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GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

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STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

DIVISION OF AQUATIC RESOURCES
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Testimony of
DAWN N.S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
WATER & LAND

Tuesday, March 19, 2024
9:30 AM

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Conference Room 430, State Capitol

In consideration of
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 198/HOUSE RESOLUTION 178
REQUESTING THE STATE'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO ADVOCATE
FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF EXISTING INTERNATIONAL LAWS TO REDUCE
GHOST NETS ENTERING THE STATE FROM INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND
TAKE OTHER ACTIONS TO REDUCE MARINE DEBRIS FROM FISHING GEAR

House Concurrent Resolution 198/House Resolution 178 request the State's congressional delegation to advocate for the enforcement of existing international laws to reduce ghost nets entering the State from international waters, advocate for the establishment of a requirement for United States fishing vessels to mark their fishing gear, and create financial incentives to retrieve and dispose of floating fishing gear. **The Department supports these measures.**

Derelict and abandoned fishing gear such as fishing nets and lines (sometimes called "ghost nets") pose a serious threat to coral reefs, marine mammals, sea turtles, seabirds, and other wildlife. Ghost nets pose a serious entanglement threat to endangered Hawaiian monk seals, threatened or endangered green, hawksbill, and olive ridley sea turtles, and our iconic humpback whales. Ghost nets also entangle coral reefs, breaking, shading, and abrading coral, preventing healthy growth, causing tissue damage, and promoting the spread of coral disease. Ghost nets and other derelict fishing gear also pose a danger to vessel navigation and human safety at sea.

Hawai'i has some of the highest reported marine debris accumulation rates in the United States. Any action taken by our congressional delegation to reduce the amount of ghost nets in the ocean will contribute to the improved health of marine species and habitats.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of these measures.

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY
DEAN D. UYENO
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER
AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
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CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

HCR-198

Submitted on: 3/17/2024 8:12:16 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!

HCR-198

Submitted on: 3/18/2024 9:00:22 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/19/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Bishop	Friends of Hanauma Bay	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support this important resolution on behalf of all of our marine environments.
With Aloha,

Lisa Bishop

Friends of Hanauma Bay I President