of the most critically endangered marine mammals in the world. It, like much of what makes Hawaii, Hawaii, is on the verge of extinction. Many of these threats are beyond our ability to control locally. The primary threats to the Hawaiian Monk Seal are climate change, overfishing, pollution, disease, human encroachment and marine debris. And yet, we in Hawaii are determined to show that the accelerating trend toward extinction of the Hawaiian Monk Seal can not just be slowed down, it can be reversed.

Besides its intrinsic value, and its important role in the marine ecosystem of the Hawaiian archipelago, the Hawaiian Monk Seal has spiritual value as a reflection of Hawaii's soul. The Monk Seal's current endangered status is a reflection of who we have been, but its potential rescue is a reflection of who we can become; who we wish to become. We in Hawaii, at least most of us, are ready to go beyond blaming outsiders for our plight, and admit that we are part of the problem. We are also ready to change and sacrifice for a better future. But at the same time we are also cognizant of the fact that we cannot save our seal, anymore than we can save ourselves, without a lot of help from others. Locally, we have overfished, polluted our waters, and failed to implement policies that protect our shared environment from the more selfish side of our own human nature. We sat back and allowed hundreds unique endemic species to go extinct on our watch. There is no excuse for what we have done, but I believe there is a genuine desire among most of us to reverse the trend; to demonstrate our better nature.

To be blunt, it is time to stop talking about "sustainability" and whatever the latest buzzword is, and get down to living with the facts. We are doing a lousy job taking care of the environment that we need to survive, because we spend too much time catering to the short-term, reactive and selfish side of our own human nature. Fortunately, for the Monk Seal, us, and the rest of the planet, human nature is not one-dimensional. As a species, we have evolved the capacity to engage in complex, long-term reasoning based on facts and driven by compassion.

It is our hope that this kind of real fact-based reasoning, sustained by compassion for the Hawaiian Monk Seal, can act as a model not just for better marine policy, but also as a model for how to save ourselves from ourselves.

Mahalo nui loa for taking steps to care and malama our true assets that we depend on for life.

Keiko Bonk, Save Our Seal Campaign 808 732 6411 or 808 938 6888 keiko.bonk@mcbi.org



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Decision Making: Wednesday, February 24, 2010 at 11:00 am

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2441, relating to endangered species

February 22, 2010

Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Tankamine and members of the committee:

My name is Kiana Kauwe and I am working on the Save Our Seal Campaign. I am in strong **support** of SB 2441 which establishes the crime of intentional or knowing taking of an endangered species as a class C felony and provides a private right of action to enforce conservation of aquatic life, wildlife, and land plants laws.

It is alarming that three seals were shot and killed this past year. These killings are a result of a growing anti-seal culture spread throughout the islands. This measure would send a strong message to counter anti-seal sentiment. We will no longer allow our endangered species to be senselessly killed. Increased penalties would serve as a deterrent for future killings.

It is critical that strong action against seal killings be taken now. The Hawaiian monk seal population is so critically endangered that every intentional killing is a sad loss to the species' recovery.

As the Main Hawaiian Island seal population continues to grow, we expect human interactions will occur with greater frequency. Thus, it is critical for the survival of the seal that we develop a culture of cohabitation that does not tolerate any kind of inappropriate or violent interactions with this species. Hawaii's people must understand the severe nature of the rules of enforcement for a species so fragile and on the verge of extinction.

Mahalo for considering this measure. I hope the legislature is committed to helping in the recovery our critically endangered Hawaiian monk seal, our official state mammal.

Save Our Seal Campaign Organizations

Marine Conservation Biology Institute * The Snorkel Bob Foundation * Firedoll Foundation * Conservation Council for Hawaii KAHEA The Hawaiian-Environmental Alliance * Maui Tomorrow * Center for Biological Diversity * Surfrider Foundation Sierra Club * Hawaii Audubon Society * Earthtrust Hawaii * Lost Fish Coalition * Malama O Puna * Save Our Seas * Life of the Land Greenpeace Foundation Hawaii * Hanalei Watershed Hui * Hui Ho'omalu I ka Aina



The Nature Conservancy Hawai'i Program 923 Nu'uanu Avenue Honolulu, HI 96817 tel (808) 537-4508 fax (808) 545-2019 www.nature.org/hawaii

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Commenting on S.B. 2441 SD1 Relating to Endangered Species
Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Wednesday, February 24, 2010, 11:00AM, Room 016

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawaii's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for native species in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 32,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on O'ahu, Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.

