

## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

February 15, 2011, 9:30 A.M. (Testimony is 1 page long)

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1473 HD1**

Aloha Chair Morita and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Chapter of the Sierra Club, with 8,000 dues-paying members and supporters, *supports* HB 1473 HD1. This measure requires most new lighting fixtures to be full-cutoff or semi-cutoff fixtures.

While this measure appears primarily geared toward reducing energy consumption, reducing unnecessary light pollution will also have an environmental benefit. Artificial lighting can adversely impact the nesting and feeding behaviors of birds and marine life.

Every year, thousands of baby birds (fledglings) leave their nests for their first flight to the ocean. Many of them are disoriented by bright night-time coastal lights, often scenic ocean spotlights in residential coastal communities but also airport and facility lights. After flying to exhaustion (or collision) and falling to the ground, exhausted fledglings are extremely susceptible to predation.

Adult seabirds, including the endangered Hawaiian petrel (Pterodroma sandwichensis) and the threatened Newell's shearwater (Puffinus auricularis newelli), also suffer the negative impacts of artificial night lighting. The wedge-tailed shearwater (Puffinus pacificus), while not yet listed as threatened or endangered, is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and adversely impacted by artificial night lighting. These protected seabirds are found in many areas throughout the State and transit coastal areas that are fully developed. In addition to protecting Hawaii's native and endangered species, residents and visitors alike share a great appreciation of dark Hawaiian skies for stargazing—and romantic walks along the moonlit beach.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.