The Nature Conservancy submits the following comments on S.B. 2441 SD1 Relating to Endangered Species:

- We support the provision of the bill that makes it a Class C felony to intentionally or knowingly take an endangered species. We think strict penalties should be applied in such cases.
- We take no position on the provisions in the bill that would provide a private citizen's right of civil action to address violations of HRS Chapter 195D.



TO: Honorable Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine and Committee Members

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

DATE: Wednesday, February 24, 11:00am

RE: Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2441; Endangered Species; Felony; Private Right of Action

Submitted by: Inga Gibson, Hawaii State Director, The Humane Society of the United States, P.O. Box 89131, Honolulu, HI 96830, igibson@hsus.org, 808-922-9910

On behalf of our more than 49, 315 members and supporters in Hawaii, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) supports SB 2441; to increase penalties for the intentional or knowing taking of an endangered species.

Given Hawaii's rich and unique resources, it is imperative that we have strong laws to protect endangered animals and to serve as adequate deterrents for abusing and exploiting these treasured species.

Two recent high profile monk seal killings have demonstrated that Hawaii lacks such protective laws. Monk seals are highly endangered and it is estimated that fewer than 1200 individuals are left in Hawaii. In one Kauai case, a man wantonly killed a pregnant monk seal with a .22-caliber rifle. Despite this egregious crime, he ultimately received only a \$25 fine and a 90 day jail sentence. Another monk seal was found shot at Kauai's Kaumakani Beach, but the criminal responsible has yet to be found. With such low possibilities for pairing a significant fine with jail time, the state fails to deter the significant portion of individuals who might kill a protected animal, but do not due to fear of the consequences. This bill provides a much-needed update to the penalties for taking endangered animal species in Hawaii and it sends a strong message that this is a serious crime.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure and urge your support of SB2441.

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov

Sent:

Monday, February 22, 2010 2:14 PM

To:

JGO Testimony neil@firedoll.org

Cc: Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Neil Sims Organization: Individual

Address: 318 Melven Ct. San Leandro, CA, 94577

Phone: 925-937-4560

E-mail: neil@firedoll.org Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments:

As a frequent visitor to the state of Hawaii, I am drawn again and again by the warmth of its people, and its rich and precious wildlife. Seeing a resting Monk seal on Kauai and another on Oahu were thrills of a lifetime. But to learn of the recent Monk seal killings on Kauai was disheartening and appalling.

The family foundation I work for, the Firedoll Foundation, makes grants to support the preservation of Hawaii's rich natural heritage. Please help preserve that legacy, by protecting the very rare (and very Hawaiian) Monk seal.

By making it a felony to consciously " take" an endangered species such as the Monk seal, will discourage such takings, and help preserve the legacy that draws so many of us to the islands each year.

Thank you for considering this Bill.

Sincerely,

Neil Sims

Senior Program Officer The Firedoll Foundation www.firedoll.org Dear Chairmen of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Commitee.

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 2441 as introduced by State of Hawaii Senator Gary Hooser. My name is Sophia Senter and I am a resident of Kauai County, HI.

For the past two years I have volunteered with Kauai's Hawaiian Monk Seal Conservation Hui helping to monitor and protect the Hawaiian monk seals on Kauai. I moved to Kauai in 2008 after completing a Bachelor's of Science in wildlife management. My background provided me with the skills to assist with injured seals as well as with necropsies of dead seals. I worked with NOAA staff to perform the necropsies on the two Hawaiian monk seals that were shot and killed on Kauai last year. After working almost full-time at times to protect monk seals and educate the public about their life-history and endangerment, seeing the two seals, 119 and K06 (plus her near-term pup) brutally and callously killed in that manner was devastating for me. Considering the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and its purported penalties our conservation hui hoped that at least if the perpetrator was found and convicted that some kind of justice would prevail. I was extremely disappointed when the shooter of K06, the pregnant female monk seal, was allowed a plea bargain and given a light sentence/fine compared to the maximum penalties of the ESA.

I was shocked again when I learned how weak the Hawaii State law was for harming or killing an endangered species. I am so pleased and supportive of the Senate Bill introduced by Senator Hooser to increase the penalty from a misdemeanor to Class C Felony. I am urging the members of the Judiciary and Committee to do all you can to make sure this Bill is passed expeditiously in this year's legislature. This Bill will help all endangered species of the State of Hawaii. It will show the public that the State of Hawaii supports the precious gift they have of the unique endangered Hawaiian Monk Seal. It will also be a strong deterrence for those who have not learned yet that the seals and other wildlife in Hawaii are to be protected not harmed.

Mahalo, Sophia Senter

Makaala Kaaumoana [makaala@hawaiian.net]

Sent:

Monday, February 22, 2010 1:20 PM

To:

JGO Testimony

Subject:

SB2441

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Testimony in strong support

SB2441

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Committee members,

Mahalo for hearing this critical bill today. For those of us who work every day in our streams and oceans and who care for the fragile things in our mauka lands, this bill offers us vital support and will make a difference in our success.

Please know that many who care, many who watch, many who save and protect in their own way will be strengthened by this legislation. Their efforts will be acknowledged, their work will matter.

From Hanalei, a place where many of our most rare find refuge, we thank you for this opportunity to support this bill.

These are the teeth we need to protect the remaining few of so many of Hawaii's treasures.

Me ka pono,

Maka'ala Ka'aumoana Executive Director Hanalei Watershed Hui P.O.Box 1285 Hanalei, HI 96714 808-828-1205 808-346-5458 cell

The Hanalei Watershed Hui mission is to support and protect the ecology, cultures and sustainable economies of Hanalei.



February 22, 2010

Senate Sergeant-At-Arms
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
586-6659 fax

RE: SB 2441, SD1

Aloha Senators,

I am writing to ask for your support and subsequent passing of the above bill. As a volumeer for saving the Hawaiian Monk Seal and believer in protecting all species, it is most important that we get this billing passed, with no delays.

The volunteers and the scientists are all-aware of the downward spiral of the monk seals and are doing everything possible to protect and preserve the few animals we have left.

There isn't a lot of time to save these creatures. Any delays or deferments in passing laws, is crucial to saving the entire species. Harsher prosecution in the takes and killings of these animals is needed to stop the killing of the harmless creatures we have left dwelling on our islands, trying to survive.

The birth of pups on the Main Hawaiian Islands in 2009 was offset by the 4 killings of animals in 2009. A pregnant seal within a week of birth shot. A \$25.00 fine and a few days in jail. The law did not protect these 4 animals and a Class C felony charge would give a lawbreaker a moment to think about the consequences of such unnecessary actions against innocent and endangered creatures. That one female seal could have helped the population with about 16 to 20 pups in her lifetime. We lost more than a mom and baby that day. We lost another chance to turn the decline around.

Volunteers and taxpayers that care about the environment and Hawaii's fragile ecosystem and the creatures that are part of that system, thank you for your consideration in passing this most important bill. The endangered species of our Islands do not have time for delay.

Mahalo nui loa, Dana Jones Secretary HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL RESPONSE TEAM OF OAHU

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov

Sent:

Monday, February 22, 2010 4:24 PM

To:

JGO Testimony

Cc:

douglasperrine@yahoo.com

Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Doug Perrine Organization: Individual

Address: 76-223 Haoa Street Kailua Kona HI 96740

Phone: 808-329-4523

E-mail: douglasperrine@yahoo.com

Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments:

As citizens of Hawaii, the endangered species found only here are our sacred kuleana to protect and preserve. Without a reasonable deterrent to those who do not respect the original inhabitants of this archipelago, the laws protecting these species are just a bad joke.

Sent:

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov Monday, February 22, 2010 3:47 PM

To: Cc: JGO Testimony octopus@maui.net

Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Rene Umberger Organization: Individual

Address: Phone:

E-mail: octopus@maui.net Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments:

From: Kim Steutermann Rogers [kimsrogers@mac.com]

Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 3:42 PM

To: JGO Testimony

Subject: SB2441 Wednesday 2/24/10 @ 11:00 a.m.

My name is Kim Steutermann Rogers, and I support SB 2441.

I live in the community of Anahola on Kauai where I volunteer many hours a week for numerous organizations that monitor and protect many of Hawaii's precious endangered species—organizations like the Hawaiian Monk Seal Conservation Hui, Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge, ReefCheck, the Marine Mammal Stranding Network and Malama Maha'ulepu.

Today, I would specifically like to address my involvement with the Hawaiian Monk Seals and how the killings of two—or three if you count the near-term fetus that also expired—affected me and my fellow volunteers.

Last year, when the male seal known as "I-19" was found dead and floating in the shoreline on Kauai's west side, I was called to help with the necropsy. Because that case is still under investigation, I won't say much about it, except that as I gazed at the sleek four-and-a-half-year-old marine mammal lying dead on the table, I noted how beautiful he looked. His face came to me in my dreams for several days after that. The day before he was killed, we volunteers had included him in our semi-annual Hawaiian Monk Seal count, and we were hopeful for his future, because he had reached a critical age that bode well for his long-term survival.

We volunteers figured the killing of I-19 was a fluke, an isolated incident that would not happen again. Sadly, we were wrong.

One morning at sunrise, a month later, I headed out to a remote north shore beach. I was hoping to find a female and her newborn pup. A pregnant seal had been spotted on this particular beach the evening before. *She was big*, I was told. But she wasn't there. Later that day, I received another call. A pregnant female—K06, the one I had searched for that morning—had been shot.

Again, I was asked to help with the necropsy. I helped drag K06 from the beach and transport her to a makeshift necropsy station. I helped bagged and tag tissue and organ cultures, as we carved the largest seal I had ever seen into bits and pieces.

We searched her body for a bullet that an x-ray showed was there. We found it just inside the placenta lining—inside her womb. But that bullet hadn't impacted the fetus. The pup wasn't killed by a bullet. I held the three-foot-long, perfectly-formed male pup in my hands. He died of suffocation as his mother's life seeped out of her due to another bullet that blasted in one side of her chest cavity and out the other.

Hawaiian Monk Seals are federally protected species. And, so, we volunteers continually ask why our state and federal government isn't doing more to protect them.

We volunteers wonder about our own safety and whether when we head out to a beach—and remember Kauai has many remote beaches—whether we will meet harm.

We volunteers are frustrated when we see seals harassed—by dogs roaming unleashed on the beach, by snorkelers in the water—because we see our warnings go unheeded. Unheeded because people are either a)

uneducated about these endangered animals; or b) feel no repercussions will come to them, because, hey, even an admitted killer of a Hawaiian monk seal got off with what we volunteers see as a light sentence.

Our endangered species make Hawaii special. Visitors come from around the world to see our native birds, our endemic marine life and rare plants. Please help preserve our host culture and our livelihood by passing SB 2441. Please do the right thing.

Mahalo,

Kim Steutermann Rogers

P.O. Box 823

Anahola, HI 96703

808-823-9861

Kim Steutermann Rogers kimsrogers@mac.com http://www.kimsrogers.com P.O. Box 823 Anahola, HI 96703 808-823-9861

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov

Sent:

Monday, February 22, 2010 3:41 PM

To:

JGO Testimony

Cc:

tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com

Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Tina Owens Organization: Individual

Address: Phone:

E-mail: <u>tinaowens@hawaii.rr.com</u>

Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments:

I am strongly in support of SB2441 and want the legislature to impose heavy penalties on those who take or kill endangered species of all types, especially monk seals.

Georgette Yaindl, Esq. 2649 Peter St. P.O. Box. 1555 Honolulu, HI 96806 808.224.0219 yaindl@hawaii.edu

February 22, 201000

TO: Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair

Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

RE: SUPPORT for SB 2441, A Bill for An Act Relating to Endangered Species

HEARING

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

DATE:

TIME:

11:00 a.m.

PLACE:

Conference Room 016

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Thank you, Senators, for considering this bill for adoption by Hawaii's twenty-fifth legislature. I am writing to express my strong support for this bill.

I understand that the driving force behind SB 2441 is the tragic intentional killings of four (4) Hawaiian monk seals by gunshot on Kauai and Molokai during the past two (2) years; and the position that when a person acts intentionally to harm or kill one of Hawaii's listed endangered species, this crime should be classified under state law as a felony, not a misdemeanor, as currently provided. While I understand this bill will make acts of intentional harm to <u>any</u> endangered species a felony, I especially urge you to pass this bill to provide increased protection to Hawaii's State Mammal, the fifteen million year old Hawaiian monk seal.

SB 2441 also attempts to provide for a private right of action to enforce Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 195D. While I agree with the legislative intent and public need for such provision, I respectfully suggest that the current proposed language requires revision and suggest alternative language below. I urge the committee members and all your legislative colleagues favorably move SB 2441 to amend Chapter 195D and allow for a private right of action for many reasons, and suggest that the following two (2) reasons are particularly compelling:

- 1) Federal law allows citizens to file suit under the Endangered Species Act via the "citizen's suit provision" located at 16 U.S.C. S. § 1540 (g)(1). It is only right and appropriate that the rights of Hawaii's citizens and the welfare of Hawaii's endangered species, and particularly that of the Hawaiian monk seal that lives nowhere else besides the Hawaiian Archipelago, should be vindicated and represented in our state courts.
- In 1997, the legislature passed Act 380, amending Chapter 195D DDDD to provide for the creation of "Habitat Conservation Plans." Act 380 also amended Chapter 195D at section 28 to provide that "the rights and remedies under Chapter 195D shall be cumulative and in addition to any and all rights and remedies that may exist under applicable state and federal laws." Then, in 2003, the legislature again amended Chapter 195D via Act 35 to provide for "citizen's suit" enforcement of the provisions and regulations concerning Habitat Conservation plans. SB 2441 builds on the successes of previous legislatures to strengthen chapter 195D, as well as reinforces their recognition of the concurrency of federal and state jurisdiction over endangered species, and the utility of providing for protection and recovery of endangered species under state law through a "citizen's suit" mechanism.

However, I respectfully suggest that if a problem is perceived as existing in SB2441's proposed amendments to § 195D-32's "citizen suit" provision, it is a problem in the existing language that states "any person, acting as a private attorney general, may commence a civil suit on the person's behalf." Here is a, if not, the rub: a citizen's suit is not a "private attorney general's suit", at least inasmuch if the 2003 legislature intended to model Hawaii's citizen suit provision on the federal ESA citizen's suit provision. This is because under the federal ESA, only a legally interested person can bring a citizen's suit. Accordingly, that person must satisfy the constitutional Article III standing requirement of having suffered or being in imminent threat of suffering a legal injury.

Under a private attorney general action, the petitioner purports to represent the injured or imminently endangered *public*. As a basis for the recovery of legal costs and fees as the prevailing party. The Hawaii Supreme Court at length addressed the issue of suits brought under the private attorney general doctrine in the 2009 Superferry decision in Sierra Club v. DOT, 120 Haw. 181 (March 16, 2009). Here, the court explained that the doctrine is "an equitable rule that allows courts in their discretion to allow *attorney's fees* to plaintiff's who have vindicated important *public rights*."

Therefore, it is appropriate to amend SB 2441 as follows:

at page 4, Section 3, amending § 195D-32. Citizen suits. (A) Except as provided in subsection (b), any person may commence a civil suit on the person's behalf. (i.e., delete "acting as a private attorney general"); and

at page 7, Subsection (d), line 12, after "party" insert, whether private or governmental" (so that the state consents to being sued <u>and</u> being subject to payment of attorneys fees as a losing party).

Finally, the senate committees that heard this bill before Judiciary amended the original senate draft to provide that the effective date of the bill shall be July 1, 2050. While committee staff members attempted to brush this off as "standard procedure," "to keep discussion alive," and while your colleagues unlikely meant any insult or injury by casting the effective date off to forty years from now, as applied in the context of Hawaii's endangered species, and particularly the Hawaiian monk seal whose population is estimated to be declining at a rate of 5% each year, the committees' insertion of this "standard" amendment may be construed as insensitivity or ignorance on the part of our elected officials as concerns the plight on Hawaii's endangered species. Please be sure the bill you transmit to the House restores the effective date to July 1, 2010.

Thank you very much for your attention, concern, and favorable action on this bill, including consideration of the amendments proposed herein. \square

Aloha,

Georgette

February 22, 2010

Senate Sergeant-At-Arms
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
586-6659 fax

RE: SB 2441, SD1

Aloha Senators,

I am writing to ask for your support and subsequent passing of the above bill. As a volunteer for saving the Hawaiian Monk Seal and believer in protecting all species, it is most important that we get this billing passed, with no delays.

The volunteers and the scientists are all-aware of the downward spiral of the monk seals and are doing everything possible to protect and preserve the few animals we have left.

There isn't a lot of time to save these creatures. Any delays or deferments in passing laws, is crucial to saving the entire species. Harsher prosecution in the takes and killings of these animals is needed to stop the killing of the harmless creatures we have left dwelling on our islands, trying to survive.

The birth of pups on the Main Hawaiian Islands in 2009 was offset by the 4 killings of animals in 2009. A pregnant seal within a week of birth shot. A \$25.00 fine and a few days in jail. The law did not protect these 4 animals and a Class C felony charge would give a lawbreaker a moment to think about the consequences of such unnecessary actions against innocent and endangered creatures. That one female seal could have helped the population with about 16 to 20 pups in her lifetime. We lost more than a mom and baby that day. We lost another chance to turn the decline around.

Volunteers and taxpayers that care about the environment and Hawaii's fragile ecosystem and the creatures that are part of that system, thank you for your consideration in passing this most important bill. The endangered species of our Islands do not have time for delay.

Mahalo nui loa.

MANA

February 22, 2010

Senate Sergeant-At-Arms
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
586-6659 fax

RE: SB 2441, SD1

Aloha Senators.

I am writing to ask for your support and subsequent passing of the above bill. As a volunteer for saving the Hawaiian Monk Seal and believer in protecting all species, it is most important that we get this billing passed, with no delays.

DJUNES

The volunteers and the scientists are all-aware of the downward spiral of the monk seals and are doing everything possible to protect and preserve the few animals we have left.

There isn't a lot of time to save these creatures. Any delays or deferments in passing laws, is crucial to saving the entire species. Harsher prosecution in the takes and killings of these animals is needed to stop the killing of the harmless creatures we have left dwelling on our islands, trying to survive.

The birth of pups on the Main Hawaiian Islands in 2009 was offset by the 4 killings of animals in 2009. A pregnant seal within a week of birth shot. A \$25.00 fine and a few days in jail. The law did not protect these 4 animals and a Class C felony charge would give a lawbreaker a moment to think about the consequences of such unnecessary actions against innocent and endangered creatures. That one female seal could have helped the population with about 16 to 20 pups in her lifetime. We lost more than a mom and baby that day. We lost another chance to turn the decline around.

Volunteers and taxpayers that care about the environment and Hawaii's fragile ecosystem and the creatures that are part of that system, thank you for your consideration in passing this most important bill. The endangered species of our Islands do not have time for delay.

Mahalo nui loa.

Rebecca Gray

2421 Tusitala St. #2403

Honolulu, HI 96792

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov

Sent:

Tuesday, February 23, 2010 9:08 AM

To:

JGO Testimony

Cc:

jschmitt@hawaii.rr.com

Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Jane Schmitt Organization: Individual

Address: Phone:

E-mail: jschmitt@hawaii.rr.com

Submitted on: 2/23/2010

Comments:

The perpetrator who killed a pregnant female monk seal last year on Kauai was given an absurdly, woefully small penalty - a miniscule fine for taking two lives of our highly endangered & constant only endemic mammal. This local man, with full knowledge of their rareness, chose to slaughter these innocent animals so he could fish more easily. He should be locked up in jail, not given a slap on the wrist. Totally unacceptable punishment for a terrible crime.

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov

Sent:

Monday, February 22, 2010 8:16 PM

To:

JGO Testimony

Cc:

neuhealth1@hotmail.com

Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Diane Neuman Organization: Individual

Address: 73-4611 Kukuki Street Kailua Kona, HI 96740

Phone: 808325-2400

E-mail: neuhealth1@hotmail.com

Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments:

We need to send a stronger message and deterent to anyone who would hurt endangered species.

Senate Sergeant-At-Arms
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY &GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair
586-6659 fax

RE: SB 2441, SD1

Aloha Senators,

I am writing to ask for your support and subsequent passing of the above bill. As a volunteer for saving the Hawaiian Monk Seal, 'ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua, it is most important that we get this bill passed without delay.

The volunteers and the scientists are all-aware of the downward spiral of the monk seals and are doing everything possible to protect and preserve the few animals we have left.

There isn't a lot of time to save these creatures. Not having delays or deferments in passing laws is crucial to saving the entire species. Harsher prosecution for the harming and killing of these animals is needed.

The birth of pups on the Main Hawaiian Islands in 2009 was offset by the killing of four animals that year. The shooting of a pregnant seal within a week of birth resulted in a mere \$25.00 fine and a few days in jail. The law did not protect these four animals. A Class C felony charge would give a lawbreaker a moment to think about the consequences of harming these innocent and endangered creatures. That one female seal could have helped the population with about 16 to 20 pups in her lifetime. We lost more than a mom and baby that day. We lost another chance to turn the decline around.

Volunteers and taxpayers who care about the environment, Hawaii's fragile eco-system, and the creatures that are part of that system, thank you for your consideration in passing this most important bill.

Mahalo nui loa,

Karen Rohter

From: Sent:

Diane Gabriel [gabdm1@gmail.com] Tuesday, February 23, 2010 7:20 AM

To:

JGO Testimony

Subject:

Senate Bill 2441/SDI

PLEASE PASS THIS BILL TO SAVE OUR STATE MAMMAL! The Hawaiian Monk Seal has been in the Hawaiian Islands since before the main islands were formed. There are less than 1100 seals alive today and they are decreasing by 4% per year. It is important that we do anything we can to protect these wonderful creatures from extinction. They are the only tropical seals in the world and the only seals found in the Hawaiian Islands outside of captivity. Please don't let the Hawaiian Monk Seal go the route of the extinct Caribbean Monk Seal.

Aloha Senators.

I am writing to ask for your support and subsequent passing of the above bill. As a volunteer for saving the Hawaiian Monk Seal and believer in protecting all species, it is most important that we get this billing passed, with no delays.

The volunteers and the scientists are all-aware of the downward spiral of the monk seals and are doing everything possible to protect and preserve the few animals we have left.

There isn't a lot of time to save these creatures. Any delays or deferments in passing laws, is crucial to saving the entire species. Harsher prosecution in the takes and killings of these animals is needed to stop the killing of the harmless creatures we have left dwelling on our islands, trying to survive.

The birth of pups on the Main Hawaiian Islands in 2009 was offset by the 4 killings of animals in 2009. A pregnant seal shot within a week of giving birth with the perpetrator only receiving a \$25.00 fine and a few days in jail. The law did not protect these 4 animals and a Class C felony charge would give a lawbreaker a moment to think about the consequences of such unnecessary actions against innocent and endangered creatures. That one female seal could have helped the population with about 16 to 20 pups in her lifetime. We lost more than a mom and baby that day. We lost another chance to turn the decline around.

Volunteers and taxpayers that care about the environment, Hawaii's fragile eco-system and the creatures that are part of that system, thank you for your consideration in passing this most important bill. The endangered species of our Islands do not have time for delay.

Mahalo nui loa,

Diane Gabriel

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov

Sent:

Tuesday, February 23, 2010 9:08 AM

To:

JGO Testimony

Cc:

jschmitt@hawaii.rr.com

Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Jane Schmitt Organization: Individual

Address: Phone:

E-mail: jschmitt@hawaii.rr.com

Submitted on: 2/23/2010

Comments:

The perpetrator who killed a pregnant female monk seal last year on Kauai was given an absurdly, woefully small penalty - a miniscule fine for taking two lives of our highly endangered & amp; only endemic mammal. This local man, with full knowledge of their rareness, chose to slaughter these innocent animals so he could fish more easily. He should be locked up in jail, not given a slap on the wrist. Totally unacceptable punishment for a terrible crime.

From: Sent:

Leanne Morin [himax57@gmail.com] Tuesday, February 23, 2010 2:39 PM

To:

JGO Testimony

Subject:

Re: Senate Bill 2441/SDI

Aloha Senators,

PLEASE PASS THIS BILL: Senate Bill 2441/SDI TO SAVE OUR STATE MAMMAL! The Hawaiian Monk Seal has been in the Hawaiian Islands since before the main islands were formed. There are less than 1100 seals alive today and they are decreasing by 4% per year. It is important that we do anything we can to protect these wonderful prehistoric creatures from extinction. They are the only tropical seals in the world and the only seals found in the Hawaiian Islands. Please don't let the Hawaiian Monk Seal go the route of the extinct Caribbean Monk Seal.

Again, I am writing to ask for your support and subsequent passing of Senate Bill 2441/SDI. As a believer in saving the Hawaiian Monk Seal it is most important that we get this bill passed without delay.

The volunteers and scientists are aware of the downward spiral of the monk seals and are doing everything possible to protect and preserve the few animals we have left.

There isn't a lot of time to save these creatures. Not delaying or deferring the passing of laws that would protect the Hawaiian Monk Seal, would be crucial to saving the entire species. Harsher prosecution in the harming and killing of these animals is needed to stop the killing of the harmless creatures we have left that are trying to survive and live on our islands.

The birth of pups on the Main Hawaiian Islands in 2009 was offset by the 4 killings of animals in 2009. A pregnant seal shot within a week of giving birth - with the perpetrator only receiving a \$25.00 fine and a few days in jail is reprehensible. The law did not protect these 4 animals and a Class C felony charge would give the lawbreaker pause to think about the consequences of such unnecessary actions against innocent and endangered creatures. That one female seal could have helped the population with about 16 to 20 pups in her lifetime. We lost more than a mom and baby that day. We lost another chance to turn the decline around.

Volunteers and taxpayers that care about the environment and Hawaii's fragile ecosystem and the creatures that are part of that system, thank you for your consideration in passing this most important bill. The endangered species of our Islands do not have time for delay.

Mahalo nui loa,

Leanne Morin

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov

Sent:

Monday, February 22, 2010 8:56 PM

To:

JGO Testimony

Cc:

merway@hawaii.rr.com

Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Ma

Organization: Individual

Address: PO Box 2807 Kailua Kona, HI

Phone: 808-324-4624

E-mail: merway@hawaii.rr.com Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments:

Please ensure that the penalty for taking an endangered species to a felony.

Mahalo for your consideration. It is vital!

2/22/10: Testimony in Support of SB 2441 Hearing: JGO 2/23/10 11:00am

Description: Endangered Species; Felony; Private Right of Action. Effective 7/1/50. (SD1) Establishes the crime of intentional or knowing taking of an endangered species as a class C felony; provides a private right of action to enforce conservation of aquatic life, wildlife, and land plants laws.

To: <u>COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS</u>

Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair Senator Dwight Y. Takamine, Vice Chair

Aloha Chair Sen. Tanguchi, Vice Chair Sen. Takamine & JGO Committee Members:

I strongly support SB 2441 which establishes the known taking of an endangered species as a Class C Felony and I urge JGO to pass SB2441.

Our Hawaiian Islands hold a fragile biodiversity which is the richest archipelago on Earth in endemic species unique to Hawaii. Sadly, Hawaii is also the endangered species capital of the world, since our natural ecosystems are so fragile and our species so unique. Being citizens of Hawaii, and certainly a governing authority of Hawaii requires that we citizens and legislators take our stewardship of Hawaii's unique natural resources seriously.

In 2009, we have lost 3 adult monk seals, one a pregnant female who was a proven breeder, knowingly killed by men who feel that monk seals are a problem because they eat fish. The pitifully low fee of \$25.00 plus only 90 days in jail with supervised release of 1 year, which was the latest sentence on Kauai, is a travesty and clearly not a deterrent. The current laws do not penalize these shameful and greedy criminals enough, as shown by a recent monk seal killing on Moloka'i.

The Hawaiian monk seal is critically endangered and may go extinct within our lifetimes. These beautiful animals have a right to exist in the main Hawaiian Islands, and consume fish as they have for thousands of years before humans voyaged to Hawaii.

I am a Hawaii public school science teacher at one of the state's largest middle schools in Kona. My students want to be able to see Hawaiian monk seals, and value the endemic species of our islands. My students are quite concerned about Hawaii's endangered and threatened plants and animals and they want their children to be able to see and care for these species as well.

Tourists visit Hawaii because of our unique culture and natural resources. If we do not seriously protect our unique plants and animals, Hawaii will just be like any ruined tropical place and will not be considered worth the trip.

So many of our endemic Hawaiian species have gone extinct via human ignorance and greed. We now have the science and knowledge to help endangered species recover. We owe it to Hawaii's future generations to protect our unique endangered species to the fullest extent. Unfortunately, unless we impose stricter penalties, those who are ignorant and greedy will continue to kill our unique wildlife.

If anything, SB2441 (SD1) does not go far enough with the initial penalty fines of \$250- and \$500-, and I would recommend increasing the fines to \$1000-per species (1st offense) and \$2000- (2nd offense), with mandatory minimum 1 year jail time. Please pass SB2441 on and make it law in 2010. Hawaii's keke and wildlife depend on you to protect Hawaii's unique environment.

Mahalo for considering my testimony,

Lisa Diaz 76-223 Haoa Street Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

Tel: 808-329-7928 E-mail: lisadiaz@hawaii.rr.com

Sent:

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov Monday, February 22, 2010 10:21 PM

To: Cc: JGO Testimony jenhomcy@aol.com

Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: Jennifer Homcy Organization: Individual

Address: 66-219 C Kamehameha Hwy Haleiwa, HI

Phone: 808-375-7460 E-mail: jenhomcy@aol.com Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments:

Sent:

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov Monday, February 22, 2010 11:16 PM

To:

JGO Testimony luvties@gmail.com

Cc: Subject:

Testimony for SB2441 on 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM

Testimony for JGO 2/24/2010 11:00:00 AM SB2441

Conference room: 016

Testifier position: support Testifier will be present: No Submitted by: jenna kuhns Organization: Individual

Address: hawaii

Phone:

E-mail: luvties@gmail.com Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments: