



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB2101_HD1_SD1
RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Senate Committee on Judiciary

April 1, 2026

9:20 AM

Room 415

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees:

Mahalo for setting this HB2101_HD1_SD1 for hearing. This bill is part of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA's) 2026 Legislative Package and OHA submits this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT**, with an additional request that the draft be amended to apply statewide without time limitation, as originally drafted by OHA.¹

As set forth below, OHA's position is based on repeat requests from our beneficiaries whose communities have been negatively affected by commercial aquarium collection to help ensure the current ten year judicial pause in commercial collection is extended permanently to protect their near shore ecosystems.

OHA's Board of Trustees adopted this bill as part of the OHA legislative package following the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs' (AOHCC) decision in October 2025 to support a resolution calling for a ban,² and the publication of Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Aquatic Resources' (DAR's) proposed rules to reopen West Hawai'i to commercial collection, which spurred renewed calls from beneficiaries to stop the industry from reopening.³ Shortly thereafter the County of Hawai'i also unanimously adopted a resolution setting forth the same kāhea to the legislature. Other

¹ This can be accomplished by deleting language at page 5 lines 2-8 limiting the ban to counties with populations over 500,000 and until conclusion of Holomua.

² See AOHCC Resolution 2025-40, "Calling for a Ban on Commercial Aquarium Collection in State of Hawai'i's Waters," [2025-AOHCC-ADOPTED-RESOLUTIONS.pdf](#).

³ See [Division of Aquatic Resources | Draft Rules and Public Notices](#), Chapters 13-77.1, "Aquarium Fishery Management," 13-60.4, West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area, Hawai'i," and 13-75, "Rules Regulating the Possession and Use of Certain Fishing Gear".

representative entities that have taken similar positions in the past include County of Kauaʻi and the Neighborhood Boards of Kahaluʻu, Kāneʻohe, Kailua and Waimānalo.

All of these representative bodies call on the legislature to take the lead in resolving this longstanding issue rather than deferring action to the DLNR and DAR which have received conflicting advice as to their jurisdiction to finally end this practice which has long divided our community.

Commercial Aquarium Collection Conflicts with Traditional and Customary Lawaiʻa Practices

Established pursuant to the terms of Section 5 of the Admissions Act and the Hawaiʻi State Constitution, Article XII, sections 4, 5, and 6, OHA serves as a semiautonomous agency and trust vehicle for the betterment of the conditions of Native Hawaiians. OHA's constitutional duties include administering its pro rata share of public trust revenues for the benefit of its Native Hawaiian beneficiaries, and formulating policy related to Native Hawaiians. HRS Chapter 10 further expands upon OHA role and duties in protecting and promoting Native Hawaiian rights across state agencies that have practices and policies that impair the exercise of such rights or affect OHA's mission to improve Native Hawaiian social and economic conditions. See HRS § 10-3.

The proposed ban set forth in HB2101 is consistent with OHA's existing duties to advance Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights under Article XII, section 7 of the Hawaiʻi State Constitution and longstanding OHA policy to protect natural resources that are important to the culture and lifestyle of Native Hawaiians. The current law allowing commercial aquarium collection, HRS § 181-33, is an unfortunate relic of the territorial period when reef fish were erroneously considered inedible and without any other recognized value. In reality, herbivorous reef fish most heavily targeted for commercial collection such as lauʻīpala (yellow tang) have been valued, managed, and revered by Native Hawaiians as a food source and for use in healing rituals and other traditional practices for generations. This antiquated law no longer reflects contemporary values let alone legal duties related to protection of our ʻāina, kai and Native Hawaiian practices that depend upon those resources.

Commercial Collection Negatively Affects Other Ocean Users

Commercial aquarium collection has divided our communities for decades due to the observed, negative impacts of the industry in marine areas targeted heavily for collection. Supplementing kamaʻāina observation and testimony, the industry's own West Hawaiʻi environmental impact statement (EIS) documented the negative impact of commercial aquarium collection on lauʻīpala (yellow tang), a species heavily targeted by the industry which has been valued, managed, and revered by Native Hawaiians as a food source and for use in healing rituals and other traditional practices for generations.⁴

⁴ Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council, Revised Final Environmental Impact Statement

Nonetheless, in early October 2025, DAR proposed rules to reopen commercial aquarium collection in the West Hawai‘i Regional Fishing Management Area (WHRFMA).⁵ **DAR’s proposed rules limit collection to the seven industry participants who contributed to the EIS, indicating the limited economic potential of this industry.**

On October 15, 2025, West Hawai‘i beneficiaries attended OHA’s Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment to testify in opposition to DAR’s proposal, and to ask OHA for support in addressing the observed, negative effects of commercial aquarium collection in their communities. Subsequently, on October 24, 2025, the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board) received over five hours of community testimony on the proposal to reopen the industry, overwhelmingly in opposition. During the public hearing, some Board members expressed the opinion that existing law *allowing* DLNR to issue commercial aquarium collection permits, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 188-31, *requires* that it permit industry participants after they comply with HEPA.⁶ This is also a position advanced by the Attorney General’s Office in related litigation.

Following five hours of primarily opposition testimony, the Board voted to send the rules out for public hearing, moving this industry one step closer to reopening in West Hawai‘i. OHA’s Board of Trustees voted to adopt a ban on collection as part of its legislative package shortly thereafter, in response to calls for help from West Hawai‘i beneficiaries, and consistent with OHA policy related to protection of natural resources.

Commercial Aquarium Collection Has Limited Economic Benefits

According to the industry’s own advocates, the aquarium trade in WHRFMA generates between \$499,416 to \$2,022,686 of income per year within the state (as 67% of statewide industry activity).⁷ In contrast, healthy coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, further enhancing their economic value.⁸ For example, state-supported analyses show that coral reefs provide flood protection benefits valued at more than \$836 million annually, protecting people, property, and jobs

Issuance of Commercial Aquarium Permits and Commercial Marine Licenses for the West Hawai‘i Regional Fishery Management Area (EIS) at p.122 (May 26, 2021), [2021-06-08-HA-Revised-FEIS-Hawaii-Island-Commercial-Aquarium-Permits.pdf](#).

⁵ Significantly, three Board members voted to approve the 2023 EIS and three voted to reject it; therefore, it was deemed approved by operation of law. See HRS § 343-5(e). Moreover, an EIS is an informational document required for public transparency and disclosure; approval of an EIS does not require that the regulatory agency approve the underlying project application.

⁶ See Board members statements on the Board’s purported lack of authority to ban commercial aquarium collection, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JE2zPoVp8qs&list=PLDh6ZXzdUvQkHtgVoauOkfa26NfNLh2pK&index=4> at 8:10:27; 7:22:09; 7:55:33.

⁷ RFEIS at p.102.

⁸ [Restoring Hawai‘i’s Reefs | The Nature Conservancy](#) (Sept. 16, 2018).

throughout Hawai‘i’s coastal communities.⁹

At the same time, costs for DAR to administer the permitting program and police compliance with geographically defined marine protected areas under the proposed rules reduce the economic value of this industry to the state. Moreover, DAR’s sustainability conclusion for West Hawai‘i is based on a permit-quota system that rests, in turn, upon untested enforcement and closes this industry to newcomers, further limiting the extent to which this industry benefits the public beyond existing industry participants.¹⁰ Whether DOCARE can in fact enforce the permit-quota system to maintain “sustainability” is unknown.

The Public Trust in Natural Resources Further Supports a Ban

Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, Haw. Const. Art. XI, § 1, requires that public resources be managed for the benefit of present and future generations, with commercial uses that negatively impact these resources disfavored under the law. Where commercial uses are permitted, commercial users have a high burden to justify their needs considering negative consequences on public trust uses including long term preservation of the resource itself. Moreover, where there is scientific uncertainty concerning the effects of commercial use, the public trust doctrine cautions application of the precautionary principle to preserve resources long term. Native Hawaiian cultural practices are one of the uses constitutionally protected under the public trust doctrine. *See In re Waiāhole*, 94 Haw. 97, 115-142 (2000).

These constitutional principles clearly caution the state against permitting an industry shown to repeatedly impinge upon the interests and concerns of the general public and those most intimately connected to the affected place and ecosystems. Beyond the specific interests of affected communities, businesses, and Native Hawaiian practitioners, up to 84% of Hawai‘i Island and O‘ahu residents favor banning the industry.¹¹

This widespread concern with the aquarium industry points to a fundamental policy question that this legislature must confront: in an age of ecological uncertainty, with coral reefs facing potential extinction within the next fifty years, does the commercial

⁹ Hawai‘i Coral Reef Initiative, *The Economic Value of Hawai‘i’s Coral Reefs* (Honolulu: State of Hawai‘i, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources).

¹⁰ OHA is sensitive to concerns of industry participants but notes that because the industry was judicially banned, there has been no collection for the better part of a decade, and a ban would not displace existing jobs. Further OHA is committed to developing programs to help beneficiaries pursue other maritime career pathways.

¹¹ See [Earthjustice Press Release](#), “Land Board Advances Plan to Re-Open West Hawai‘i Waters to Aquarium Pet Industry,” (Oct. 27, 2025) (citing a recent poll conducted by conducted by Honolulu-based Anthology | FINN Research).

extraction of reef fish serve a beneficial public purpose. OHA respectfully submits that it does not, and urges the legislature to pass this ban to protect Native Hawaiian beneficiaries, Hawai'i's nearshore ecosystems, and the broader public interest.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to present testimony. OHA asks that the Committees PASS this bill, but to remove the language at page 5 line 2-8 limiting the applicability of the ban to counties with populations over 500,000 and only until conclusion of the Holomua Initiative, to ensure the ban applies statewide and permanently as originally drafted.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

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CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
Acting Chairperson

Before the Senate Committees on
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
and
JUDICIARY

Thursday, April 2, 2026
9:20 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2101, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION

House Bill 2101, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1 proposes to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection, in counties with a population greater than 500,000 and prohibits the consideration of rules for the issuance of permits for the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes. This measure would be repealed upon promulgation of rules pursuant to the Holomua Marine Initiative and chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), by the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) for counties with a population greater than 500,000. **The Department opposes this measure.**

Pursuant to Chapters 187A and 189, HRS, the Department has managed the Hawai'i aquarium fishery for sustainable commercial use based on science and monitoring, gear restrictions, and in West Hawai'i, Fish Replenishment Areas (FRAs), which have contributed to increased populations of the two most heavily collected aquarium fish species. For example, in West Hawai'i, populations of yellow tang and goldring surgeonfish (kole), which together accounted for 91% of the total FY2017 aquarium catch, increased significantly within FRAs between 1999/2000 (when FRAs were first implemented) and 2021/2022.

In 2024, the Department's Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) conducted an independent review and analysis of available data for West Hawai'i and concluded that existing and

proposed aquarium fish management measures provide significant safeguards against threats to populations of target species as well as threats to the ecosystem.

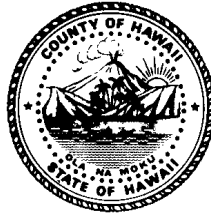
Since the 2017 Hawai'i Supreme Court ruling that aquarium fish permits are subject to the environmental review requirements of the Hawaii Environmental Policy Act (HEPA), aquarium collectors from O'ahu and West Hawai'i have been required to prepare Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements to analyze the impacts of aquarium collecting. This HEPA compliance requirement greatly reduces the number of aquarium collectors eligible to participate in the fishery. To date, only seven collectors in West Hawai'i have completed the HEPA review process and are eligible to obtain aquarium fish permits.

The Department is currently going through the public rulemaking process to implement administrative rules that strengthen regulations for the aquarium fishery through a combination of statewide and regional regulations. Public Hearings will be held on March 31 (via Zoom) and April 1 (in Kona), and written testimony will be accepted until April 12, 2026. These rules are designed to ensure that any authorized aquarium collection activity will be strictly regulated and monitored for compliance and sustainability. The proposed regulations include a mandatory commercial aquarium fishing permit, a limited "whitelist" of species that may be harvested, total annual catch limits for each species, area restrictions, and reporting requirements.

The Department is also currently undertaking a wholistic, community-driven nearshore management strategy called the Holomua Marine Initiative (Holomua). Holomua, which in the Hawaiian language means "to progress and move forward into the future," brings local fishers, cultural practitioners, and community representatives together with scientists and resource managers to collaboratively develop island-scale management actions aimed at improving the health of nearshore resources. Holomua was first launched on Maui in October 2022 as a pilot management planning process. The Maui planning team is currently finalizing its proposed management plan and draft rules for Maui, and DAR will be launching the Holomua process on Hawai'i island this May. After Hawai'i island, DAR plans to initiate the Holomua management planning process on O'ahu, likely beginning in the summer of 2027.

Given the timeline of DAR's ongoing management efforts and the public rulemaking process described above, delaying the aquarium fishery rulemaking until the conclusion of the O'ahu Holomua process would be inappropriate. Additionally, in light of DAR's commitment to a transparent, community-driven management framework through Holomua, the Department opposes legislation that would require aquarium fishery management to be addressed within that process. The commercial aquarium fishery is highly controversial and would likely impede progress, diverting attention from more immediate and pressing nearshore management priorities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

March 29, 2026

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

RE: **Support for HB2101, HD1, RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION.**

Prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection, in counties with a population greater than 200,000 and less than 300,000.

Hearing: **April 2, 2026 at 9:20 am**

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

I write in strong support of H.B. No. 2101, H.D. 1, relating to commercial aquarium collection.

H.B. 2101, H.D. 1 prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection, in counties with a population greater than 200,000 and less than 300,000 . This measure reflects a clear legislative intent to protect Hawai'i's native reef ecosystems while recognizing the unique population and environmental pressures facing Hawai'i County.

As outlined in the bill's findings, the capture and sale of Hawai'i's native reef wildlife for ornamental display and commercial profit are inconsistent with foundational Hawaiian values such as mālama 'āina, aloha 'āina, and kuleana to our surrounding environment . The measure further recognizes that many reef fish species targeted by aquarium collection have long been used for subsistence and cultural purposes and play a critical role in maintaining reef resilience, particularly as climate change intensifies ocean warming and acidification .

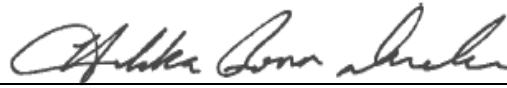
Healthy reef systems are essential to Hawai'i Island. They protect our shorelines from erosion and storm surge, support subsistence fishing and traditional practices, and sustain a visitor

industry that depends on vibrant, living reefs. In the face of accelerating environmental stressors, preserving herbivorous reef fish populations is a prudent and necessary conservation strategy.

Importantly, H.B. 2101, H.D. 1 preserves traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights protected under the State Constitution, as well as lawful fishing for consumption or bait and legitimate aquaculture and scientific activities . This balanced approach safeguards cultural practices while ending the commercial aquarium harvest within the affected county.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your favorable consideration and passage of H.B. No. 2101, H.D. 1.

Sincerely,



HOLEKA GORO INABA, Ed.D.,
Council Chair, District 8, North Kona

HGI.wpb

REBECCA VILLEGAS

*Council Member
District 7, Central Kona*



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HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

*County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740*

March 30, 2026

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS COUNCIL MEMBER,

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

ON HB 2101 HD1, SD1, RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION AND JUDICIARY

Chairs, Vice Chairs and Members of the Committee:

I was born and raised on Hawai'i Island and have spent much of my life connected to our ocean, which is why I strongly support H.B. 2101, H.D.1. I have seen firsthand how important healthy reefs are to our communities. Whether through fishing, swimming, or simply observing marine life, these experiences have deepened my respect for the delicate balance that sustains our near-shore ecosystems.

Our reefs are not just resources, they are living systems that support food security, protect our shorelines, and carry cultural meaning. Species like lau'ipala (yellow tang) and kole are a familiar and essential part of that system. Seeing them thrive in the wild is part of what makes Hawai'i unique. Removing them for commercial aquarium trade takes away from the health of the reef and from future generations who deserve to experience the same abundance.

The values of mālama 'āina and kuleana resonate strongly with me. We have a responsibility to care for these ecosystems in a way that ensures their resilience, especially as climate change continues to place additional stress on coral reefs. Protecting herbivorous fish that helps control algae and support coral health is a practical and necessary step.

I also appreciate that this bill respects traditional and customary practices, subsistence fishing, and responsible aquaculture. It strikes a thoughtful balance between conservation and cultural rights.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to pass H.B. 2101, H.D. 1, S.D.1.

Mahalo for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Villegas', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rebecca Villegas
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2026 9:23:54 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Godfrey Akaka	Testifying for The Native Hawaiian Gathering Rights Association	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are in strong opposition of this ban of an entire fishery. Banning the most highly regulated and highest sustainable fishery will open the door to begin the ban of every fishery in the state. Mahalo.



TESTIMONY PROVIDING COMMENTS ON H.B. 2101 H.D. 1 S.D. 1
Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Submitted to the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection & Judiciary
Hawaii State Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature, 2026

Aloha Chairs and Members of the Committees:

We respectfully submit **comments** on H.B. 2101, H.D. 1 S.D. 1, which would prohibit the commercial harvest of aquatic life for aquarium purposes in counties with a population greater than 500,000, provide for the consideration of rules for the issuance of permits for the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, and sunset the prohibition upon the promulgation of such rules. Although we support the intent of this measure, we strongly urge the Committees to amend the bill to its original version. The original version of this measure is long overdue and reflects Hawaii's constitutional obligations, Native Hawaiian values, environmental justice principles, and our collective kuleana to protect reef wildlife for present and future generations.

I. CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATIONS DEMAND ACTION

The Hawaii State Constitution is unambiguous in its mandate to protect our natural environment. Article XI, Section 1 declares:

"For the benefit of present and future generations, the State and its political subdivisions shall conserve and protect Hawaii's natural beauty and all natural resources, including land, water, air, minerals and energy sources, and shall promote the development and utilization of these resources in a manner consistent with their conservation and in furtherance of the self-sufficiency of the State."

Commercial aquarium collection, which strips native reef ecosystems of critical herbivorous fish like lauipala (yellow tang) and kole (goldring surgeonfish) purely for ornamental profit, is fundamentally incompatible with this constitutional duty. These fish are living ecological actors essential to reef health and resilience, not decorations

Article XI, Section 9, further affirms that each person has the right to a clean and healthful environment, and that the State has an affirmative duty to protect that right. Allowing commercial collectors to deplete reef wildlife for private profit at the expense of public ecological health directly undermines this constitutional guarantee.

Importantly, Article XII, Section 7 protects the exercise of traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights. Many reef species targeted by commercial aquarium collectors, including those falsely characterized in 1953 territorial legislation as having "little or no value as food fish," have sustained Native Hawaiian communities for generations through subsistence,



cultural practice, and spiritual connection to the ‘āina. Permitting commercial depletion of these species for the pet trade is an ongoing affront to constitutionally protected Native Hawaiian rights.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The commercial aquarium trade represents a profound environmental justice issue. The burden of ecological degradation falls disproportionately on Native Hawaiian and local communities, who depend on healthy reefs for subsistence fishing, cultural practices, and community well-being. Meanwhile, the profits flow primarily to outside commercial interests and global pet trade markets.

The 1953 territorial legislature's dismissal of reef fish as having “little or no value as food fish” was not merely scientifically inaccurate; it was a colonial erasure of Native Hawaiian subsistence and cultural practices. H.B. 2101 begins to correct that historical wrong by restoring legal recognition of the true value these species hold for Hawaii's communities.

Furthermore, reef ecosystems provide irreplaceable ecosystem services to coastal communities, including moderating erosion, protecting infrastructure from high surf, and supporting nature-based tourism that sustains local livelihoods. The degradation of reefs through commercial extraction disproportionately harms the working families and communities most dependent on these natural systems.

III. ANIMAL WILDLIFE PROTECTIONS AND ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

Beyond their ecological roles, the fish targeted by commercial aquarium collection are sentient wildlife deserving of protection in their own right. Capture methods used in the aquarium trade, including the use of fine-meshed nets, cause significant stress, injury, and mortality to individual animals, both those collected and those incidentally harmed during collection. Many fish do not survive the trauma of capture, transport, and captivity.

Hawaii has already recognized the importance of protecting its marine environment by prohibiting the taking of sand, dead coral, coral rubble, rocks, and soil since 1988. It is both logical and morally consistent to extend these protections to living reef wildlife. Native reef fish are not commodities to be extracted for ornamental display. They are wild animals with ecological roles, behavioral complexity, and intrinsic value.

Climate change makes these protections even more urgent. Herbivorous reef fish like laupala and kole are natural reef custodians, consuming the algae that blooms following ocean heat events and threatens to smother coral. Removing these animals from the reef for private profit at a time of accelerating climate stress is ecologically reckless and morally indefensible.

IV. CONCLUSION



H.B. 2101, in its original form, honors Hawaii's constitutional commitments, corrects a historical injustice rooted in the colonial dismissal of Native Hawaiian values, advances environmental justice for communities most dependent on healthy reefs, and affirms that Hawaii's native wildlife has value far beyond what any aquarium price tag can capture.

I urge the Committee to pass this measure with an amendment back to the original version.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 9:56:55 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nakoolani Warrington	Testifying for Kupuna for the Moopuna	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In STRONG SUPPORT of HB2101 HD1 SD1

SUPPORT and PASS HB2101 to ban aquarium collection.

Reinstate the statewide ban from the original bill. Mahalo.



*He Lawai'a no ke kai papa'u, he pōkole ke aho; He Lawai'a no ke kai hohonu
he loa ke aho" "A fisherman of shallow seas uses a short line; a fisherman
of the deep sea uses a long line."*

KALANIHALE

March 23, 2026

Aloha e Chair and committee members,

RE: Strong Support for HB 2101 (Relating to Environmental Protection) — Prohibiting Commercial Aquarium Collection

On behalf of Kalanihale, I write in strong support of HB 2101, which establishes a statewide statutory prohibition on the commercial collection of marine life for sale and export as aquarium pets, while explicitly preserving scientific research, education, and aquaculture/captive breeding.

This bill resolves a fundamental policy question that agency rulemaking cannot: whether nearshore reef species should be treated as export commodities or protected as public trust resources for Hawai'i's people—especially for Native Hawaiian and local subsistence communities whose customary and traditional practices depend on healthy nearshore ecosystems.


Commercial aquarium collection has fueled decades of conflict by extracting culturally and ecologically significant species, including reef herbivores, from our nearshore waters for private profit—primarily for off-island consumers. This has impaired reef integrity and disrupted subsistence fishing practices, while treating public trust marine resources as ornaments rather than living resources central to food security, culture, and community resilience.

HB2101 is also critical for good governance. It would prevent the Division of Aquatic Resources from asserting that state law compels reopening commercial aquarium collection and would eliminate the need to spend scarce public resources on a costly permitting system designed to support an industry with negligible benefits to the state and its residents. Instead, DAR's limited capacity can be directed toward what communities across the pae 'āina are calling for: co-management support, reef stewardship, and addressing urgent, escalating threats to nearshore ecosystems.

Healthy coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security. A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations.

For these reasons, Kalanihale respectfully urges the committees to pass HB2101.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

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FRIENDS of HANAUMA BAY

CONSERVE • PROTECT • RESTORE

*Dedicated to the conservation of coastal and marine environments,
emphasizing stewardship of the natural resources of Hanauma Bay*

To: Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Committee on Judiciary, Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Re: **Strong Support for HB2101 SD1** - Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

April 2, 2026

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, and members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection, and the Judiciary:

This bill received 810 pieces of written testimony in the last hearing alone, the vast majority in strong support of the preamble's five paragraphs, beginning with "*The legislature finds that the capture and sale of Hawaii's native reef wildlife for ornamental display and commercial profit are **unsustainable and contrary to Hawaiian values**, including malama ama, aloha ama, kuleana for the surrounding environment, and pono fishing practices, such as taking only what is needed for family or community subsistence;*"

and ending with "*The legislature notes that in 1988, the State prohibited the taking of sand, dead coral or coral rubble, rocks, soil, and other marine deposits. **Extending these prohibitions to encompass the commercial collection and sale of reef wildlife for the aquarium pet trade is now necessary to protect and conserve Hawaii's invaluable natural resources for present and future generations**, including traditional Native Hawaiian cultural practices that depend on them. The legislature further notes that these obligations and protections are enshrined in article XI, sections 1 and 9, and article XII, section 7, of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.*"

So thank you for hearing these voices and scheduling the bill for a hearing in your joint committee today.

In many cases, the testimony represents more than the heartfelt words from one person or ohana:

-HB2101 is part of OHA's legislative priorities this year on behalf of its hundreds of thousand Native Hawaiian beneficiaries.

-The Sierra Club of Hawaii strongly supports the bill on behalf of its 20,000 members.

-The Democratic Caucus of the Hawaii Democratic Party speaks in strong support on behalf of 6,680 members.

-The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce strongly supports the bill on behalf of its 580 members.

-The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs supports HB2101 on behalf of its 3,500 members.

-The Hawaii Ocean Legislative Task Force supports the bill on behalf of more than 150 members across over 20 organizations.

-The Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce supports HB2101 on behalf of its 460 businesses and members.

-The Activities and Attractions Association of Hawai'i (A3H) strongly supports the bill on behalf of its members.

Most of the testimonies request the ban to be extended statewide. Which we support.

Hawai'i is ready to close down the unnecessary, extractive, and cruel commercial aquarium fish collection industry statewide for good. We look to your leadership to support BLNR's 2023 unanimous decision to finally make this happen.

Mahalo for your time, and for the opportunity to join so many others testifying in strong support of HB2101, amended to a statewide ban.

With Aloha,

Lisa Bishop, MS
Friends of Hanauma Bay I President

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 2:52:46 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Moran	Testifying for Kihei Community Assoc (KCA)	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha committee chairs and members

While we continue to support this bill to preserve Hawaii's natural resources, we believe it must apply to all locations in the State waters, not just the kai of Oahu. Please make such an adjustment before approving it in this joint committee. Mahalo

Mike Moran for KCA www.gokihei.org

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 3:58:43 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rebekah Kaufmann	Testifying for Kohala Divers	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rebekah Kaufmann, and I am the owner of Kohala Divers and Siren Sportfishing. I live and work in Kawaihae/Kamuela on Hawai'i Island (North Kona–Kohala Coast). I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB2101 with an amendment to explicitly include Hawai'i Island.

Our businesses depend on healthy, fish-filled reefs. Guests come to Hawai'i for thriving marine life—schools of reef fish, turtles, and intact coral ecosystems—not empty reefs. When aquarium collection removes key species and disrupts reef balance, it directly harms the experience visitors pay for and the reputation Hawai'i has built as a world-class ocean destination.

Healthy reefs are also essential to our local community and economy. They support sustainable ocean recreation, provide resilience for coral and coastal ecosystems, and help ensure that future generations can experience Hawai'i's marine life the way it should be—abundant, diverse, and alive.

Please pass HB2101 and amend it to include Hawai'i Island so protections are consistent statewide and no island is left behind. Mahalo for your leadership and for protecting Hawai'i's reefs.

Mahalo,

Rebekah Kaufmann

Owner, Kohala Divers & Siren Sportfishing

Kawaihae/Kamuela, Hawai'i Island

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 5:49:23 PM

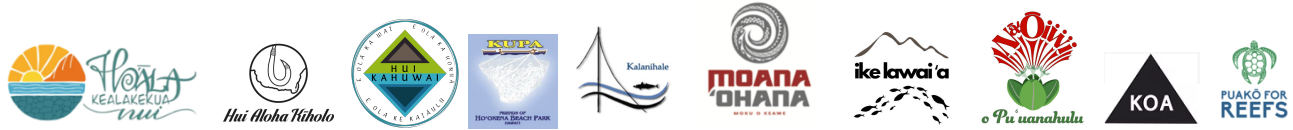
Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Nakachi	Testifying for Moana Ohana	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support, please amend to add all Hawaiian Islands please

KAI KULEANA



Re: Strong Support for HB2101 SD1, for April 2, 2026

Date: March 29, 2026

Aloha e Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads and Members of the committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary,

Kai Kuleana submits this written testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB2101 SD1 and respectfully urges passage of this measure to ban aquarium fish collection on Oahu. Although this bill is only for Oahu we further recommend a statewide prohibition on aquarium fish collection.

Kai Kuleana is a network of hoa‘āina (stewards) from across Hawai‘i Island, from North Kohala to South Kona. We rely on our nearshore resources to feed our ‘ohana, sustain our livelihoods, and fulfill our kuleana as stewards of these places. Our communities are deeply connected to the health of our reefs and fisheries, and our ability to maintain these relationships depends on their long-term abundance. We are committed to solution-oriented, community-driven efforts that foster healthy, vibrant ecosystems supported by engaged and responsible communities.

Aquarium fish collection places additional pressure on ecosystems that are already vulnerable. As a collective, we believe it is our responsibility to ensure these resources are protected so they may continue to sustain our communities for generations to come.

We respectfully urge your joint committees to **PASS** this bill. This measure affirms our right and responsibility to mālama kai and helps to perpetuate ‘āina momona through active advocacy and community-based stewardship.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our mana‘o.

With Aloha,

Signed on behalf of Kai Kuleana
by lineal descendants and community representatives,



Mike Nakachi, Moana 'Ohana



Chuckie Leslie, 'Ike Lawai'a



Ku'ulei Keakealani, Hui Aloha Kiholo



Kawika Ruddle, Ruddle 'Ohana



Charlie Young, KUPA Friends of Ho'okena Beach Park



Shane Akoni Nelson, Ho'āla Kealakekua Nui, Inc



MiuLan Pa'alua, Ho'ola



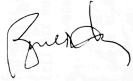
Malia Kipapa, Ka 'Ohana Kipapa



Jeana Kelekolio, Hui 'Ohana o Hōnaunau



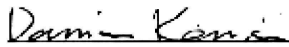
Kaikea Nakachi, Hui Kahuwai



Reggie Lee, Lee 'Ohana of Kohanaiki



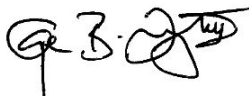
Ka'imi Kaupiko, Kalanihale



Damien Kenison, Kauhakō Ohana Association



Shenell Caldeira, Nā 'Ōiwi o Pu'uanahulu



George Fry, Puakō for Reefs

In Strong Support:

- Pi'i La'cha, La'cha 'Ohana of Kalahuipua'a, Kohala
- Pualani Maielua, Ka 'Ohana Maielua of Kailapa, Kohala
- Jeff Coakley, Hui Mamalahoa of Kohala

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:18:15 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Culbertson	Testifying for Big Island Reef Keepers hui	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators!

'Big Island Reef Keepers' are united in calling for strong support of HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection, WITH THE RE-INSTALEMENT OF HAWAII ISLAND AS PART OF A STATEWIDE LAW!

Most Hawai'i residents support this ban statewide, and with aquaculture now supplying the trade, there is no reason to take the wild ones.

Please understand that West Hawaii Island reefs and reef fish (Yellow Tang etc.) are ground zero for this industry's ambitions. And that this is no longer tolerable.

And right now, these fish are hard at work cleaning up our reefs everywhere after the recent storms inundated corals with polluted run-off.

Indeed, these fish are natures 'tools' for reef recovery.

Please honor that process now by banning their removal at the hands of Aquarium extractors!

Mahalo nui loa!

R A Culbertson

Honokaa

Member,

Big Island Reef Keepers hui

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:25:53 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Libby Leonard	Testifying for Sustainable Kohala 'Ohana	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

Sustainable Kohala 'Ohana submits **strong support for HB2101 HD1**, a necessary measure to protect Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, reef ecosystems, and the public trust resources our communities depend on.

WHY:

- Herbivorous reef fish like lau'īpala (yellow tang) are central to traditional fishing and subsistence for Native Hawaiian communities.
- Aquarium collectors remove hundreds of thousands of fish each year, disrupting reef biodiversity and the ecological functions that herbivorous fish provide. **These fish play a critical role in controlling algae that can smother corals**, an increasingly important function as warming waters and bleaching events threaten reef survival. Captured fish are also reported to experience high mortality rates in captivity.
- **84% of Hawai'i Island and O'ahu residents support permanently banning this industry (Anthology | FINN Research, 2025).**
- Commercial aquarium collection has raised significant legal and environmental concerns and undermines Native Hawaiian traditional and customary fishing rights protected under Article XII, § 7 of the Hawai'i Constitution. This activity directly impacts communities who rely on these species for subsistence, cultural practices, and stewardship of public trust resources.
- A recent analysis of state and federal monitoring data found that yellow tang populations have not clearly recovered following the halt of commercial aquarium collection in 2017. This lack of clear recovery underscores the risk of reopening the fishery and potentially reversing years of limited regeneration.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB2101 HD1 and stand with Hawai'i's communities in protecting the reefs that sustain our food systems, cultural practices, and future generations.

Mahalo for standing with Hawai'i's communities in protecting the resources that sustain us,

Mahalo nui loa,

Libby Leonard

President, Sustainable Kohala 'Ohana



HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:14:51 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Valerie Barnes	Testifying for HULI PAC	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB 2101 as it was passed out of the House before it was amended in the Senate to eliminate its applicabililty to West Hawaii and to repeal the measure when DAR rules are promulgated that permit the taking of reef fish for aquariums.

Please restore the original language OR amend the original language to apply to the banning of the fishery on ALL islands.

The public has been overwhelmingly clear that we do NOT want the aquarium trade to continue. The stress on our reefs from climate change is horrendous enough. We don't need to speed the degradation by removing large numbers of reef fish, destroying corals.

Mahalo

March 29, 2026

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: HB2101, HD1 — Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

POSITION: IN SUPPORT

Aloha, Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard,
and Members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

My name is Benjy Garfinkle, and I am a longtime resident of Hawai'i. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong **SUPPORT** of HB2101, HD1, and I urge the committees to pass this measure with an amendment to extend protections to Hawai'i Island.

The reefs of Hawai'i are not simply a resource — they are a living inheritance. As someone who has spent years in and around these waters as a diver, a community member, and a business owner, I have witnessed firsthand the fragility of our reef ecosystems and how much they mean to the people who call these islands home.

Commercial aquarium collection removes herbivorous reef fish — the very animals that keep algae in check and allow coral to recover. With aquaculture now capable of supplying the ornamental fish trade, there is simply no justification for continuing to extract wild fish from reefs already under stress from warming oceans and recent storm damage. West Hawai'i reefs have not recovered as expected since aquarium collection stopped in 2017, and the elimination of the monitoring program that was tracking that recovery only deepens the concern.

I am also deeply troubled that the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is moving to reopen collection in West Hawai'i as early as this summer — even as poaching of wild Hawai'i yellow tangs continues openly online. Reopening the fishery at this time sends the wrong message and places our reefs at further risk.

Most Hawai'i residents support a statewide ban. I urge this committee to listen to the community, protect what remains, and **pass HB2101 with an amendment extending protections to Hawai'i Island**. The reef cannot speak for itself. We must speak for it.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and your continued service to the people of Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,
Benjy Garfinkle
Hawai'i Resident



Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2101

On behalf of thousands of supporters, we strongly SUPPORT HB2101.

For years, local communities, scientists, and even visitors to Hawai'i have urged lawmakers to further protect Hawai'i's fish from the commercial aquarium trade by implementing a true ban on the capture and sale of these animals, regardless of the method of collection.

The islands' fragile reef ecosystems are already plagued by invasive species, warmer waters, and increased acidity. The aquarium trade, which removes tens of thousands of these fish annually, is incompatible with the need to protect and restore our marine ecosystems. Allowing this destructive practice to continue jeopardizes our already struggling reefs and undermines the best available science on how to protect them. It is unacceptable to risk these ecosystems for the monetary gain of a small number of individuals who export the islands' wildlife for the aquarium pet trade.

Thank you for your consideration, and we hope you will SUPPORT this bill.

Natalie Parra
Co-Founder, Keiko Conservation



To: The Honorable Chairs Jarrett Keohokalole and Karl Rhoads, the Honorable Vice Chairs Carol Fukunaga and Mike Gabbards, and Members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary

From: Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing HB2101 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION

Hearing: Thursday April 2, 2026 9:20 a.m. CR229

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbards, and Members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary!

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (HIROC) is a group of scientists, educators, filmmakers and environmental advocates who have been working since 2017 to protect Hawaii's coral reefs and ocean.

The Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition **STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB2101 HD1 SD1's temporary ban on aquarium fishing in Oahu, but urges an amendment to apply a permanent ban statewide rather than just in Honolulu County!**

An amendment is needed to prohibit commercial aquarium extractions statewide to address underlying fishery and reef protection concerns on all islands. Most commercial aquarium extractions (poaching) occur on the Big Island, not Oahu, where the fisheries are already severely depleted.

The Committees should strike from this bill page 5 lines 2-8.

This measure amended to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection, is urgently **needed statewide** because:

- The Hawai'i Constitution's **public trust doctrine** (Art, XI, Sec. 1) requires that public trust resources be conserved, protected, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations. Article XI Sections 6 and 9 require the Legislature to conserve and protect the public's use and enjoyment of the natural resources including reefs, as defined by environmental laws.
- It is **culturally appropriate** to ban the taking of herbivorous reef fish such as **yellow tang**. Taking them is **not pono!** OHA has testified that yellow tang "have been valued, managed, and revered by Native Hawaiians as a food source and for use in healing rituals and other traditional practices for generations."
- The State's coral reefs are threatened by climate heating, pollution, and insufficient numbers of **herbivorous fish to clean the reefs**. Scientists project annual heat-stress events by as early as 2030.
- Scientific consensus indicates that **up to 70% of Hawai'i's reefs statewide could be lost by mid-century without strong local protections, including increased herbivore abundance and biomass to control algal overgrowth.**
- Data from the DLNR's Division of Aquatic Resources show that, contrary to earlier assumptions, **yellow tang populations have not recovered** as biologically or historically expected following the court-ordered cessation of aquarium collecting in late 2017.
- **On O'ahu, the most heavily targeted aquarium species—again, largely herbivores—have been depleted by approximately 90% on average due in part to aquarium collecting** (Grabowsky & Thornhill 2020).
- **Aquarium fish are mostly exported from the State. The trade overwhelmingly benefits non-Hawaiians, while the adverse impacts to our delicate marine ecosystems and tourism economy are felt here.**
- Food fishers and subsistence communities are paying the price for decades of aquarium collecting. DLNR reported in 2020 that the aquarium trade exported 1.8 times more fish from West Hawai'i than all food fishers combined.

Additional benefits of HB2101 HD1 SD1 include:

- **Clear economic benefits** to State residents. A peer-reviewed cost-benefit analysis found that **ending the aquarium trade yields net positive economic benefits**, supporting over \$440 million annually in direct and indirect reef-related tourism value.
- **Saving taxpayers money.** DLNR has estimated that administering the aquarium trade costs the State hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, excluding enforcement, while generating only minimal permit revenue. Ending the trade would eliminate these ongoing public costs.
- Supporting truly **sustainable alternatives.** The only sustainable aquarium trade is one based on **aquaculture**. Thanks to advances by Hawai'i researchers and businesses, including the Oceanic Institute and Biota, **popular species such as yellow tang are now captive-bred and commercially available without harming wild reef populations.**

HB2101 HD1 SD1 should be amended to represent a responsible, science-based, and **culturally grounded** solution that aligns with public opinion, protects **reef ecosystems under increasing climate stress**, and fulfills the State's constitutional **public-trust** obligations.

Please pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with amendment to **strike from this bill page 5 lines 2-8 to help protect the State's reefs and reef wildlife!**

Mahalo!

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:06:44 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sylvia Dolena	Testifying for Aloha Animal Advocates	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support the ban on reef fishing for all Hawaiian Islands.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:58:28 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelby Billionaire	Testifying for Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands & Ohana Unity Party	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

****Aloha kakahiaka nui, Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee.****

My name is ****Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM****, Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I. Chairman, Ohana Unity Party

I submit this testimony with a heart full of the Aloha Spirit, in accordance with ****HRS 5-7.5 Aloha Spirit Law****. I offer ****conditional support**** for ****HB2101 SD1**** — ***Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection***.

I speak not only for the reef, but also for the honest fishermen who make a modest living from the kai, and for our mo‘opuna who deserve healthy reefs filled with fish.

The Pono Middle Path We Need

The bill is right to protect our nearshore reefs. Commercial aquarium collection — especially with fine-mesh nets — has been controversial for decades. Many honest fishermen I know are hardworking family men who take only what they need and respect the ‘āina. But there are also profiteers who treat Mother Nature like an endless ATM, raping the reefs for quick money and believing the ocean will just keep producing more fish forever. That is not pono.

****Yellow tang (lau‘īpala)**** is a perfect example. Nobody eats yellow tang as food. We eat ****manini**** (convict tang) fried — crispy, delicious, and part of our cultural diet. Yellow tang and kole are primarily harvested for overseas pet stores and fancy home aquariums. When the trade pushes divers to take hundreds of thousands per year, it disrupts the balance that herbivorous fish bring to our reefs (eating algae so coral can thrive).

My Proposed Reasonable Amendments (A Balanced Approach) Instead of a full ban or endless delay, let us make this bill truly pono with these common-sense changes: 1

. ****Limit, don’t completely eliminate**** honest small-scale collection. Allow a strictly managed, low-quota fishery (e.g., no more than 30,000–50,000 yellow tang/year statewide, with strict monitoring and rotational zones) for U.S. citizen residents who have clean records and use only low-impact gear (no fine-mesh nets in sensitive areas).

2. ****Strong preference for local and Native Hawaiian fishermen.**** Give first priority in any limited permits to kama‘āina, lineal descendants, and small family operations — not big mainland exporters.

3. ****True sustainability rules.**** - Mandatory catch reporting with GPS tracking. - Annual independent reef health surveys before any permits are renewed. - Immediate closure of any zone showing decline. - Heavy fines and lifetime bans for repeat offenders or those who “rape for profit.”

4. ****Sunset tied to real progress****, not the year 3000. Let the prohibition stay in place until the Holomua Marine Initiative is fully completed ****and**** a science-based, community-supported management plan is approved by the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

5. ****Support transition for honest fishermen.**** Include funding or grants for those displaced to move into ****aquaculture**** (captive breeding of yellow tang and other species). Several Hawaiian companies are already doing this successfully and creating good jobs.

****He ali‘i ka ‘āina, he kauwā ke kanaka**** — The land (and sea) is the chief; we are the servants. This bill should serve the reef first, while still allowing honest fishermen a small, tightly regulated place at the table. We can protect the kai without destroying livelihoods that have been part of our islands for generations.

I urge you to ****amend HB2101 SD1**** with the reasonable, balanced approach above so that we mālama the reef, support true stewards, and punish the profiteers who take too much.

****E ho‘omaika‘i kākou**** — Let us give thanks and find the pono path together.

Mahalo nui loa for your kuleana and for listening to a voice that cares for both the fishermen and the fish.

****Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM**** Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.
Chairman, Ohana Unity Party [Contact info as usual]



SENATOR JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, CHAIR
SENATOR CAROL FUKUNAGA, VICE CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

SENATOR KARL RHOADS, CHAIR
SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, VICE CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

TESTIMONY IN **STRONG SUPPORT** OF HOUSE BILL 2101 HD1 SD1,
WITH AMENDMENTS

Thursday, April 2, 2026, 9:20 a.m.
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

Earthjustice submits this testimony in **strong support** of HB 2101 HD1 SD1, **with amendments**. HB 2101 HD1 SD1 would prohibit commercial aquarium collection in counties with a population greater than 500,000, and prohibit the Department of Land and Natural Resources from promulgating rules or issuing permits for commercial aquarium collection until after the Holomua Marine Initiative is completed for counties with a population greater than 500,000. Because there is ample justification to ban commercial aquarium collection *statewide*, we support amending the bill to the original version of HB 2101.

Earthjustice is a public interest environmental law organization with a Mid-Pacific Office based in Honolulu for nearly 40 years. For over a decade, we have represented a hui of reef advocates—including Native Hawaiian subsistence fishers and cultural practitioners from throughout the pae ‘āina—to protect Hawai‘i’s reefs from the extraction hundreds of thousands of fish each year to supply the global aquarium pet industry.

An Opportunity To Reverse A Historical Injustice

In 1953, Hawai‘i’s territorial legislature passed a law allowing “aquarium fish permits” that would enable collectors to use fine-meshed nets to capture juvenile fish targeted by the commercial aquarium trade. See Haw. Rev. Stat. § 188-31. This law’s passage was based on the ignorant view by those in power that the fish species sought after by the industry are “not edible.” S. Stand. Comm. Rep. 442, in 1953 Senate Journal, at 669. *Such a finding would never*

stand today. Commercial aquarium collectors target popular food fish including kole (goldring surgeonfish) and pāku'iku'i (achilles tang), herbivorous fish that are essential to coral reef health, and other colorful fishes that are found nowhere else in the world—all of which are culturally significant for Native Hawaiians. Because of this outdated legislation, commercial aquarium collectors have enjoyed a *decades-long pass to extract hundreds of thousands of fish from Hawai'i's reefs annually*, which has devastated nearshore ecosystems by reducing fish populations and directly damaging reefs through harmful collection methods.

Litigation And Other Community-Led Advocacy

Due to Hawai'i Supreme Court and environmental court rulings mandating environmental review, *no legal commercial aquarium collection has occurred in West Hawai'i since 2017, or anywhere else in the state (including O'ahu) since 2021*.¹ In 2023, the Board of Land and Natural Resources unanimously approved a community-led petition to ban commercial aquarium collection by administrative rule. The rulemaking petition was filed by reef advocates including lawai'a pono practitioners from West Hawai'i, which has been ground zero for commercial aquarium collection for decades, and Kāne'ohe, which experienced a dramatic increase in commercial aquarium collection after collectors depleted West O'ahu reefs.

Rather than initiating rulemaking to ban commercial aquarium collection, as the unanimously approved rulemaking petition proposed, Department of Land and Natural Resources staff instead *ran in the opposite direction by developing rules to authorize aquarium collection*. The Board is now planning to resume issuing aquarium fish permits, starting with seven West Hawai'i permits. Indeed, the Department recently scheduled public hearings for the end of this month to reopen West Hawai'i. O'ahu's reefs are next in line for permits that could be issued to fifteen collectors upon completion and acceptance of an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS").

The Board is taking these steps based on its *erroneous view that it lacks the power to ban commercial aquarium collection and that only the legislature can ban this extractive activity*. Indeed, at the October 24, 2025 Board meeting approving rulemaking proceedings to reopen West Hawai'i to commercial aquarium collection, Chair Chang directed the dozens of community members who testified in opposition to the Board's action as follows: *"I would urge you to talk story to the legislators for a different fix."*²

¹ Given the lack of any legal collection in five years or more, any claims that a ban would negatively affect current livelihoods is disingenuous at best and, at worst, suggests ongoing illegal poaching.

² See Board of Land and Natural Resources Oct. 24, 2025 Meeting, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JE2zPoVp8qs&list=PLDh6ZXzdUvOkHtqVoauOkfa26NfNLh2pK&index=4> at 8:10:27; see also *id.* at 7:22:09 and 7:55:33 (Board Members Denise Iseri-

Meanwhile, in 2024, the Hawai'i Supreme Court affirmed the Board's default decision to approve an industry-sponsored EIS for West Hawai'i commercial collection. The EIS was approved by operation of law when the Board failed to reach a majority vote and instead reached a 3-3 tie decision. The Hawai'i Supreme Court *did not endorse* the EIS's findings and conclusions that commercial aquarium collection has insignificant environmental effects, or the EIS's failure to propose measures and alternatives to reduce environmental harm. Rather, the court held that the EIS contained sufficient information—including the concerns, data, and studies that reef advocates had submitted in commenting on the EIS—to inform future permitting decisions. Under well-settled Hawai'i Supreme Court precedent, *EIS approval does not guarantee permit approval*. Rather, an EIS is an informational document that informs agency decision-making.

Community Sentiment Strongly Opposing Commercial Collection

Three public opinion polls conducted since 2012 have repeatedly shown overwhelming public support for ending commercial aquarium collection in Hawai'i. The 2025 poll showed that *84% of O'ahu and Hawai'i Island residents support a ban*, while only 10% support collection. The following government and non-government entities have passed resolutions supporting and urging a state legislative ban:

- Hawai'i County Council;
- Maui County Council;
- Kaula County Council;
- Neighborhood boards for Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne'ohe, and Kahalu'u;
- Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs;
- Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club;
- Ko'olau Foundation; and
- Kāne'ohe Bay Regional Council.

The public and government entities have called upon the legislature to act.

Hundreds Of Thousands In State Subsidies For The Trade

If the legislature does not act and the Board proceeds as planned, collectors would pay just \$100 per year (just *\$700 total* for 7 West Hawai'i collectors, which are the only permits even potentially on the table at this time) for a program that the Division of Aquatic Resources has estimated would cost the state *\$300,000-\$500,000* annually to administer *for Hawai'i Island*

Matsubara's and Riley Smith's statements on the Board's purported lack of authority to ban commercial aquarium collection).

alone.³ Enforcing the Board’s proposed aquarium catch quotas—if it even were possible—would be extremely resource-intensive, since enforcement would require counting live fish at sea and onshore, further straining the Division of Conservation and Resources and Enforcement’s limited resources. Collectors would extract hundreds of thousands of fish and ship them overseas to sell as ornamental pets, while Hawai’i’s reefs increasingly struggle to feed local families and withstand climate change. The legislature should prioritize pono food fishing and reef resilience to benefit all Hawai’i citizens over an extractive practice that benefits only a handful of commercial collectors.

Harmful Impacts Of The Trade

Data from the industry-sponsored West Hawai’i EIS show that fish populations are significantly lower in areas open to commercial aquarium collection than in areas closed to collection. For example, the diagram below from the EIS shows significantly lower lau’īpala (yellow tang) density in open areas (green) than in closed areas (blue and red). It is also our understanding that the Division of Aquatic Resources is collecting significantly less fish population data along West Hawai’i than it has in prior years, which will hinder the agency’s ability to assess how resumed collection would affect West Hawai’i populations. The Division’s claim that collection is “sustainable,” therefore, cannot be validated and is mere guesswork *at best* under this scaled back data collection regime.

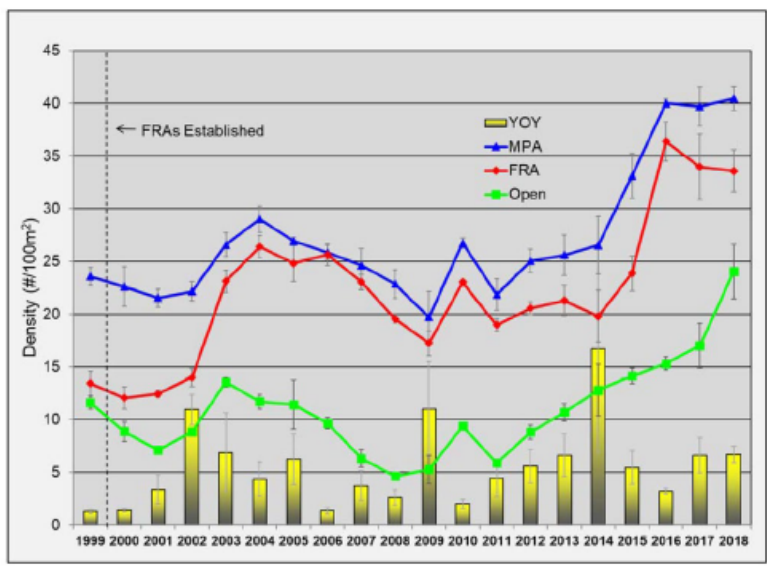


Figure 5. Overall changes in Yellow Tang density (Mean ± SE) in FRAs, MPAs, and Open Areas, 1999-2018. Yellow vertical bars indicate mean density (MAY-NOV) of Yellow Tang YOY. YOY are not included in trend line data (DAR 2019a).

³ See Schaar & Cox, The future for Hawai’i’s marine aquarium fishery: A cost benefit analysis compared to an environmental impact statement, Marine Policy (2021) (attached).

Availability of Reef-Safe Alternatives

Rather than propping up a wasteful and costly industry that stands to benefit only a handful of collectors, Hawai'i should continue to invest in reef-safe alternatives to commercial aquarium collection. Biota Aquariums operates a Waimānalo-based facility that has been successfully aqua-culturing and selling lau'ipala (yellow tang)—the Hawai'i reef fish most sought-after by the aquarium pet trade—for years. Prohibiting wild catch of reef life for the aquarium pet trade would enable modern, reef-safe aquarium fish operations to flourish and thrive in Hawai'i. Such operations create jobs and provide economic opportunities without threatening further harm to public trust resources.

For the first time since the territorial legislature enacted Haw. Rev. Stat. § 188-31, Hawai'i's reefs have finally had a break from commercial aquarium collection. Now that the Board is on the precipice of reopening Hawai'i's reefs to this destructive activity, the legislature is presented with a rare opportunity to right historical wrongs and fulfill its constitutional duties to protect Hawai'i's reef ecosystems as public trust and culturally significant resources for present and future generations. See Haw. Const. art. XI, § 1; Haw. Const. art. XII, § 7.

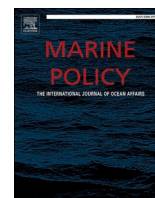
Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or for further information.

Respectfully submitted,



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Senior Attorney
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Attachment



The future for Hawai'i's marine aquarium fishery: A cost benefit analysis compared to an environmental impact assessment

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ABSTRACT

Conflict has surrounded Hawai'i's commercial marine aquarium fishery since its inception in the late 1940s. In 2019, the Hawai'i Supreme Court requested that an environmental impact statement (EIS) analysing the ecological and cultural impacts of Hawai'i's marine aquarium fishery be completed for Hawai'i Island (Big Island) and O'ahu. The costs and benefits associated with the fishery and their distribution across stakeholder groups was however not addressed in the EIS. This paper presents a cost-benefit based analysis of four policy scenarios using existing secondary data for Hawai'i's marine aquarium fishery. From the analysis, a state-wide collection ban was the option that yielded positive annual net benefits and negatively impacted the fewest stakeholders. In contrast, the EIS recommends ten permits for fishing off the coast of Big Island be issued.

1. Introduction

Some view the marine aquarium fish trade as a path to expanding the conservation of reef environments based on the assumption that owning aquarium fishes cultivates awareness and interest in the conservation of their source habitats [46,6,31,47]. While conservation groups have promoted the aquarium trade as a means of enhancing livelihoods in developing countries, others are concerned that the profit motive of commercial fishers serves as an incentive to overharvest species commonly found in marine aquariums [37,39,59]. If marine aquarium fisheries are not properly regulated and the regulations are not promulgated, a common-pool resource dilemma will result in economic profitability prevailing over long-term sustainability – a tragedy of the commons scenario [43].

Hawai'i's commercial marine aquarium fishery has been a source of debate among various stakeholder groups including aquarium fishers and hobbyists, marine scientists, Native Hawaiians (Kānaka Maoli), resource managers, policy makers and community members [2,36,46]. The fishery's costs and benefits are distributed differently among these stakeholders, resulting in years of conflict. As has been observed in many fisheries around the world, fishers in Hawai'i under report their catches and mortality rates [23,48,52,56], which further exacerbates conflicts. The fishery is comprised of two geographically distinct zones. The first is the West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area (WHRFMA) that extends the length of the west coast of Hawai'i Island (Big Island) from

Ka Lae, Ka'u[–] (South Point) to 'Upolu Point. The second encompasses North Kohala, and the main Hawaiian Islands excluding all zones that are designated as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) [57].

Residents and Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners have pushed to ban aquarium fishing in Hawai'i citing the lack of sustainable and humane harvesting methods, inadequate enforcement, inaccurate catch reporting and poor alignment with Kānaka Maoli ideals of resource management [23]. In 2017, the Hawai'i Supreme Court placed a moratorium on aquarium fishery permits, citing a need for a Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act (HEPA) review [15–17]. The court concluded that the permitted use of fine mesh nets involves the public's use of state land and therefore requires discretionary approval from the state [15–17]. The court's request in 2019 for an environmental impact statement (EIS) analysing the ecological and cultural impacts of the marine aquarium fishery came after Environmental Assessments (EA) for Big Island and O'ahu were submitted by the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) and deemed insufficient by the State's Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Chair Suzanne D. Case [15–17]. The final environmental impact statement (EIS) funded by PIJAC and conducted by a consulting firm, which concluded that DLNR should issue permits to ten commercial aquarium fishers in the WHRFMA, was unanimously rejected by the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) after concluding that the EIS did not adequately disclose the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action [14]. PIJAC appealed BLNR's decision to the Environmental Council who affirmed BLNR's rejection of

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Table 1
Description of policy scenarios analysed in CBA.

Scenario	Characteristics
A. Status quo (2019)	AQ Permits void and fishery continues without use of fine mesh nets on O'ahu, Big Island and no collecting in WHRFMA Voluntary catch report data Majority of catch is exported Unknown impacts to other fisheries, the environment, cultural resources and on-reef tourism State funds monitoring and management of fishery Potential for non-compliance Provides industry income Provides tax and fee revenue to state
B. Permitting system (2016)	Administrative rules and bag limits apply across the State Voluntary catch report data Majority of catch is exported Unknown impacts to other fisheries, the environment, cultural resources and on-reef tourism State funds monitoring and management of fishery Potential for non-compliance Provides industry income Provides tax and fee revenue to state
C. State-wide collecting ban	No aquarium species from Hawai'i state waters can be collected Collection exemptions possible for research, educational institutions and managers Wild-captured aquarium exports banned No impacts on other fisheries, the environment, cultural resources or on-reef tourism State avoids costs associated with managing the fishery Potential for non-compliance Loss of industry income Loss of tax and fees revenues to state
D. Captive breeding collection	Permits issued to fishers with facilities for captive breeding Opportunity to export from Hawai'i Unknown impacts on other fisheries, cultural resources, the environment and on-reef tourism State funds monitoring and management of fishery Potential for non-compliance Provides income opportunity for industry Provides tax and fee revenue to state

the EIS [27].

The 2019 state-wide moratorium allows commercial aquarium fishing to continue without commercial aquarium permits, as long as fine-mesh net equipment is not used and fishers possess a commercial marine license (CML), whereas, all collection has been outlawed regardless of gear-type for the WHRFMA [20]. A November 2020 order from Hawai'i's First Circuit Court requires environmental review for issuance of new or renewed annual CMLs to be used for aquarium fishing purposes, allowing aquarium collecting by CML holders to continue until their CML expire one year after issuance [18,21]. A January 2021 order from the same court further strengthened the November 2020 order by issuing an injunction to halt aquarium collection under existing CMLs, completely banning commercial aquarium fishing in the State of Hawai'i pending environmental review by the industry [13].

Many U. S. government agencies use cost benefit analysis (CBA) in addition to or in place of environmental impact assessment to assist in management decision-making. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [54] concluded that cost benefit analyses used to determine environmental regulations increased net benefits to society and "provide the balance required in complex regulatory decisions." International non-profit organizations also rely on CBAs in managing natural resources. Verdone [55] used CBA to analyse landscape forest restoration in Rwanda for the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

This paper presents a cost benefit (CBA) based analysis using published information and existing data to provide evidence to assist decision makers considering the future of this fishery. Four policy scenarios were developed, the relevant costs and benefits for each scenario are described and/or estimated and their distribution across stakeholder groups are assessed. The CBA results are compared to the EIS recommendations and conclusions in order to determine how the two differ and which one provides a more accurate appraisal of maintaining the aquarium fishery.

2. Methods

Four past, current or proposed scenarios for managing this fishery are described (Table 1) in order to identify the associated costs and benefits, along with stakeholders impacted. Scenarios A and B assume that the aquarium fishery continues, though the number of fishers in the industry is not mandated in either one. Scenario A involves maintaining the 2019 status quo that restricts the use of fine mesh nets and no collecting in the WHRFMA. Scenario B assumes that the 2016 bag limits would be applied across the State. These were considered here because they both attempt to limit the catch. Scenario C involves a state-wide ban, which has been suggested by many stakeholders who do not benefit from the fishery. Scenario D allows the fishery to continue only to facilitate the establishment of captive breeding operations. This option is considered as one that protects wild fish in the long run, while also encouraging an industry that cultivates awareness and interest in the conservation of their source habitats by producing aquarium fish. The environmental impact statement (EIS) funded by PIJAC recommends limiting the number of permits, rather than limiting the catch.

The stakeholder groups who were identified in each scenario are described (Table 2) and the acronym used for the group throughout the

Table 2
Codes and descriptions for stakeholder groups.

Code	Stakeholder Group Description
S1	Native Hawaiians
S2	Residents of Hawai'i
S3	Tourists
S4	Collectors and wholesalers from O'ahu
S5	Collectors and wholesalers from Hawai'i Island excluding the WHRFMA
S6	Collectors and wholesalers from the WHRFMA
S7	All collectors and wholesaler in the State
S8	State government agencies

paper is identified. Previous research [2,23,36,46], various media reports, hearings and litigation surrounding the ongoing conflict in this fishery provided details about the stakeholder groups. A description of the methods used to estimate or describe each cost/benefit and their expected sign follow. While CBA normally involves discounting to ensure that net present value of costs and benefits are calculated, annual point estimates are used in this CBA. Since the estimates do not vary over time, discounting adds nothing to the analysis.

2.1. Cost and benefit estimates and descriptions

2.1.1. State management costs

Since both Scenarios A and B involve limiting the industry's catch and require voluntary reporting, the State will have to enforce these regulations. Therefore, to estimate this cost, DAR personnel in DLNR were contacted and asked to estimate DAR's 2019 management cost for Hawai'i's marine aquarium fishery including salaries of employees who work directly with the fishery, aquarium fish surveys and any other costs associated with the fishery that DAR funds. DAR officials provided a low estimate of USD 300,000 annually covering the time spent by 20 or more individuals in the aquarium fishery along with their supplies and equipment. Their high estimate of USD 500,000 annually includes costs, such as fringe benefits that are not included DAR's annual 2019 budget, but are found in DLNR's overall budget. For Scenario C, these management costs should be eliminated overtime. Scenario D would likely involve management costs, which could be reduced as the policies and regulations that support this scenario are refined.

2.1.2. Tourism value

According to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority [29], the State's economy relied on tourism for its largest source of private capital. Spalding et al. [50], estimated the "on-reef" tourism value for the entire state of Hawai'i at USD 550.8 million per year. Spalding was contacted and estimated, using the existing data base the annual "on-reef" values for O'ahu and Hawai'i Island to be approximately USD 442,496,000 and USD 16,921,000 respectively, for an annual upper bound of USD 459,417,000. This was inflated to 2019 USD for a total annual value of USD 478,891,356.77. Cesar and Beukering [7] estimated the value of tourism to be USD 304 million and inflating this value to 2019 USD yields a low estimate of approximately USD 442.1 million.

This estimated tourism value between USD 478,891,356.77 and 442,100,000 USD represents the direct and indirect market value of on-reef tourism to the State in 2019. Maintaining this value over time is partially contingent on maintaining the health and beauty of Hawai'i's reefs. The aquarium fishery may reduce this over time as fish are removed from the reefs in Scenarios A and B because the limits are not calculated based on the productivity of the fishery and are difficult to enforce. Evidence also suggests that catches are underreported. Therefore, if the fishery continues, overharvesting of this public resource will likely occur and as a result, the value of tourism will decrease. Uncertainty exists as to how quickly this decline will occur. Researchers predict that unmitigated bleaching events could lead to the loss of shallow coral cover in Hawai'i by the year 2050 [35], which indicates that a 30 year time frame could be considered in making marine resource management decisions and would result in an extremely large total cost of continuing this aquarium fishery by 2050.

2.1.3. Industry income

In order to determine the market value of the aquarium fishery in Hawai'i, the methods used by Dierking [22] were updated with recent data to conservatively estimate 2019 gross revenue for the industry. Unpublished 2019 catch report summary information, unpublished 2019 dealer purchase information, unpublished 2019 individual catch reports, and unpublished permit lists from 2015 to 2018 were obtained from DAR. The 2019 price and cost information from dealer websites, retail price lists on websites, and industry structure information

provided the data used for the estimation. The lower bound for total revenue accruing to fishers was calculated by multiplying the "diver price" for each species by the number sold to estimate annual revenue of USD 1,676,982 in 2019.

Wholesale revenue could not be estimated due to the lack of price information among local fishers who are also wholesalers. In order to estimate the upper bounds, the 2016 catch report data for "number sold" was used with retail prices on the website of a Hawai'i based fisher retailing fish. The "number sold" on the 2016 catch report for each of 12 species was multiplied by the 2019 retail price listed by the primary collector/retailer. The total revenue across all the species represents the upper bounds of USD 8,343,896, which includes the value of the fish after they were exported.

2.1.4. License fees

The State does collect license fees for the aquarium fishery. Commercial aquarium permits are USD 50 and recreational aquarium permits have no cost [20]. Commercial aquarium collectors must also purchase USD 100 commercial marine fishing licenses annually from DAR. Scenario A, which represents the status quo in 2019 only accounts for the cost of the commercial marine fishing license since all commercial aquarium permits are void. Scenario D assumes that a permit is required to collect for captive breeding. This scenario explores an option that would raise the permit cost to USD 500 and cap the number of permits issued at 100 state-wide.

2.1.5. Export values

The industry values also include the value of fish exported, which were investigated to determine how much of this value accrues to the State. Catch reports for 2016 are the most recent, complete annual data set and thus are used to estimate exports. Twelve species commonly targeted in Hawai'i's marine aquarium fishery (Table a1, appendix) were included. The data for six out of the twelve species discussed in this study (*Naso lituratus*, *Forcipiger flavissimus*, *Chaetodon multicinctus*, *Zanclus cornutus*, *Centropyge potteri*, *Coris gaimard*) indicated that the fish sales on initial catch reports by licensed fishers was lower than numbers of fish reportedly purchased by licensed dealers from licensed fishers on dealer sales and export reports. This suggests that a percentage of the catch was not reported on catch reports or was sold to dealers by fishers who do not report their catch to the state.

Dierking [22], reported that roughly 95% of the aquarium fish caught from the West Hawai'i fishery were exported. Two criteria were used to identify retailers from which price information was obtained. The first criteria requires that the species' primary and sole collection origin had to be Hawai'i, and the second requires the species be one of the 12 species described in this study, not including captive bred fish. Retail prices for 2019 were collected from 11 online aquaria retailers with 10 on mainland U.S.A. and one from Hawai'i. Species name, price, retailer name, city of operation and website information were used to generate an average out-of-state retail price for each of the 12 species and were compared to online retail prices offered by the local aquarium fishers/retailer. Retail price differences were 1.5–5.1 times higher in mainland markets compared to the local market.

The profits made on the mainland and the taxes on the value added accrues to the area in which the fish is retailed. Since these profits and taxes occur from the sale of a Hawai'i public resource, a negative impact occurs in comparison to keeping the fish in the reef to ensure that the State's tourism sector and/or residents continue to benefit from these fish. This is consistent with a 2019 decision by the Hawai'i Supreme Court that "all public natural resources are held in trust by the State for the common benefit of Hawai'i's people and the generations to come" ([8], p. 1150).

2.1.6. Environmental costs

Hawai'i's marine aquarium fishery almost exclusively targets herbivores and corallivores. The development of a State Coral Bleaching

Table 3
Cost and benefits associated with each scenario.

Scenario	Impacted Stakeholder Groups	Annual Estimates (USD)	
		Low	High
A. Status Quo (2019)			
- State management costs	S8	-300,000.00	-500,000.00
- Tourism value	S2, S3, S8	-442,105,806.46	-478,891,356.77
+ Industry income	S4, S5	1,784,936.43	8,343,896.00
+ License fees	S8	17,400.00	17,400.00
Total valued net benefit		-440,603,470.03	-471,030,060.77
Costs/benefits not valued			
- Losses from exports	S2, S8		
- Environmental costs	S1, S2, S3, S7, S8		
- Social costs	S1, S2, S8		
- Other fisheries' indirect costs	S1, S2, S7, S8		
- Captive breeding costs	S4, S5		
B. Permitting System (2016)			
- State management costs	S8	-300,000.00	-500,000.00
- Tourism value	S2, S3, S8	-442,105,806.46	-478,891,356.77
+ Industry income	S7	1,784,936.43	8,343,896.00
+ License fees	S8	26,100.00	26,100.00
Total valued net benefit		-440,594,770.03	-471,021,360.77
Costs/benefits not valued			
- Losses from exports	S2, S8		
- Environmental costs	S1, S2, S3, S7, S8		
- Social costs	S1, S2, S8		
- Other fisheries' indirect costs	S1, S2, S7, S8		
- Captive breeding costs	S7		
C. Statewide AQ Collection Ban			
+ Tourism value	S2, S3, S8	442,105,806.46	478,891,356.77
- Industry income	S7	-1,784,936.43	-8,343,896.00
- License fees	S8	-26,100.00	-26,100.00
Total valued net benefit		440,294,770.03	470,521,360.77
Costs/benefits not valued			
+ Environmental costs	S1, S2, S3, S7, S8		
+ Social costs	S1, S2, S7, S8		
+ Other fisheries' Indirect costs	S1, S2, S8		
D. Captive Breeding Collection			
- State management costs	S8	-300,000.00	-500,000.00
- Tourism value	S2, S3, S8	-442,105,806.45	-478,891,356.77
+ Industry income	S7	1,784,936.43	8,343,896.00
+ License fees	S8	50,000.00	50,000.00
Total valued net benefit		-440,570,870.03	-470,997,460.77
Costs/benefits not valued			
- Losses from exports	S2, S8		
- Environmental costs	S1, S2, S3, S7, S8		
- Social costs	S1, S2, S7, S8		
- Other fisheries' indirect costs	S1, S2, S8		
- Captive breeding costs	S7		

Recovery Plan, in collaboration with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), DLNR, and DAR concluded that the establishment of a combination of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Herbivore Fishery Management Areas (HFMA) across the main Hawaiian Islands ranked among the most preferred actions to address the State's coral reef recovery from climate change induced bleaching events [19]. The State's decision to employ spatial herbivore management, highlights the importance of herbivores as a critical tool for reef recovery and resiliency, thus increasing their value and importance in Hawai'i's coral reef ecosystems.

Past studies have indicated that climate change impacts coupled with local, human-induced stressors can retard coral reef resilience, resulting in regime shifts from coral to algal turf dominated systems if left unchecked [1,8,9,26,30]. Herbivores have been found to play critical roles in resisting these regime shifts [26]. While the long-term impact of the aquarium fishery on herbivore management is uncertain, the potential exists for the fishery to prevent the State from realizing its reef recovery goals.

2.1.7. Social costs

A 2017 survey of Hawai'i residents concluded that 90% of respondents support further regulation of Hawai'i's marine aquarium fishery, and that 83% of respondents support ending the trade altogether [4]. From the fishers' perspective, Stevenson et al. [51] found that 20.7% of all fishers disliked the bureaucracy and 17.2% disliked the poor reputation of the West Hawai'i aquarium fishery.

No secondary information about the overall social impacts is available. However, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council [44] did summarize several interviews in a Cultural Impact Statement found in Appendix A that describes the contentious nature of the fishery and its lack of alignment with Native Hawaiian values and fishing/management views/traditions [44].

While the impact of the fishery on the long-term social well-being of State's residents is uncertain, the majority appears to conclude that continuing to operate this fishery reduces their social well-being.

2.1.8. Indirect costs for other fisheries

While some studies have indicated that fish populations have increased in open areas and Fish Replenishment Areas (FRAs) where no aquarium collecting occurs, other studies have argued that many marine aquarium fish stocks in Hawai'i are still relatively data poor [41]. The Hawai'i Supreme Court has adopted a precautionary principle associated with the public trust with a ruling concluding that "where (scientific) uncertainty exists, a trustee's duty to protect the resource mitigates in favour of choosing presumptions that also protect the resource" ([32], p. 466)).

Overfishing is the primary driver of reef fish declines across the main Hawaiian Islands and the populations of food-fish species that overlap with some commonly collected aquarium species are particularly affected [24]. Specific concern regarding the sustained abundance of some commonly targeted food-fish species in the West Hawai'i aquarium fishery exists due to some species exhibiting declining populations [57]. Concern regarding the aquarium fishery's impact on the commercial and recreational nearshore reef fisheries has arisen due to overlap in target species [46,57]. This concern supports the conclusion that the aquarium fishery is likely to have negative impacts on other fisheries in the long-run.

2.1.9. Captive breeding costs

Scenario D involves allowing the aquarium fishery to continue in order to support captive breeding efforts. In order for this scenario not to have negative impacts on Hawai'i reefs, a detailed policy and supporting regulations would be required. Descriptions of the costs paid by wholesalers and collectors by Dierking [22] can be used to infer the cost categories associated with local collection and wholesale business operations. Captive breeding and husbandry would result in similar costs

Table 4

A comparison of procedures and recommendations for the CBA to those for the 2020 Hawai'i Island EIS.

Cost Benefit Analysis	Big Island 2020 EIS ^a
Explores four policy alternatives, including a ban. Provided evidence-based recommendations based on impact estimates, descriptions, and the distribution of them among stakeholder groups. Recommends a statewide ban on the collection and export of marine aquaria. Suggests that captive breeding collection might hold potential if properly managed. Completed as a student project using existing secondary data and not funded by any industry, government agency or non-profit organization.	Rejected considering a ban since it did not meet PIJAC's purpose. Considered three scenarios that involved no permit limits and one with a permit limit. Provided a recommendation based on direct market benefits of the industry. Recommends reducing the number of permits to ten across the State. Funded by the PIJAC.

^a [44]

as wild collection, along with some additional costs to accommodate more technologically advanced equipment required to stimulate spawning [40,58].

Marine ornamental species can be categorized as demersal spawners or pelagic spawners. Most demersal spawners produce clutches of eggs in nests or on substrates and tend to form strong breeding pairs, often displaying parental care which makes them the preferred choice for captive breeding aquarists [40]. The specialized knowledge and equipment required for rearing marine aquarium fish that are pelagic spawners will make them more expensive to produce compared to wild collection [49]. This increase in costs would primarily impact those that purchase these captive bred fish. Currently, nearly all of these people live outside of the State and therefore likely have no particular interest in protecting the public resources of residents. Rhyné [49] also argues that promoting access to breeding information could result in more successful ornamental rearing and help conserve populations of wild aquarium fish.

3. Results and discussion

The results indicate that Scenario C, a state-wide ban on aquarium collecting, is the only scenario that produced positive net benefits (Table 3). Because point estimates in 2019 USD were the only quantitative data presented here, this conclusion is based on one annual estimate of costs and benefits. The stakeholder groups negatively impacted by a state-wide ban include a small group of local fishers, wholesalers, and dealers that comprise Hawai'i industry while benefits accrue to larger populations of stakeholders.

The status quo policy in Scenario A would allow collection to continue with methods other than fine-mesh nets. In the WHRFMA, where all permits are now void, poaching has been observed, resulting in vessel, aquarium gear and fish take seizures [5]. Thus, monitoring costs may increase if this scenario occurs. Scenario B, which represents what took place in 2016 does not put a cap on the issuance of permits, though it does provide for the collection of fees by the State. Overall, market benefits would still accrue only to aquarium collectors and wholesalers, though the distribution of net benefits between these industry members varies between Scenarios A and B because Scenario A excludes fishers in the WHRFMA.

Scenario D allows collection for captive breeding with a permit similar to DAR's Special Activity Permit system which allows research, education or management institutions to collect marine organisms with specific gear restriction exemptions [18,21]. However, all existing permit holders can claim to be engaged in breeding. Further research may be needed to identify potential regulatory and enforcement solutions for Scenario D. Fishers could be required to prove their capacity to captive breed species and stricter live-fish export regulations could be developed. While this would increase costs, the potential indirect and non-market benefits associated with not removing fish from the reefs in the long-run would also increase and provide the positive benefits associated with consumers having access to aquarium fish. Miltz et al. [38] found that 90.5% of consumer respondents were willing to pay more for fishes that were certified as harvested in an environmentally

sustainable way. This type of certification could be considered for captive bred fish to create a mechanism that convinces the customers to absorb some of the costs associated with switching to a sustainable practice [38]. In addition, captive breeding facilities could become attractions for residents and visitors. If captive breeding attractions included educational content designed to inform people about protecting fish and the surrounding reefs, the carrying capacity of Hawai'i's near shore ecosystems may increase.

A comparison of this CBA with the PIJAC funded EIS found that the procedures and overall recommendations were significantly different (Table 4). Both the CBA and the EIS relied on existing data to complete the analysis and the market benefits of the industry estimated by the CBA and the EIS are similar. The EIS did not consider a ban because it did not meet PIJAC's purpose to continue fishers' livelihoods [44]. The EIS considered three scenarios that involved unlimited permits and one that limited permits on the Big Island to ten. The costs for Native Hawaiians and other stakeholder groups of continuing to operate the fishery were considered negligible and no justification is provided as to why this decision was made [44]. No recommendations on compliance enforcement relative to the proposed bag limits or oversight to prevent poaching were included. No caveat was included that oversight and enforcement expenses might increase if permits were limited [44]. One individual who was allegedly named as one of the proposed permit holders [45] was also cited in a February 2020 poaching incident (R. Umberger, personal communication; [5]) which indicates the need for such a caveat. Overall the EIS puts forth a recommendation that supports the industry.

Because Hawai'i's Supreme Court reaffirmed that all public resource are to benefit Hawai'i's people [32] and that private or commercial use should receive a "high" level of scrutiny, the size of the stakeholder groups is also of interest. The resident population, including Native Hawaiians, was 1,415,872 in 2019 [53] and Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council [44] indicates that their preferred plan would directly benefit ten resident fishers with permits and their employees. Visitors, which numbered 10,424,995 in 2019 [28], will also likely pay a cost if marine aquarium fish are removed from the State's reefs. Tourists can also decide to travel elsewhere should the reefs become degraded, which will result in significant market costs for Hawai'i in the long-term.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

The analysis presented here determined that a state-wide ban on collection is likely to produce impacts of positive annual net benefits. The EIS funded by PIJAC recommended that collection permits be limited to ensure that the fishery remains in existence. Relying on EIS recommendations that aim to support one group of stakeholders at the expense of others to determine policy could be considered biased. CBA is used globally for evidence-based decision-making.

When considering the "sustainability" of any system, distributional and equity issues over a long-time frame must be considered [10]. The CBA presented in this paper explores these distributional issues that this fishery poses to a variety of stakeholder groups and the environment using the available evidence. While modern economic systems often

focus on gross domestic product to track economic progress and guide policy, tracking environmental and social indicators has been identified as important to ensure sustainability in certain economic sectors specific to Hawai'i [42].

Other fisheries, which pose similar environmental problems [3,11,12,25,33,34], should consider employing CBA in order to inform decision-making. Relying on an EIS funded by an industry stakeholder group is likely to produce a document aimed at justifying the position of the funder. Stakeholders that receive cultural ecosystem services from resources that are also being harvested for market benefits often include relatively large populations of disadvantaged minorities and indigenous populations. Businesses interested in protecting their market benefits likely have an advantage if an EIS is the only source of management recommendations. Sustainable management requires that the costs and benefits accruing to all stakeholder groups be investigated to ensure that policies are equitable.

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CRediT authorship contribution statement

Siena Schaar: Investigation, Formal analysis, Writing - original draft. **Linda J. Cox:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Writing - review & editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

none.

Data availability

The majority of data used for this research came from secondary sources. Relevant pricing data was collected from public websites and catch data was retrieved by UIPA from the Hawai'i Department of Aquatic Resources (DAR).

Appendix

See Tables A.1–A.3.

Table A.1

The 12 common marine aquarium species included in this report.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Hawaiian Name
Yellow Tang ^b	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	Lau'ipala, Lau'i pala, or Lā'i pala)
Goldring Surgeonfish ^a	<i>Ctenochaetus strigosus</i>	Kole
Achilles Tang ^b	<i>Acanthurus achilles</i>	Paku'iku'i
Orangespine Unicornfish ^b	<i>Naso lituratus</i>	Umaumalei, Kala, Ume, Mahaha, Pakala, Pakalakala or 'Ohua
Chevron Tang ^b	<i>Ctenochaetus hawaiiensis</i>	n/a
Longnose Butterflyfish, (Forcefish) ^b	<i>Forcipiger flavissimus</i>	Lau wiliwili nukunuku 'oi'oi
Multiband (Pebbled) Butterflyfish ^a	<i>Chaetodon multicinctus</i>	Kikākapu, Kapuhili
Fourspot Butterflyfish ^b	<i>Chaetodon quadrimaculatus</i>	Lauhau
Tinker's Butterflyfish ^b	<i>Chaetodon tinkeri</i>	n/a
Moorish Idol ^b	<i>Zanclus cornutus</i>	Kihikihi
Potter's Angelfish ^a	<i>Centropyge potteri</i>	n/a
Yellowtail Coris Wrasse ^b	<i>Coris gaimard</i>	Hinalea 'akilolo

^a Indicates endemic species

^b Indicates native species

Table A.2

Average retail prices (U.S Mainland) compared to average retail price (local collector/seller) of 12 common aquarium species, and price difference (%).

Common Name	Scientific Name	Avg. Retail Price (U.S Mainland) n = 10	Avg. Retail Price (Local collector/seller) n = 1	Mark-up (%)
Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	\$74.41	\$16.00	465.1
Goldring Surgeonfish	<i>Ctenochaetus strigosus</i>	\$71.88	\$14.00	513.4
Achilles Tang	<i>Acanthurus achilles</i>	\$392.32	\$150.00	261.5
Orangespine Unicornfish	<i>Naso lituratus</i>	\$152.71	\$37.50	407.2
Chevron Tang	<i>Ctenochaetus hawaiiensis</i>	\$233.11	\$150.00	155.4
Longnose Butterflyfish	<i>Forcipiger flavissimus</i>	\$46.00	\$15.00	306.6
Multiband Pebbled Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon multicinctus</i>	\$35.37	\$10.00	353.7
Fourspot Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon quadrimaculatus</i>	\$78.99	\$40.00	197.5
Tinker's Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon tinkeri</i>	\$699.99	\$350.00	200.0
Moorish Idol	<i>Zanclus cornutus</i>	\$49.98	\$10.00	499.8
Potter's Angelfish	<i>Centropyge potteri</i>	\$108.06	\$30.00	360.2
Yellowtail Coris	<i>Coris gaimard</i>	n/a	\$30.00	n/a

Table A.3

Comparison of specimens reported sold on licensed aquarium collectors' detailed catch reports (2016) versus specimens reported bought from licensed fishers by licensed dealers, on licensed aquarium dealers' personal sales and export reports (2016).

Common Name	Scientific Name	No. Sold (AQ detailed catch report)	No. Bought (AQ dealer pers. Sale/export report)	% (no. bought/ no. sold)
Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	322,651	284,784	88.26
Goldring Surgeonfish	<i>Ctenochaetus strigosus</i>	45,765	44,106	96.37
Achilles Tang	<i>Acanthurus achilles</i>	6787	5758	84.84
Orangespine Unicornfish ^a	<i>Naso lituratus</i>	9966	10,338	103.73
Chevron Tang	<i>Ctenochaetus hawaiiensis</i>	5126 (B.I only)	4135	80.67
Longnose Butterflyfish ^a	<i>Forcipiger flavissimus</i>	1329	1507	113.39
Multiband Pebbled Butterflyfish ^a	<i>Chaetodon multicinctus</i>	314	666	212.10
Fourspot Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon quadrimaculatus</i>	480	448	93.33
Tinker's Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon tinkeri</i>	293 (B.I only)	218	74.40
Moorish Idol ^a	<i>Zanclus cornutus</i>	805 (B.I only)	970	120.50
Potter's Angelfish ^a	<i>Centropyge potteri</i>	6708	8726	130.08
Yellowtail Coris Wrasse ^a	<i>Coris gaimard</i>	866	993	114.67

(B.I only) indicates collection and reporting on detailed catch report only from Hawai'i island

^a Indicates sales or export reporting over 100% of what was reported on initial detailed catch report.

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Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maki Morinoue, from Hawai'i Island, and I am testifying on behalf of HULI PAC, a grassroots organization dedicated to endorsing and supporting leaders of integrity who prioritize the 'āina and people of Hawai'i. I write in strong support of HB2101, which permanently bans commercial aquarium collection, but I respectfully urge you to amend this bill by removing the population-based limitation that now protects only O'ahu and reinstating the original statewide ban.

In January 2026, the **Hawai'i Island County Council unanimously passed Resolution No. 422-25**. In early March 2026, the **Maui County Council unanimously passed Resolution No. 26-53**. Both resolutions send a clear and unified message to the State Legislature ***to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life from state marine waters for ornamental commercial aquarium purposes***. The will of Hawai'i Island and Maui has been clearly expressed, joining thousands of testimonies across all islands over the past decade calling for a statewide ban on this destructive commercial practice.

Our reefs are not divisible by county population. They function as one interconnected ecosystem across our entire island chain. Protection should not depend on how many people live on a particular island. Every reef in Hawai'i deserves the same level of care and legal protection.

Healthy reefs depend on fish abundance. Herbivorous reef fish like surgeonfish, tangs, and parrotfish are essential reef caretakers. They graze algae that would otherwise smother coral, particularly after bleaching and heat-stress events caused by climate change-driven ocean warming. Scientific research consistently shows that reefs with higher herbivore biomass recover faster and demonstrate significantly greater resilience to warming ocean temperatures and acidification.

When fish are removed for the aquarium trade, reefs lose this natural defense system. Fewer herbivores lead to increased algal overgrowth, weakened coral systems, reduced biodiversity, and long-term ecosystem decline that cascades through the entire food web. No level of so-called "managed extraction" can replace the ecological role these fish evolved to serve over millennia.

Our reefs also sustain the ocean's ability to produce 50% of the Earth's oxygen. Healthy coral reef ecosystems support phytoplankton populations that generate a significant portion of the oxygen we breathe. When we allow commercial extraction that degrades reef health, we are not just harming fish populations—we are undermining the ocean's capacity to sustain life itself. Every fish removed for ornamental display weakens the intricate web of relationships that keeps our reefs functioning as living, breathing ecosystems. Our coral reefs are the rainforest of the sea.

This is fundamentally a matter of constitutional rights and legal obligations. Article XII, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution protects the traditional and customary rights of Native Hawaiians to engage in



subsistence, cultural, and religious practices. Commercial aquarium collection directly conflicts with these protected rights by depleting fish populations that Native Hawaiians depend upon for lawai'a, 'ohana sustenance, cultural ceremony, and passing traditional ecological knowledge to the next generation.

The Kapa'akai analysis, established by our Hawai'i Supreme Court, requires the State to assess the impact of any proposed action on traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights. Commercial aquarium collection has never undergone proper Kapa'akai analysis, yet it continues to extract thousands of fish annually from waters where Native Hawaiians have constitutionally protected gathering rights and have voiced opposition. This is a clear violation of the State's fiduciary duty to protect these rights.

Furthermore, the Board of Land and Natural Resources' own Hierarchy of Use Policy from 1988 establishes clear priorities for allocating marine resources. That policy places subsistence and traditional cultural practices at the top of the hierarchy, with commercial extraction at the bottom. Yet current practice inverts this priority, allowing commercial aquarium collectors to take fish that should be preserved first and foremost for Native Hawaiian subsistence and cultural use. HB2101, with a statewide ban, would finally align state law with the BLNR's own established policy framework.

Reef fish sustain food systems, cultural practices, shoreline protection, and Hawai'i's ocean-based tourism economy. Removing them for ornamental display in continental US aquariums and international markets provides private profit to a small number of collectors while diminishing public trust resources guaranteed under our Constitution to all residents, and especially to Native Hawaiians. This is the definition of mismanagement of a common resource.

Living reefs generate far greater long-term economic value through cultural practice, subsistence fishing, shoreline protection, snorkeling, and diving than extraction ever could. Tourism depends on vibrant reefs full of fish. Coastal communities depend on healthy reefs for shoreline stabilization and storm protection. Families depend on abundant fish populations for food security. The phytoplankton provides 50% of Earth's oxygen for all of us here on Planet Earth. A reef full of fish supports entire communities, economies, and ALL life on Earth. An emptied reef serves only the narrow commercial interests of aquarium collectors and distant hobbyists.

The current amendment limiting protection to O'ahu based on population thresholds is arbitrary and indefensible. It suggests that the constitutional rights of Native Hawaiians on less-populated islands matter less, that the ecological integrity of neighbor-island reefs is expendable, and that commercial profit should be prioritized over ecosystem health anywhere outside O'ahu. This is continuous betrayal and inequitable behavior from our State Legislators.

HB2101 with a statewide ban protects reef resilience in a warming ocean, Native Hawaiian constitutional rights and traditional practices, public trust resources held in common for all residents, the oxygen-producing capacity of healthy marine ecosystems, and future generations' right to inherit oceans as



abundant as the ones our kupuna knew. These protections should extend equally to every island in our state.

We need fish on our reefs, not in tanks. We need oxygen from healthy ocean ecosystems—not degraded reefs stripped of the species that maintain them. We need to honor our Constitution and our legal obligations to Native Hawaiian rights, not subordinate them to commercial interests.

I respectfully urge you to pass HB2101, and amend by removing the population-based stipulation that protects only O‘ahu, reinstate the original statewide ban, and stand firmly on the side of ike Hawai‘i, Native Hawaiian rights, constitutional obligations, and intergenerational responsibility.

Mahalo nui loa,

Maki Morinoue
HULI PAC
Hawai‘i Island



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March 30, 2026

RE: STRONG SUPPORT — HB2101 SD1, Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Joint CPN/JDC Committee Hearing, March 31, 2026, 9:20 AM | DAR Public Hearings (March 31 & April 1) | DAR Written Testimony (Due April 12)

Aloha mai kākou, Honorable Chairs, Vice Chairs, Committee Members, and DAR Staff,

Pōhaku Pelemaka, a grassroots 501(c)(3) nonprofit working along Puna makai, Hawai'i Island, submits this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB2101 SD1. We urge the Legislature to **amend this measure to restore a statewide ban** on commercial aquarium collection — not limited to Honolulu County. Our mission is to protect and perpetuate the intrinsic qualities of Puna makai (coast), Native Hawaiian wellbeing, and intergenerational knowledge, through our culturally grounded programs including Ho'omakua i Ke Kai a Pele marine monitoring post 2018 eruption, Hi'i i Ka Malu Niu coconut grove mapping and heritage restoration, and Kahu 'Āina Hawai'i culture and community based stewardship.

The Ecological Damage Is Clear and Documented

Between 1976 and 2018, the aquarium industry extracted more than 8.6 million fish from West Hawai'i waters alone — over 80% of them juvenile yellow tang taken before they could reproduce. These herbivorous species are the reef's primary defense against algal overgrowth; removing them accelerates coral decline at a time when bleaching, ocean acidification, and warming seas are already pushing our reefs toward collapse. NOAA data shows Hawai'i's nearshore fish stocks declined nearly 80% between 1900 and the mid-1980s, and studies on O'ahu concluded that aquarium collection pushed fisheries to the point of collapse. The global supply chain compounds the waste — an estimated 1 in 10 wild-caught fish survives from reef to retail hobbyist tank, creating a relentless cycle of extraction, death, and replacement demand.

Other Pacific Islands Have Already Acted — Hawai'i Is Behind

The Philippines banned coral collection in the late 1970s after cyanide fishing devastated reefs across the Indo-Pacific. Fiji imposed a complete ban on coral and aquarium fish exports after finding that 3% of reefs surrounding Viti Levu had been depleted by the trade alone. The U.S. Coral Reef Task Force documented that over 80% of coral and nearly 50% of aquarium fish traded globally were destined for U.S. markets — making the United States the world's largest driver of demand. Hawai'i, as the third-largest U.S. supplier of aquarium reef wildlife, sits at both ends of this destructive chain. Other island nations recognized this threat decades ago. It is past time Hawai'i did the same.

The Money Is Not Worth It

The entire West Hawai'i aquarium fishery generated roughly \$1.5 million per year — split among a few dozen permit holders. Meanwhile, Hawai'i's coral reef ecosystems contribute an estimated \$360 million annually to the state economy, with an overall asset value approaching \$10 billion. The trade captures a fraction of one percent of the value healthy reefs generate while actively degrading the resource that supports everything else — dive tourism, snorkeling, subsistence fishing, shoreline protection, cultural practice. The profits flow to mainland wholesalers, pet store chains, and hobbyists. The costs remain here. As 'Alohi Nakachi of The Nature Conservancy stated,



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the aquarium trade primarily benefits those outside the pae 'āina while the cost is borne by everyone else.

The People Have Spoken — The State Must Listen

For over 30 years, Hawai'i's communities have demanded an end to commercial aquarium extraction. Miloli'i fishermen testified for decades about disappearing reef fish. The Hawai'i Supreme Court ruled in 2017 that regulators cannot ignore the impacts. BLNR rejected the industry's own EIS for failing to account for environmental and cultural harm. The Environmental Council upheld that rejection. The Hawai'i County Council unanimously urged a statewide ban. And yet DAR is now proposing rules to reopen the collection — because it feels "statutorily forced" to do so. That is exactly why legislative action is needed now. Since the 2017 court-ordered halt, our reefs have begun to recover. Fish are returning. Communities are seeing species absent for years. To reopen collection in any county would throw away a decade of reef recovery for the benefit of a mainland pet industry.

The State should invest in captive breeding, community-based marine stewardship, and reef-based tourism — not extraction permits. Reef ecosystems do not observe county boundaries. We urge the Committee to amend HB2101 SD1 to apply statewide, consistent with Article XI, Sections 1 and 9, and Article XII, Section 7 of the Hawai'i State Constitution.

E lauhoe mai nā wa 'a; i ke kā, i ka hoe; i ka hoe, i ke kā; pae aku i ka 'āina.

Let us — community, lawmakers, and stewards — 'auamo this kuleana together to protect Hawai'i

We respectfully urge the Legislature and DAR to **PASS HB2101 with a statewide amendment** and deny any rules reopening commercial aquarium collection. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha 'aha 'a,

Toni "Makani" Gregg

Aloha 'Āina Practitioner

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March 30 2026

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT HB 2101

HB2101 – Ban Commercial Aquarium Collection

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. Jim Wyban. I am a UH Manoa trained PhD in Marine Biology. I am an aquaculture scientist and entrepreneur and a pioneer of Hawai'i's Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) shrimp broodstock industry. Over the past three decades, my work has helped position Hawai'i as a global leader in biosecure shrimp genetics and high-value aquaculture exports.

I strongly support **HB 2101 to Ban Commercial Aquarium Collection. I also support a complete ban on aquarium collection in West Hawaii (Kona).** I am a Hawaii Island resident and an avid snorkeler in both Hilo and Kona. Over the last few years, since reef collections were banned, I've seen a nice recovery of reef fishes in many of my favorite dive spots in Kona. Where I used to see single Yellow Tangs swimming, I've recently seen small schools of Yellow Tangs. In the old days, Kona was known as the "Gold Coast" because of the huge schools of Yellow Tang visible from the shoreline.

When I had my shrimp breeding company based at NELHA, we would pack our farm raised shrimp broodstock during the night to deliver to Aloha air cargo by 6 am. We would drop off 60-100 boxes of broodstock. At air cargo, our pile of boxes (60-100) would be dwarfed by the number of boxes of reef fish being exported. I was convinced that the collectors were grossly underreporting their harvests. This happened every time I went to Kona air cargo 2-3 times per week over 20 years.

My professional opinion is that commercial Hawaii reef fish aquarium collection is an undesirable, unsustainable extraction from our precious coral reefs. A few people are making money as our public reefs are unsustainably depleted. Hawaii's reef fish are far more valuable on the reef than in private aquaria on the continent. A second problem is that free collection of reef fish grossly undervalues the replacement costs of those fish. Aquaculture can now produce those beautiful reef fish but if the reef collectors are collecting free fish, aquaculture companies cannot compete.

I therefore **strongly support HB 2101** and the permanent ban of commercial reef fish collection for the aquarium trade.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jim Wyban
CEO
Marine Genetics LLC

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 12:52:12 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Dean	Testifying for Clean the Pacific	Support	Written Testimony Only


Comments:

My heart is daring to allow a ray of hope and sunshine in these dark times. I see that there is an opportunity to stop the devastation of our coral reef habitats by banning the extraction of our precious reef fish. Please hear, support and pass HB2101.

I want to share two stories with you. One is about my Son, who worked for the DAR counting fish and measuring reef decline. The other is a podcast of a story I gave at the Museum of Natural History in New York City last summer. I implore you to listen to that podcast, it's less than 7 minutes and I promise you won't be sorry you did.

My son, Kanoe Phillips, and I were snorkeling off the Mahukona pier about 7 years ago. Afterwards we sat on the edge and talked story for awhile. Suddenly he exclaimed, "LOOK!" I looked down in the water and there was a school of yellow tang, about 10-12 total. We watched them drift back and forth in the gentle swells for a few minutes, then Kanoe said, "I heard schools like this were common once." I can't overstate how much that sentence broke my heart. I just looked at him in disbelief and sorrow, because he has no idea of the beauty that once existed. When I was his age, I went snorkeling there often and there were always multiple schools of yellow tang, each one containing hundreds of fish, a dizzying display of dazzling yellow fish. Think about that. He went to some of the most remote areas off the west coast of Hawaii Island with the DAR, and this sad little remnant of yellow tang off the pier was amazing to him? Oh, the shame. This is almost entirely the result of the aquarium industry.

Now with all of the stressors that humanity is bringing to bear on this tiny blue dot we call home, the last thing these fish need is to be ripped from their homes and imprisoned for life in some dentist's office. I'm telling you Tim, there's going to be a reckoning for our sociopathic indifference to the pain and suffering we're inflicting on the natural world. For every action there's an equal and opposite reaction, and we will reap the bitter fruit of our greed and selfishness as a species. This is one act of kindness you can take, for the fishes and for people like me who swoon with joy at the beauty of planet Earth's spectacular miracle of life.

Now please, take a moment from your hectic day and relax while you listen to my story. Thank you Tim, for your kokua. 

https://open.spotify.com/episode/3V2aYCGw9b1xExDlykZJRg?go=1&sp_cid=2acc7e486c29448ead1a29f2b9c1635c&utm_source=embed_player_p&utm_medium=desktop&nd=1&dlsi=61ac54a2c1fa40ee

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 12:58:08 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marine Advocates	Testifying for Marine Advocates Collaborating for Sustainable Aquatic Life through Action and Discipline	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary,

We are in strong support of HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an important amendment. Specifically, we urge you to restore the measure to a permanent, statewide ban on commercial aquarium collection, rather than a temporary, O‘ahu-only approach.

The Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources, through its Chairperson and with the unanimous support of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, affirmed that while it recognizes the urgency of protecting Hawai‘i’s marine ecosystems, it lacks the authority to enact a ban on commercial aquarium collection as petitioned.

This limitation underscores the critical need for legislative action through HB2101 HD1 SD1 to provide the clear authority and direction necessary to safeguard these cultural and natural public trust resources for future generations. However, in its current form, HB2101 requires amendment to ensure meaningful statewide impact.

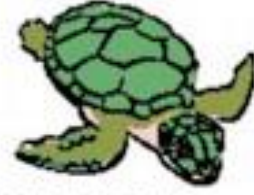
Hawai‘i’s Constitution affirms that natural and cultural resources must be protected for the benefit of all people. Allowing the commercial extraction of reef wildlife for private profit on any island is inconsistent with this responsibility.

Mahalo,

Marine Advocates Collaborating for Sustainable Aquatic Life through Action and Discipline

Advocating for an equitable voice and identity of lawai‘a to be pono in conduct as hoa‘āina of nearshore and marine ecosystems with an emphasis on Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices.

Puako
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



My name is Diane O'Toole, and I am writing on behalf of the Puako Community Association, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization on Hawai'i Island.

We strongly OPPOSE the proposed aquarium fishing rules that would reopen West Hawai'i reefs to commercial aquarium collection.

Reef fish belong on the reef — not in aquariums. Prior to the 2017 halt, millions of reef fish were removed from these waters, disrupting the natural balance of our fragile marine ecosystems. These fish are essential to maintain healthy coral reefs, helping to control algae and support reef resilience.

Our reefs are already under significant stress from climate change, coral bleaching, pollution, and overuse. Reintroducing large-scale commercial aquarium collection adds yet another pressure that our reefs cannot afford.

The people of Puako have consistently supported stronger protections for reef ecosystems, not a return to harmful practices.

We have established another and separate 501c3, Puako for Reefs to have a sewer system installed to reduce land-based sources of pollution that harm our reef.

The PCA is in support of HB2101, WITH an amendment to include Hawaii Island, as a more appropriate and precautionary measure to protect our reef ecosystem statewide. We respectfully urge the State of Hawai'i to prioritize long-term reef health and community well-being by maintaining protections against commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Diane O'Toole

Treasurer

Puako Community Association

808-990-8080

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 1:58:20 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Niki Roderick	Testifying for FreediveSafe! Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Senate Committee,

I strongly support HB2101 HD1, SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide which would establish a ban on the collection of reef resources for commercial aquarium sale and ensure that West Hawai‘i and other areas targeted by the industry remain closed as they have been for the past nearly 10 years. I also request that this ban be extended statewide for the following reasons.

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain. But the aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which reportedly die within a year after collection.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai‘i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a total ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawai‘i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law. Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Accordingly, the legislature has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

This critical ecosystem supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, shoreline protection provided by healthy coral reefs, and on-reef tourism activities dependent on vibrant and healthy ecosystems that generate approximately \$1.2 billion annually in economic benefits. In light of the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and a cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to **pass HB2101 HD1, SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide, as originally drafted.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Niki Roderick

Executive Director

FreediveSafe! Hawaii

West Hawaii, Hawaii Island



Healthy fish and reefs are essential to the State of Hawai'i's long term well being. Degraded reefs/lack of healthy reef fish populations mean more shoreline damage, which is expensive in multiple ways (e.g. loss of food sources, loss of tourism dollars).

Healthy breeding stock means need for abundant numbers of fish. We know from other animal populations that they will vanish when numbers get too low for a healthy population. Please protect the health of Hawaiian Islands by protecting its beautiful reef fish.

The attached 2025 picture shows a degraded coral reef and one lone fish in Napili Bay, Maui. Years ago this bay had much more abundant reef fish and corals...great for the environment and for future generations of Hawaiians. The time to protect these resources is NOW.

Thank you...
Pat Lindquist
President, Napili Bay and Beach Foundation



Testimony Before The
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection (CPN)
Senate Committee on Judiciary (JDC)
IN SUPPORT OF HB2101 HD1 SD1
April 2, 2026, 9:20 a.m., Room 229 & via Videoconference

We are Olan Leimomi Fisher and Kevin Chang, Kua'āina Advocate and Executive Director, respectively, testifying on behalf of [Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). "Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo" stands for "grassroots growing through shared responsibility," and our acronym "KUA" means "backbone." **Our mission is to connect and empower communities to improve their quality of life through the collective care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage, serving as a "backbone organization" that supports creative and community-driven solutions to problems stemming from environmental degradation.** Hawai'i's biocultural resources continue to be negatively impacted by political, economic, and social changes, and the increasing dangers of climate change make fostering and empowering resilient communities acutely critical.

Currently KUA supports three major networks of: (1) over 40 mālama 'āina (caring for our 'āina or "that which feeds") community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together); (2) over 60 loko i'a (fishpond aquaculture systems unique to Hawai'i) and wai 'ōpae (anchialine pool systems) sites in varying stages of restoration and development, with numerous caretakers, stakeholders, and volunteers known as the Hui Mālama Loko I'a ("caretakers of fishponds"); and (3) the Limu Hui made up of over 50 loea (traditional experts) and practitioners in all things "limu" or locally-grown "seaweed." **Our shared vision is to once again experience what our kūpuna (ancestors) referred to as 'ĀINA MOMONA – abundant and healthy ecological systems that sustain our community resilience and well-being.**

KUA supports HB2101 HD1 SD1 as an incremental step toward 'āina momona, but in its original form covering all islands and especially Hawai'i Island.

A popular quote of community leader Mac Poepoe is "**we do not play with our food.**"

KUA supports this bill in its original form covering all islands, based on the long term place-based opposition by traditional fishing communities in West Hawai'i and the growing sentiment of support for a statewide approach to addressing this matter within our networks. **But at the very least, this bill should also cover Hawai'i Island as the well-known, primary target for commercial AQ fishers.**

E Alu Pū members in West Hawai'i have long opposed commercial aquarium (AQ) collection in their region. Their opposition to AQ collection is based on their Native Hawaiian cultural philosophies, values, and traditions of lawai'a pono and place-based fishery management. In 1998, the West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area (WHRFMA) was created along with the West Hawai'i Fishery Council (WHFC), largely in response to the AQ trades' decimation of their fishery. WHRFMA and WHFC were built upon the strong community

efforts to make fishery governance more local and pertinent to the communities most dependent on the fishery. Further, the litigious history of the AQ trade shows the strong West Hawai'i pushback to this commercial industry that nearly eradicated entire fish species before the communities started taking formal action.

Some of these species are traditional food species and are necessary for upholding our unique and important reef ecosystems which should be a priority of our state. The highly lucrative aquarium trade primarily serves extractive interests for sales to an industry outside of our state for a non-essential, non-food use . Further, it is becoming feasible to grow the very species that go for the highest dollars in the aquaculture trade.

How does allowing for statewide AQ fishing, at the very least before completing the Holomua process for all islands, align with our Hawai'i State Constitution Article XII, Section 7 to protect all rights, customarily and traditionally, for Native Hawaiian ahupua'a tenants, as well as the public trust doctrine in Article XI, Section 1? We cannot see how it does. We question further why the push for AQ collection rules is being prioritized over other longstanding community efforts and management needs, especially those in West Hawai'i by Native Hawaiian and local communities in Ho'okena and Ka'ūpūlehu.

Although our focus at KUA has never been the economic value of our i'a, it is hard to ignore the flagrant economic imbalance at play between what little money would come back to DLNR through just \$100 per AQ permit, versus and the retail price \$100+ per AQ fish sold. It also seems imprudent and irresponsible as a management decision. With the only seven known potential AQ permittees, that would mean a mere \$700 annually going back to the state – for the care of 'āina and kai on behalf of Native Hawaiian and local people. Meanwhile, it is our understanding that the state management costs (excluding enforcement of the rules) is estimated at \$300,000 - \$500,000 annually.

The communities we work with are committed to ensuring the long-term health of our biocultural resources that they have cared for and depended on for generations since time immemorial. **We believe protecting our environment, the foundation of our very existence, is about sustained and long-term commitments toward achieving 'āina momona abundance once again.** To get there requires maintaining protections for mālama 'āina, including through this bill to prohibit an extractive, non-essential practice not rooted in Native Hawaiian culture or practices. Our decisions today will continue to shape the future that our keiki's keiki's keiki will one day inherit – we hope for a future of shared and harmonious abundance, and hope you do, too.

Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to submit testimony. **Please PASS HB2101 HD1 SD1, but amend it to once again cover all Hawai'i fisheries and especially Hawai'i Island.**

Aloha 'Āina Momona no nā kau ā kau.



A Community Dedicated to Saving Puakō Reef

Return the reef to its historic 70% coral coverage from its existing 7%.

www.Puako4reefs.org * [Puako for Reefs Facebook](#)

Story map of Puakō: [Wahi Pana -A Sacred Place](#)

HEARING FOR STATE SENATE COMMITTEES ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION and JUDICIARY

Thursday, April 2, 2026 9:20 a.m.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol

TO: Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection Chair Jarrett Keohokalole, and Vice-Chair Carol Fukunaga, and all members
Senate Committee on Judiciary Chair Kari Rhoads, and Vice-Chair Mike Gabbard, and all members

RE: HOUSE BILL 2101 HD1 SD1. Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collecting.

Puakō For Reefs respectfully submits this testimony in support of HB 2101, HD1, SD1 which would prohibit the commercial collection of aquarium fish from Oahu's waters. However, this ban should be state-wide to achieve all the benefits of healthy reefs, as well as healthy fish populations.

Our organization fully supports the original intent and purpose of this measure—a statewide ban on commercial aquarium collecting. Puakō For Reefs is investing extraordinary effort to protect and restore coral reef ecosystems along the South Kohala coastline. Through millions of dollars in community donations and countless volunteer hours, we are working to remove a significant stressor, wastewater pollution, from our reefs and nearshore waters. To see these restoration efforts undermined by another preventable stressor, intensive aquarium fish collection, is deeply concerning and discouraging for our community.

While HD1 limited the prohibition to Hawai'i Island, now SD 1 has changed that limited protection to 'Oahu. It is widely recognized that the vast majority of aquarium fish collection occurs on the Big Island. In addition, illegal poaching remains widespread. The current regulatory framework, constrained by limited enforcement resources, has proven insufficient to prevent ongoing poaching.

Several critical considerations support passage of this bill:

- 1. Chronic Enforcement Challenges and Rampant Poaching**

Due to extremely limited enforcement capacity, illegal aquarium fish collection continues to occur on a regular basis. A clear, statewide prohibition would significantly simplify enforcement, eliminate regulatory ambiguity, and provide a practical solution to ongoing poaching.

- 2. Ecological Harm and Loss of Key Reef Species**

The reef fish most heavily targeted for aquarium collection include herbivorous species that play a vital role in controlling algae growth. These fish are essential to coral health and reef resilience. The notion that reef fish populations are limitless is demonstrably incorrect. Continued removal of key species compromises ecosystem balance and threatens long-term reef survival. Moreover, such extraction disregards longstanding local stewardship practices



**PUAKŌ FOR
REEFS**

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www.Puako4reefs.org * [Puako for Reefs Facebook](#)

Story map of Puakō: [Wahi Pana -A Sacred Place](#)

and Native Hawaiian values that emphasize mālama ‘āina and responsible care for our ocean resources.

3. **Public Trust Responsibilities**

Hawai‘i’s State Constitution affirms the public trust doctrine and the State’s obligation to protect natural resources for present and future generations. Strengthening protections for reef ecosystems aligns directly with these constitutional responsibilities and reflects a renewed commitment to safeguarding our shared natural heritage.

4. **Economic Reality and Public Burden**

The economic benefits of the legal aquarium trade accrue to a very small number of individuals, never mind the illegal trade. The broader public bears all the environmental degradation, diminished reef health, and the costs of enforcement. Residents and taxpayers shoulder all these expensive and expansive harms with zero benefit.

Our coral reefs are foundational to Hawai‘i’s cultural identity, food security, shoreline protection, and tourism-based economy. They are already under immense stress from climate change, land-based pollution, and ocean warming. Reducing preventable, extractive pressures is both prudent and necessary.

We respectfully urge you to vote in favor of HB 2101, HD1, SD1 and make further amendments to include the whole state. This would be a decisive step toward meaningful, long-term protection of Hawai‘i’s reefs and ocean waters.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara Bell for Puakō for Reefs Board members and its many volunteers

Karen Anderson, Board Chair,
Stephanie Erickson, Board Treasurer,
Barbara Bell, Board Secretary, and
George Fry, Board member

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 3:53:43 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Redfeather	Testifying for Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to reinstate the state wide ban before passing. Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:07:28 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Damien Kenison	Testifying for Kauhako Ohana Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Damien Kenison, president of Kauhako Ohana Association representing the ohana from the Hookena District, South Kona, Hawaii Island. We are in strong support of HB2101 banning AQ collecting including here on Hawaii Island. The AQ industry has altered the life cycles of many of our food fish when they removed hundreds of thousands of i'a from our West Hawaii coral reefs. Many reef fish like pakuikui have not been able to rejuvenate after being removed from their habitat as other fish species moved in to replace them. Harvesting pakuikui has been banned here because they have been severely depleted and DAR stated they do not know why. Pakuikui is a favorited food fish of South Kona kupuna and being denied the ono of that i'a is something that should not have happened. AQ collecting benefits a few while the thousands of us who oppose this maha oe practice are ignored and disrespected. DAR will soon issue AQ permits for West Hawaii further harming our coral reefs and negatively impacting our fishing for mea'ai. How can we teach our keiki to learn a skill passed down from generations of kupuna if there a fewer fish to catch. Protein from the ocean is healthy, as well as ono, and it is our right to have access to a sustainable resource to feed our families. How can DAR believe that removing thousands of reef fish from their habitat is sustainable or ethical. We do not need a 10 year study to determine the impacts of altering the biological makeup of a coral reef after thousands of its inhabitants have been removed every year. Please support and pass HB 2101 with an amendment to include Hawaii Island.

Mahalo nui loa,

Damien Kenison

Kauhako Ohana Association

(808) 987-9149

PO Box 38 Honaunau HI 96726

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:10:37 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Goeggel	Testifying for Animal Rights Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animal Rights Hawai'i strongly supports HB2101 and we urge this committee to pass it and show your support for healthy and beautiful reefs. It can't be voiced enough - Hawai'i needs those beautiful fishes to stay here where they belong, not in some fancy tank. Mahalo.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:19:14 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kehaulani Lum	Testifying for Ali'i Pauahi Hawaiian Civic Club	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai‘i’s marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai‘i is

sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kehaulani Lum, Pelekikena

'Aiea, O'ahu

Ali'i Pauahi Hawaiian Civic Club

HB 2101

Hello Chair and Board Members,

The Biota Group is in favor of HB2101 to ban the commercial aquarium collection.

Aquaculture is a sustainable alternative to wild collection, and our company has proven that this alternative is viable to meet global demand. Over the past seven years our company has invested millions in Hawaiian research and infrastructure to aquaculture popular ornamental species within Hawaii. This allows for consistent, sustainable, well-paid jobs and careers that are future proof given ever-changing global climate and increased environmental restrictions.

A commercial aquarium collection ban would increase the confidence of companies like ours to invest further in Hawaiian ornamental aquaculture. There is a significant risk of financial loss to Hawaii's established and growing aquaculture sector than there is to gain in the commercial fisheries sector- in both monetary value and job impacts.

Aquaculture allows Hawaiian reefs to stay stocked with marine life while still allowing the iconic animals as ambassadors to educate the world about Hawaii's reefs.

We urge you to pass HB2101 to solidify Hawaii's commitment to sustainable practices, future building, and protecting the reefs.



March 30, 2026

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Hawai'i State Legislature
Via Electronic Transmission

Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 2101 HD1 SD1, Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection
Hearing: Thursday, April 2, 2026, 9:20 AM CR 229 & Via Videoconference

To: The Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

The Surfrider Foundation, Hawai'i Region, is in strong support of HB 2101 HD1 SD1, which prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes in specified counties. Surfrider Foundation prefers the original version of this bill which applied statewide, rather than the county- based population limitation in the HD1 SD1 version.

The Surfrider Foundation is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our ocean, waves, and beaches for all people through a powerful activist network. From this lens, protecting Hawai'i's coral reefs is essential to safeguarding clean water, coastal ecosystems, and the communities that depend on them.

Healthy reefs function as critical natural infrastructure - improving water quality, supporting biodiversity, sustaining cultural and subsistence practices, and reducing coastal erosion and storm impacts. Herbivorous reef fish play a key role in maintaining reef health and resilience.

The commercial aquarium trade directly undermines these ecosystem functions by removing essential reef species for ornamental use. Decades of extraction have reduced reef fish populations and degraded reef ecosystem health that Hawai'i communities rely on.

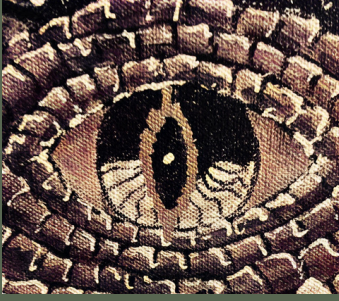
This is a public trust issue - Hawai'i's reef ecosystems must be managed for the benefit of present and future generations, not depleted for private commercial gain. This is especially critical as reef ecosystems face increasing stress from climate change and land-based pollution.

HB2101 represents an important step toward protecting reef health, water quality, and long-term coastal resilience. We support this measure and urge the Legislature to consider expanding these protections statewide.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support on behalf of Surfrider Foundation Hawai'i's three chapters and members statewide.

Sincerely,

Hanna Lilley
Hawai'i Regional Manager
Surfrider Foundation



KELI'IPIO-KUAMO'O FOUNDATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 38-5653
WAIKŌLOA, HI. 96738
[HTTPS://WWW.KUAMOOFUNDATION.ORG](https://www.kuamooofoundation.org) AND
[HTTPS://WWW.KUKUIPAHU.COM](https://www.kukuipahu.com)
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Anthony Keli'ipio
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Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

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Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai'i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne'ohe, and Kahalu'u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo,

Lehua Kaulukukui, KKF President

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:02:10 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronald Robinson	Testifying for Big Island Aviation, LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

30 March 2026

Opposition to Aquarium Fish Collecting

Ronald Robinson, MD, MPH, MBA, FACHE

I am writing in **support of HB2101 with an amendment to include Hawai‘i Island** and in strong opposition to commercial aquarium collecting.

I am a small business owner living near Kailua Kona in Hawai‘i county (Big Island Aviation, LLC), and my business brings over \$100,000 of annual impact to the county’s economy. My business is tied directly to the health and biodiversity of Hawai‘i’s reef environment. I also serve as a volunteer for three marine non-profits (Malama Kai, Reef Check, Ocean Defenders Alliance) and am an avid recreational SCUBA diver, so I see the reef personally several times each week. In addition, I am the squadron commander for Hawai‘i’s Kona Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol, so I see the reef and its fish populations from the air on a frequent basis. Finally, I am a physician trained in science and the scientific method of observation. My ability to observe this situation from the perspectives of science, business, and community service places me in a position to provide an educated opinion on this vital issue.

The scientific evidence is overwhelming that commercial aquarium collection damages the fragile reef ecosystem. (1,2) Fish like the yellow tang play a crucial role in maintaining the health of coral reefs by grazing on algae. Their decline can lead to algal overgrowth, which harms coral and disrupts the entire marine ecosystem. They are also a food source for larger predatory fish and their decline can affect the population dynamics of these predators. The fact that the yellow tang population did not recover as predicted during the recent hiatus in aquarium fish collection is an indicator that the models being used by DAR are inaccurate, and the coral reef ecosystem is much more fragile than they predicted.

From a community perspective, each fish that remains on the reef delights hundreds of people. Each fish collected, if it survives, benefits a privileged few. In the 25 years I have been diving this reef I have seen fish populations decline due to environmental stress and the ongoing poaching of aquarium fish despite the recent ban on aquarium fish collection. Keeping our fish on the reef is vital to our tourist industry, and to businesses such as my own. In addition, since the fish are now available by commercial aquaculture, there is no reason other than the financial

self-interest of commercial aquarium fish collection to continue the practice of removing wild fish from our reef.

I strongly oppose allowing a small group of selfish commercial aquarium collectors to negatively impact our shared coral reef resource.

Blast fishing is wrong – it was banned in 1940.

Cyanide fishing is wrong – it was banned in in the 1960's. Commercial whaling is wrong – it was banned in 1986.

Commercial aquarium collecting is wrong – ban it now.

Do your kuleana – just say “NO!” to aquarium fish collecting.

(1) <https://earth.org/the-destructive-truth-behind-aquariums/>

(2) Tissot and Hallacher, 2003

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:24:26 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mel Malinowski	Testifying for South Kohala Reef Alliance	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Capture and exporting of wild reef fish to the mainland has been primarily focused on the island of Hawai'i. HB2101 is the pono way to correct this practice which benefits just a few, but hurts all Hawai'ians and visitors who expect healthy reefs filled with fish as in years past.

Stopping this stripping of our reefs needs to happen. In order for HB2101 to work, it should be amended to cover all of Hawai'i. Otherwise, it will do little to stop poaching, as the airlines will continue to allow the fish to be air freighted, and the main location for the collecting would not be protected.

It's time to say that our wild Hawai'ian resources are not for export, but are here for the benefit of Hawai'ians and our visitors in a renewable way. Keep our reefs vibrant and healthy for the future. It's sound ocean management, like that traditional in days past.



**SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**

April 2, 2026

9:20 AM

Conference Room 229

**In SUPPORT of HB2101 HD1 SD1: RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM
COLLECTION**

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair gabbard, and Members of the Committees,

On behalf of our more than 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** HB2101 HD1 SD1, and urges the Committees to **amend this measure to ensure that the aquarium collection industry is not allowed to once again threaten the nearshore ecosystems of any island, and not just O'ahu.**

Hawai'i's coral reefs and the larger living systems dependent upon them are being severely threatened by human-induced global warming, pollution, and the largely unchecked profit-driven extraction of marine life – including, until recently, commercial aquarium collection. Before the local aquarium collection industry was effectively shut down by court rulings in 2017 and 2021, millions of specimens of marine life, including ecologically and culturally important herbivore species, were taken from our reefs and shipped to private aquarium collectors each year. Not surprisingly, the industry has been and continues to be the center of significant conflict and controversy, with the vast majority of the public, and Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and subsistence communities in particular, objecting to such large-scale extraction of public trust marine resources solely for ornamental purposes, and the financial benefit of a select few.

Despite this, and even after the Board of Land and Natural Resources voted in support of a petition to end commercial aquarium collection, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would instead reopen this industry, starting in West Hawai'i. DAR staff have justified their rule proposal by citing obligations under existing statutes. As agency rulemaking determines *how* an activity is conducted, not *whether* it should be allowed, it is now up to the Legislature to affirm that Hawai'i's ocean wildlife should be used and conserved for the public benefit, not exploited for a gratuitous, harmful, and now defunct industry. **The Sierra Club strongly urges the Legislature to take such action and end decades of painful controversy once and for all, by amending this measure to make clear that commercial aquarium collection should not be permitted in West Hawai'i Island, or in any Hawaiian waters.**



Notably, DAR already struggles to meet urgent needs relating to our reefs and ocean environment. This includes addressing the numerous threats to our marine resources from irresponsible or uninformed harvesting practices, and leveraging the willingness and ability of communities throughout the islands to help co-manage their nearshore waters. By prohibiting commercial aquarium collection throughout the islands, this measure would allow DAR to avoid committing hugely disproportionate resources catering to the profit-seeking demands of a handful of private entities, and to instead focus on upholding its critical mission and the public trust in our marine ecosystems.

For these reasons, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committees to **PASS WITH AMENDMENTS** HB2101 HD1 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:14:09 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shaena Dela Cruz Hoohuli	Testifying for Buildteam 50	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

RE: HB2101 SD1 – Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Aloha kākahiāka nui, Chair(s), Vice Chair(s), and esteemed Members of the Committees,

My name is Shaena Dela Cruz Hoohuli, CEO and Founder of Build Team 50 LLC. I submit this testimony in strong SUPPORT of HB2101 SD1 under the name, kuleana, and ancestral responsibility of my ‘ohana. Our kūpuna taught us that “He ali‘i ka ‘āina, he kauwā ke kanaka” — the land (and sea) is the chief; we are its servants. The ocean — our kai — is not a commodity to be harvested for profit, but a sacred ancestor that sustains our lāhui, provides for our families, and connects us to our past and future. Commercial aquarium collection treats our reef fish as mere ornaments for distant aquariums, removing species that are vital to our marine ecosystem, traditional practices, and cultural continuity.

This bill wisely prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes in counties with populations greater than 500,000, while properly preserving space for traditional and customary Native Hawaiian gathering rights, scientific research, education, aquaculture, and personal use. It honors the principle of mālama ‘āina — caring for the land and sea so they may continue to care for us. For too long, short-term commercial gain has come at the expense of long-term ecological and cultural health.

Our reefs are already under pressure from climate change, pollution, and overuse. Continuing to allow large-scale removal of reef fish for the global pet trade is not pono.

As our kupuna reminded us through the ‘ōlelo no‘eau: “‘A‘ohe hana nui ke alu ‘ia” — no task is too big when done together. By passing HB2101 SD1, we stand together to protect what remains and ensure our keiki inherit healthy, abundant reefs. I urge you to pass HB2101 SD1 without further weakening amendments.

Let us choose righteousness today so that “Ua mau ke ea o ka ‘āina i ka pono” — the life of the land (and sea) is perpetuated in righteousness. Mahalo nui loa for your kuleana and for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaena Dela Cruz Hoohuli
CEO & Founder, Build Team 50 LLC
808-859-6544
buildteam50@gmail.com

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:46:34 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Blake McNaughton	Testifying for Makahaloa Fishing Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kākou,

Makahaloa Fishing Association represents over 140 fishing ‘ohana from Hilo Palikū on Hawai‘i Island. We support a statewide ban on aquarium fishing. This industry is wasteful and not pono. What if we dumped out and killed 9 out of the 10 fish we caught instead of feeding our ‘ohana?? Let’s support these working fisherman with other industries that align with a sustainable Hawaii instead of enabling a destructive industry.

We urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.



April 2, 2026

TO: Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection, and Judiciary

RE: STRONG SUPPORT for HB2101 SD1 – Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees,

We strongly support HB2101 SD1 and respectfully urge you to restore the bill to its original statewide scope.

As currently written, the bill leaves West Hawai'i exposed at the very moment the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is moving to reopen commercial aquarium collection there—potentially as soon as this summer. This is occurring despite DAR's own data showing that yellow tang populations in West Hawai'i have been heavily—and possibly permanently—impacted by decades of collection and have not meaningfully recovered since the fishery was shut down in 2017.

West Hawai'i should not be excluded from protection when it is the area most at risk of renewed large-scale extraction.

For decades, the aquarium trade has removed millions of reef animals—primarily herbivores—from Hawai'i reefs for export. This extraction has occurred in the absence of effective enforcement and with well-documented mortality throughout the supply chain. Public opposition has remained strong and consistent, with approximately **84% of residents supporting an end to the trade.**

The core claim used to justify reopening the fishery has failed.

The aquarium trade's most recent EIS repeatedly asserted that yellow tang populations would rapidly recover—doubling within roughly 15 months after collection stopped. That recovery has not occurred.

More than five years after closure on O'ahu, and more than eight years in West Hawai'i, populations have not doubled. In many cases, they have not meaningfully increased at all.

This is not a minor discrepancy—it is a failure of the central sustainability claim.

At the same time, the State has reduced its ability to measure impacts.

For more than two decades, DAR conducted 4–6 monitoring surveys annually in West Hawai'i, producing statistically robust data that clearly demonstrated differences between protected and collected reefs.

In 2022, DAR reduced that effort to a single annual survey.

That change substantially weakens the State's ability to detect trends, evaluate recovery, or measure the impacts of renewed extraction.

The result is a concerning combination: **failed recovery, followed by reduced monitoring, followed by a proposal to resume extraction.**

Proceeding under these conditions is not precautionary management—it is management without reliable feedback.

The economic justification is equally weak.

DLNR has estimated that managing the aquarium trade costs hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, excluding enforcement, while generating minimal revenue. At the same time, reef-based tourism generates hundreds of millions of dollars each year and depends on abundant reef life.

Continuing to subsidize a small extractive industry at the expense of a far larger reef-dependent economy is not sound public policy.

This is ultimately a policy decision about how Hawai'i values its public trust resources.

The permits at issue are not held by individual collectors, but by a mainland-based pet industry trade association, with individuals participating as designees. This is not simply about protecting local livelihoods—it is a decision about whether Hawai'i should continue supplying wildlife to a global commercial trade.

That trade continues to prefer Hawai'i's wild reef fish over aquacultured alternatives which are much better suited for captivity.

Conclusion

HB2101 provides a clear and responsible path forward.

The science used to justify reopening has not held. Monitoring has been reduced. Enforcement remains limited. And the economic return to the State is negligible.

Reopening the aquarium trade under these conditions would place Hawai'i's already stressed reef ecosystems at further risk.

We respectfully urge you to pass HB2101 and restore it to apply statewide.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The 'A'ole AQ Hui:

For the Fishes, Moana Ohana, Kalanihale, The Center for Biodiversity, Kai Palaoa, Sierra Club of Hawai'i, Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Hawaiian Humane Society, Friends of Hanauma Bay, Conservation Council for Hawaii, Fair Wind Cruises, Surfrider Foundation | Hawai'i Region, Keiko Conservation, Legacy Reef Foundation, Haereticus Environmental Laboratory, Ocean Defenders Alliance | Hawai'i, Oceanic Preservation Society

Aquarium Collecting and the Failure of Reef Fish Recovery in Hawai'i

Independent state and federal monitoring data show that yellow tang populations in Hawai'i failed to recover—and in some cases declined—after aquarium collecting ceased, contradicting sustainability claims, population doubling theory, and Hawai'i's own historical recovery experience.

Why These Findings Matter for Aquarium Trade Legislation

Claims that aquarium collecting can be conducted sustainably have been advanced by the aquarium trade and relied upon in environmental reviews, agency rulemaking, and management justifications for continued or renewed aquarium collecting. While sustainability is frequently asserted, it is rarely defined with specificity or tied to empirically testable recovery benchmarks. For yellow tang—the most heavily targeted aquarium species in Hawai'i—long-term monitoring data allow these sustainability claims to be evaluated directly. The results demonstrate that recovery cannot be presumed and that continued authorization of aquarium collecting poses substantial biological and management risks. To date, policymakers have not required a clear definition of sustainability or objective recovery criteria against which these claims can be evaluated.

If aquarium collecting were truly sustainable, the cessation of harvest would have resulted in timely and sustained population recovery; instead, monitoring data show post-closure stagnation or decline rather than recovery.

What Happened After Aquarium Collecting Stopped

West Hawai'i (State and Federal Monitoring)

- Commercial aquarium collecting was halted by court order in 2017 in previously open areas of the West Hawai'i Regional Fishery Management Area (WHRFMA).
- Based on population doubling time theory and prior recovery following protection, yellow tang populations were expected to approximately double by 2021.
- Although abundance increased briefly in 2018, this increase was not sustained, and by 2021, yellow tang abundance in formerly collected areas had declined back to levels comparable to those observed during active collection.
- No population doubling has occurred through 2024 based on both Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) and NOAA monitoring data.
- **Historical precedent:** Yellow tang populations in West Hawai'i doubled within ~4 years after protection in 1999, a recovery not observed following the 2017 closure.

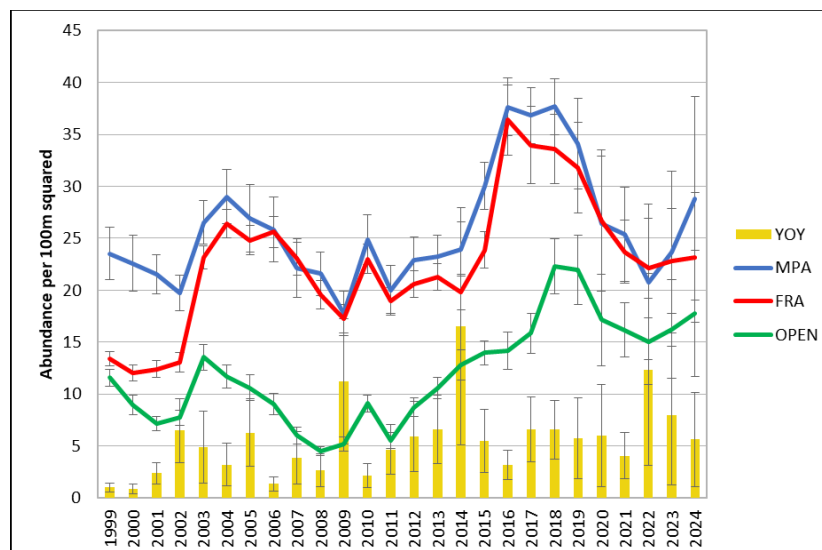


Figure 1. West Hawai'i yellow tang abundance by management area (DAR monitoring). Abundance in formerly collected (OPEN) areas briefly increased after the 2017 closure but subsequently declined, reverting by 2021 to levels similar to those observed during active collection.

O‘ahu (Federal Monitoring)

- Aquarium collecting on O‘ahu was halted in 2020 following a second court order, after a longer period of intense harvest pressure than in West Hawai‘i.
- Using West Hawai‘i as an empirical benchmark, population doubling would have been expected by approximately 2024.
- NOAA monitoring data instead show that yellow tang abundance in 2024 was significantly lower than in 2019.
- Non-overlapping error bars between 2019 and 2024 indicate a **statistically distinguishable decline** rather than recovery.

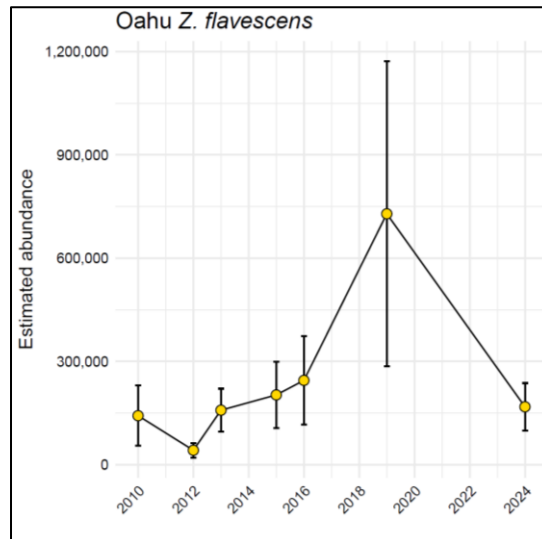


Figure 2. O‘ahu yellow tang abundance (NOAA). Estimated yellow tang abundance around O‘ahu before and after the 2020 cessation of aquarium collecting. The 2024 estimate shows a marked decline relative to 2019 with non-overlapping error bars, indicating a statistically distinguishable decrease rather than recovery.

Across both islands, ending aquarium collecting did not produce sustained population recovery. Instead, post-closure abundance either declined or reverted toward levels observed during active collection.

Why These Results Are Reliable

- West Hawai‘i conclusions rely on long-term DAR monitoring conducted prior to 2022, when survey effort was robust and statistically sound.
- NOAA monitoring provides an independent dataset showing consistent outcomes across islands.
- Claims of recent “upward trends” rely on post-2022 data, when DAR reduced sampling from 3–6 survey rounds per year to a **single annual survey**—substantially reducing statistical power.
- Large and overlapping error bars in NOAA data limit the ability to infer recovery trends, but do not obscure the absence of population doubling where recovery was expected to be most evident.

Implications for Legislative Action

Empirical monitoring data no longer support the assumption that reef fish populations will reliably recover following aquarium collecting, even after harvest pressure is fully removed. Continued authorization of commercial aquarium collecting therefore entails significant ecological and management risk, particularly for species that have already experienced decades of intense exploitation. The Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) has stated that it lacks the authority to permanently end aquarium collecting through rulemaking alone.

Permanent legislative prohibition is therefore necessary to prevent further long-term harm to Hawai‘i’s reef ecosystems and to provide clarity, consistency, and durability in state marine conservation policy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Rene Umberger | rene@forthefishes.org

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy
Supporting HB2101 HD1, Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection
Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Committee on Judiciary
April 2, 2026 at 9:20 am
Conference Room 229 and via Videoconference**

Dear Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify today. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Hawai'i and Palmyra supports HB2101 HD1, which prohibits the capture and sale of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection, in counties with a population greater than 200,000 and less than 300,000.

TNC's mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends, and we strongly support policies that recognize Indigenous rights, strengthen community governance, and support sustainable livelihoods. TNC works closely with dozens of communities and individuals leading community-based makai management efforts across five Hawaiian Islands. We carry kuleana to the places where we work and to the people and communities we work alongside, including those directly impacted by, and continuing to raise concerns about, the effects of the aquarium trade on their livelihoods, culture, and ways of life.

As a science-based organization dedicated to conserving the biodiversity that underpins all life on Earth, we are deeply aware that biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate. To reverse this trend, we must find better, more inclusive ways to manage humanity's footprint on land, freshwater, and the ocean. Addressing the twin crises of rapid climate change and biodiversity loss requires strong partnerships among communities, governments, and businesses—and above all, a foundation of respect for peoples, communities, and cultures. When policy aligns with people and place, we strengthen the conditions for the lands, waters, and communities of Hawai'i to thrive now and into the future.

In Hawai'i, we rely heavily on the partnership and stewardship of communities that mālama 'āina. These are the people with intimate, place-based knowledge of our nearshore ecosystems. That knowledge must inform and guide the management of our shared resources, for the health of our reefs and the well-being of the people connected to them.

As documented by the Division of Aquatic Resources' William Walsh (2014), the rise of the aquarium trade in the 1970s ignited longstanding conflict among collectors, fishers, and

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The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra

April 2, 2026

Page 2

community members, leading to Act 306 and the creation of Fish Replenishment Areas. Opposition to aquarium harvest and trade in West Hawai'i is longstanding, spanning over 50 years. This opposition is not simply about resource use; it is about deeply held values. According to West Hawai'i community partners that we deeply engage with, harvesting reef fish for commercial aquarium sale is not viewed as a culturally acceptable use of fishery resources.

In that spirit, we urge the Committee to move forward legislation that reflects the values of communities and protects the integrity of interconnected ecosystems across the entire pae 'āina through clear, equitable, statewide policy. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2101 HD1 and for your continued commitment to thoughtful, community-based resource management.

Guided by science, TNC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 84,000 acres in 13 nature preserves and 18 managed areas and have supported over 50 coastal communities to help protect and restore the nearshore reefs and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands.



COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Sen. Jarrett Keohokaole, Chair
Sen. Carol Fukunaga,, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Sen.Karl Rhoades, Chair
Sen. Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

April 2, 2026 9:20 AM

Conference Room 229

Strong Support of HB2101.HD1,SD1 in original form, including Hawaii Island

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Mendy Dant, President of Fair Wind Cruises and Kona Sunrise Charters, a family-owned snorkel business that has operated in Kona since 1971.

I am writing in strong support of HB2101 HD2. We must end the commercial aquarium fish collection trade for sale to the pet industry. This practice is inhumane and harmful to Hawai'i's marine environment.

Removing reef fish disrupts the delicate ecological balance that keeps our coral reefs healthy. Many of these species play a critical role in controlling algae and maintaining reef resilience. Healthy reefs are also essential to protecting our shorelines from storm damage and erosion.

In addition, our reefs are the foundation of Hawai'i's marine tourism industry. For more than five decades, our family business has depended on vibrant, living reefs to share the beauty of Hawai'i with residents and visitors alike. Depleting reef fish populations directly threatens this sustainable economic engine.

What is especially frustrating is that the Division of Aquatic Resources has been authorized by our Legislature to charge our industry a \$1.00 fee to protect our coral reefs, which in 2026 is expected to generate \$2.6 million. At the same time, DAR now seeks to issue seven permits, for a total of just \$700, to permanently remove 100,000 yellow tangs—a key herbivore that naturally eats algae and helps keep coral reefs healthy. This contradiction is deeply troubling to the ocean-loving public, who clearly recognize the hypocrisy in these actions.

For the long-term health of our reefs, our communities, and our local economy, I urge you to pass HB2101 HD2 and ensure its protections include Hawai'i Island, home to approximately 220,000 residents.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Mendy Dant
President, Fair Wind Cruises and Kona Sunrise Charters



March 31, 2026

To: Members of the CPN/JDC Committees

From: Dr. Roxane keli'ikipikāneokolohaka, Executive Director, Kia'i Kanaloa

RE: Testimony in SUPPORT with amendments of HB2101 HD1 SD1

Aloha,

On behalf of Kia'i Kanaloa with members across the pae'āina, mahalo for this opportunity to provide written testimony regarding HB2101 HD1 SD1. Kia'i Kanaloa stands in firm opposition to any aquarium fish collecting in waters off any island, as it does not benefit our ocean ecosystem, nor does it lend to the state's trust responsibility to our elder environment and the people of Hawai'i. Therefore, we request that the proposed ban be amended to apply (as originally proposed) a statewide, permanent ban rather than a temporary ban that only applies to O'ahu.

In emulating the essence of Kanaloanuiākea, Hawai'i must think more deeply and long (the essence of Kanaloa thinking) when it comes to protecting our elder environment. Thinking deeply means we must consider all threats to our sources, from the shoreline to the depths of the moana, including threats right here in Hawai'i, such as the aquarium fish trade, as well as current threats beyond our shores, such as seabed mining and fossil fuel exploration in conservation areas. Add to that the stresses of climate change we are currently experiencing, as well as the future climate stresses we have yet to comprehend fully. Included in that consideration is factoring in the potential term or irreparable harm of all these combined threats in all decision-making.

The state must dramatically shift away from prioritizing extractive industries that serve the short-term interests of individual proprietors, at the expense of a healthy, balanced marine environment that supports Hawai'i residents for generations. Doing so lends to the state fulfilling its public trust responsibilities requiring that our natural & cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good - NOT private gain. We ask you to think deeply and long, placing our Kanaloa at the center of your decision-making by prohibiting commercial aquarium collecting in our waters. **We urge you to support a complete state-wide ban of aquarium fish collecting.**

In service to our Kanaloa,

Roxane K. Keli'ikipikāneokolohaka

Dr. Roxane Keli'ikipikāneokolohaka

Kia'i Kanaloa, Executive Director



(808) 987-0453



kiaikanaloa@gmail.com

Mailing Address

1889-A Kīlauea Ave.
Hilo, HI. 96720

31 March 2026

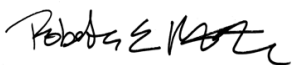
I am a scientist and kama‘āina who has worked in Hawai‘i’s forests, oceans, and communities for over 20 years. I collaborate regularly with County, State, and federal agencies, the University of Hawai‘i, other universities, and nonprofit—including Native Hawaiian—organizations to support natural resource management and community stewardship. I submit this testimony as a private citizen and as President of the Hawai‘i Marine Education and Research Center.

I strongly support HB2101 with the amendment to include Hawai‘i Island to prohibit the commercial collection of reef wildlife for aquarium purposes, regardless of method. I specifically ask that this bill includes Hawai‘i Island where the last of the iconic reefs in the main archipelago need to remain undisturbed, so they don’t follow the path of loss of so many others.

- First, Hawai‘i’s reefs are foundational to Native Hawaiian culture, food security, biodiversity, and our way of life. Commercial extraction for the aquarium trade conflicts with longstanding traditional and customary practices and has contributed to documented declines in species diversity, abundance, and biomass—particularly among herbivorous reef fish relied upon by local food fishers.
- Second, from an ecosystem management perspective, continued commercial harvest undermines reef recovery and resilience. In some areas, nearly 80 percent of certain herbivorous species have been removed for the aquarium trade. Such severe depletion disrupts ecological function, weakens reefs’ ability to recover from disturbance, and compounds accelerating stress from climate change and ocean warming. Continued extraction is inconsistent with precautionary, ecosystem-based management and the State’s duty to protect public trust marine resources.
- Third, prohibiting commercial aquarium collection is consistent with existing constitutional and statutory protections upheld by the Department of Land and Natural Resources to safeguard Hawai‘i’s natural resources, including longstanding prohibitions on the removal of coral, sand, and other marine materials.

HB2101 provides clarity and strengthens protections necessary to restore and preserve Hawai‘i’s reefs for future generations.

Respectfully submitted,



Roberta (Robin) Martin PhD
President
Hawaii Marine Education and Research Center



March 31, 2026

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Senator Jarrett Keohokalole, Chair

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 2, 2026 at 9:20am

Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2101 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

My name is Maxx Phillips. I am from Hawai'i Island and serve as the Hawai'i and Pacific Islands Director and Senior Attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity. The Center respectfully submits this testimony in strong support of HB2101 HD1 SD1, and urges its passage with an amendment to include Hawai'i Island within the bill's scope.

This Bill Protects Public Trust Resources from a Narrow Commercial Use

HB2101 HD1 SD1 addresses a fundamental imbalance. A small number of commercial actors are extracting native reef wildlife from public trust resources for private profit, while the ecological, cultural, and economic costs are borne by the broader public.

From a consumer and public interest perspective, this is not a neutral marketplace activity. It is the commodification of a shared natural resource that directly undermines reef health, food security, and the long-term viability of Hawai'i's ocean-based economy.

The State has both the authority and the obligation to regulate or prohibit such uses where they conflict with the public interest. This bill is a lawful and necessary exercise of that authority.

The Legal Framework Strongly Supports This Approach

HB2101 HD1 SD1 is firmly grounded in Hawai'i's constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires the State to conserve and protect natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Where a commercial activity demonstrably depletes native species, impairs ecosystem function, and interferes with Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, the State is not only permitted to act, it is required to do so.

Importantly, the bill is narrowly tailored. It establishes a temporary prohibition tied to completion of rulemaking under the Holomua Marine Initiative. It preserves traditional and customary rights, subsistence fishing, aquaculture, and scientific uses. It also avoids regulatory overreach by focusing specifically on commercial aquarium purposes.

From a legal standpoint, this is a conservative and defensible approach that minimizes risk while fulfilling constitutional obligations.

The Market Does Not Justify Continued Extraction

The aquarium trade depends on the removal of wild reef fish for ornamental use, despite the availability of aquacultured alternatives.

This raises a basic consumer protection concern. The market is being supplied through the depletion of public trust resources when less harmful alternatives already exist. Consumers are not meaningfully protected from the environmental externalities of this trade, and the State is left to absorb the ecological and economic consequences.

At the same time, the financial return from this industry is minimal relative to the value of intact reef ecosystems, which support tourism, shoreline protection, and local fisheries. Continuing to permit extraction under these conditions effectively subsidizes private gain at public expense.

Include Hawai'i Island

The Center strongly urges the Legislature to amend HB2101 HD1 SD1 to include Hawai'i Island.

Hawai'i Island, particularly West Hawai'i, has been the epicenter of commercial aquarium collection in the State. The ecological impacts of this fishery are best documented there, including reduced densities of key herbivorous species in areas open to collection.

Excluding Hawai'i Island creates an irrational and inequitable result. The reefs most affected by this industry would remain exposed to continued extraction, while other areas receive protection.

From both a legal and policy perspective, this distinction is difficult to justify. The State's public trust obligations do not vary by county population. Nor do the ecological dynamics that make these species essential to reef resilience.

If anything, Hawai'i Island presents the strongest case for inclusion.

Conclusion

HB2101 HD1 SD1 is a measured, legally sound response to a long-standing conflict between private commercial use and the public trust.

It protects consumers and the public from the hidden costs of resource depletion.
It aligns with constitutional mandates and established legal principles.
It allows the State's ongoing rulemaking process to proceed without interference.

With the inclusion of Hawai'i Island, it will also ensure that these protections are applied where they are most needed.

The Center respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with this amendment.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

/s/ Maxx Phillips
Maxx Phillips, Esq.
Hawai'i and Pacific Islands Director
Senior Attorney
Center for Biological Diversity

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:23:55 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laila Kaupu	Testifying for Miloliʻi CBSFA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou!

My name Laila Kaupu. Born and raise in Miloliʻi and Omokaʻa of Kona Hema. Born into a family of lawaiʻa with kūleana to my shores as Miloliʻiʻs CBSFA Outreach and Monitoring Coordinator.

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of Oʻahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.

Commercial aquarium fishing is a smack in the face of Hawaiʻiʻs constitutional public trust doctrine, requiring that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

This industry has contributed largely to the diminshing ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the stateʻs food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawaiʻi residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawaiʻi waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law.

Hawaiʻiʻs reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawaiʻi due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawaiʻi far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

We all know there are more pro's when it comes to keeping our fish on the reef. Let's just start with "keeping them on the reef." The reef needs them, the corals need them, the limu need them, we need them. Not no glass case filled with water so people can poke and probe, uuh and aaah at them for a price. Take them off the reef then we will be paying the price.

'A'ole AQ! Keep the fishies where they belong!

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Laila Kaupu

Miloli'i CBSFA of Miloli'i, Kona Hema



March 31, 2026

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

On behalf of Conservation Council for Hawai'i, we **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1** to ban commercial aquarium fish collecting. It is our responsibility to protect our native species and ecosystems and protecting our fish populations is at the top of our focus. Our islands depend on our ocean resources for survival and as a historical and cultural component of our way of life. With aquaculture businesses success, we can rely on those avenues to support the aquarium fish trade rather than collecting these precious animals from our oceans.

Most Hawai'i residents support this ban statewide, and CCH also supports the ban to protect our native species. For over 75 years, CCH has worked tirelessly to protect our plants, animals, and ecosystems for our future generations. Please continue to support our species by passing HB2101 and banning the commercial aquarium fish collection permanently.

Thank you for your time.

Leah Kocher
Operations and Events Manager
Conservation Council for Hawai'i
LK@conservehi.org

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President: Bret Nainoa Mossman | **Vice President:** Les Welsh | **Secretary:** Colleen Heyer

Treasurer: Mashuri Waite, PhD |

Directors: Erica Amundson, Puanani Anderson-Fung, Maka'ala Ka'aumoana, Steven Lee Montgomery, PhD,
Emily Sarasa |

Executive Director: Jonnetta "Jonee" Peters **Operations and Events Manager:** Leah Kocher

National Wildlife Federation Region 12 Director: Rachel Sprague

National Wildlife Federation Pacific Region Associate Director: Emily Martin

Kō Hawai'i leo no nā holoholona lōhiu – Hawai'i's voice for wildlife | State Affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation

HAWAI'I OCEAN LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE



April 2, 2026

Hawai'i State Legislature
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Re: Testimony in **SUPPORT** for HB 2101 HD1 SD1, Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and esteemed members of the committees,

The Ocean Legislative Task Force—a coalition of more than 150 individuals across over 20 organizations statewide—supports HB 2101 HD1 SD1, relating to commercial aquarium collection. This measure prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection, in counties with a population greater than 500,000, while also directing the Department of Land and Natural Resources to consider rules for the issuance of permits for such activities. The measure further includes a repeal provision upon the promulgation of these rules.

HB 2101 HD1 SD1 responds to long-standing concerns about the ecological and cultural impacts of removing native reef organisms from Hawai'i's waters for the aquarium trade, particularly in areas where fishing pressure and visitor impacts are highest. Coral reef ecosystems are essential to Hawai'i's environment, shoreline protection, and cultural practices, and their long-term health must remain a top priority.

Commercial aquarium collection has historically targeted species that play critical roles in maintaining reef balance. Concentrated extraction in heavily populated counties can undermine reef resilience, reduce biodiversity, and negatively impact nearshore ecosystems that communities depend on for food security, cultural practices, and recreation.

The Task Force appreciates the measure's approach in establishing immediate protections in high-impact areas while allowing for a future, science-based regulatory framework through DLNR rulemaking. This structure provides an opportunity to ensure that any future permitting system is transparent, precautionary, and grounded in ecosystem health and community input.

For these reasons, the Ocean Legislative Task Force respectfully urges the committees to support HB 2101 HD1 SD1 with a favorable recommendation. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

The Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force advocates for measures that advance cesspool conversion and wastewater management, protect Hawai'i's coral reefs and reef fish, ensure transparent and sustainable implementation of the Green Fee program and long-term environmental staffing, and support other measures that strengthen Hawai'i's coastal and marine ecosystems.

PROTECT KAHO‘OLAWE ‘OHANA
1733 Wili Pa Loop, B-1
Wailuku, HI 96793



HB 2102 HD1 SD1

Testimony in Support of HB2101 HD1 SD1

Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Committee on Judiciary

Aloha, my name is Dr. Davianna Pōmaika‘i McGregor and I am testifying on behalf of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana in support of HB 2102 HD1 SD1 Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection.

As longtime stewards of the island of Kaho‘olawe, the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana, understands the importance of conserving the marine ecosystems of all of our islands. The harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes is an unsustainable practice that is also unnecessary.

The life in our reefs, form the building blocks of life on our islands, and needs to be protected and sustained.

Mahalo and Aloha

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:00:04 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Testifying for Green Party of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and honorable members of committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as Co Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i, and on behalf of our members, we are in VERY STRONG SUPPORT of HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to reinstate the Statewide Ban from the original bill ! This bill needs teeth and the statewide ban gives it the strength it needs to protect the fish off our Hawaiian shores.

We the members of the Green Party support a Permanent Ban on commercial aquarium collection and support an amendment to reinstate the statewide ban from the original bill. We urge you to pass this bill with the amendment .

Mahalo for your attention to this important issue,

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo



March 30, 2026

House Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection; Committee on Judiciary
Hawai'i State Legislature

Re: Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB2101, Relating to Commercial Aquarium
Collection

Hearing: 04/2/26 9:20AM / Videoconference.

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice-Chair Fukunaga, and Committee Members; Chair Rhoads,
Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the nonprofit WAI: Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations (WAI) I am writing in **support** of HB2101. This bill would prevent the capture and sale of Hawai'i's reef wildlife. The capture and sale of our fish for ornamental display and commercial profit is unsustainable and causes deep harm to our reefs. This practice is not *pono*.

These exploited fish are critical to the ecosystem as they are the saviors of the reefs, eating seaweeds that would otherwise smother reefs, thereby allowing corals to flourish. Along with their cultural and environmental benefits, Hawai'i's coral reefs generate an estimated \$863 million annually in economic value from tourism, recreation, research, and commerce. Reefs also protect us from storms, floods, tsunamis, hurricanes and sea level rise. A recent study published in the scientific journal *Nature Communications* (Gove et al, 2023), linked the decreasing numbers of herbivore fish populations and increasing nutrient loading (from agricultural runoff, cesspools, and injection wells) as the leading causes of coral reef decline.

WAI is an environmental nonprofit dedicated to protecting our water resources by reducing sewage pollution from cesspools. Hawai'i has more than 83,000 cesspools statewide, discharging 52 million gallons of raw sewage each day into our waters. Along with threats to public health and drinking water resources, the new research shows that polluted wastewater poses significant harm to coral reefs and the near-shore environment. We support more innovative, affordable, and eco-friendly solutions to wastewater management, and all bills and policies that contribute to the health and support of our coral reefs, including saving the herbivore fish populations that protect them. Better sanitation systems protect public health and valuable natural resources like groundwater, streams, coral reefs and coastal areas.

WAI respectfully submits testimony in support of HB2101 and appreciates the Legislature's continued leadership on protecting Hawai'i's coastal ecosystems and coral reefs. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Aloha,

Stuart Coleman,

Jessica Kai Paisley,

Stuart H. Coleman, Executive Director

Jessica Kai Paisley, Program & Legal Specialist

Advanced Operation Solutions LLC
Cpt. James Everglade
Marine Biologist
78-6502 Mamalahoa Hwy
Hōlualo Hawai'i 96725
(808)990-6165

April 1, 2026

HB2101 HD1 SD1 (Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection)

I am a local Captain and UH Hilo Marine Science graduate that provides snorkel trips to tourists, we are utilizing Hawaii's reef fish the same as they would be in an aquarium. We view the fish, we enjoy seeing them, we photograph them and we do this without removing them from Hawaiian waters. If people want to see Hawaiian fish they should visit Hawaii and Get in the water. Its real nice, they're gonna like it. If this rule package is accepted and native Hawaiian fish are harmed, flown off island or sent to Petco, What do we loose?

Every Fish in the Hawaiian reef system plays a role in the maintenance, repair and health of the reef. Damaging events such as warming events, chemical runoff, physical damage and storms require time to heal and during this time Hawaiian reefs need protection. Not just the physical coral or substrate, but the living population of fish and invertebrates need to be respected for the role they play in the regrowth process. Reefs are the nurseries of the ocean, Without healthy reefs and healthy fish to maintain them you will loose other fisheries.

The reefs are the nurseries for fish like Ono, Mahi Mahi, Aku, Cava Cava, Omilu and the reef fish including the tang are part of the nursery, they maintain it they provide food for it, in the way of spawning, their eggs and fry feed other fish. The colorful fish that you want to catch and ship off island have a job here. They work on the reef, its a nursery for off shore fish.

These concepts are not always obvious, and fishermen will see impacts on their catch and have no idea that the aquarium traders have impacted so detrimentally the fish that they catch and we eat. Stop thinking about catching the colorful reef fish. You don't know the impact or the imbalance your creating. The reefs and all fisheries need help. They do not need to be sold as decoration in some far off land.

Why is Kona a world class sport fishing destination? Because of the world class reef that acts as a nursery supporting the game fish and other pelagic and offshore fish. Do you think the reef is not connected or important to the fisheries in Kona? Its all connected, everything is. All the fish, all the coral, all the limu, every crab and eel and every octopus are all reliant on each other.

Its not a question of sustainability, The reefs are not at a healthy level yet, we want the reef to improve, or grow back to pre 2015 levels or even 2005. Every fish counts. We need every fish on deck, not on the deck of an aquarium boat. We need them on the reef fulfilling their role, holding their position in the complexity of the reef population. Leave the Hawaiian reef fish alone.

Mahalo,

Cpt. James Everglade
Advanced Operation Solutions LLC

April 1, 2026

RE: Support for HB 2101 HD1 SD1 Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Dear Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Affairs, and Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

Since 1968, the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce has advanced the quality of life for our community by supporting a strong, sustainable economy on Hawai'i Island. Representing more than 460 member businesses and organizations, we serve as the leading voice for the West Hawai'i business community and advocate for policies that support long-term community stability and regional economic resilience.

We support initiatives that promote coral reef health and ocean conservation, recognizing the vital importance of sustainable ocean ecosystems. For decades, West Hawai'i has worked to balance environmental stewardship with responsible commercial activity.

Healthy reefs and thriving fish populations are foundational to Hawai'i Island's environment, culture, and visitor economy. Protecting marine ecosystems helps preserve the natural resources that support local livelihoods, community well-being, and long-term economic sustainability.

For these reasons, the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce **supports** HB 2101 HD1 SD1 Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection.

However, we are very concerned that the language of this bill has changed to include "counties with a population greater than 500,000" in SD1. This would not include Hawai'i Island. The previous HD1 draft stated, "No person shall harvest aquatic life from state marine waters for commercial aquarium purposes in counties with a population greater than 200,000 and less than 300,000." This draft focused on Hawai'i Island.

We respectfully request that the bill be **amended** to include a **statewide prohibition** on harvesting aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce



TESTIMONY
IN SUPPORT TO HB2101 HD1 SD1
RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION.

LATE

SENATE COMMITTEES ON COMMERCE & CONSUMER PROTECTION AND
JUDICIARY
Hawai'i State Capitol

April 2, 2026

9:20 a.m.

Room 229

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and Chair Rhoads and Vice Chair Gabbard ,

Ho'āla Kealakekua Nui, Inc. (HKN) is in **SUPPORT** and offers comments for HB2101 HD1, SD1. HKN wishes to amend the measure to restore the original intent for a permanent statewide ban. The State of Hawai'i is a unique setting within the construct of Western Civilization, we are an Island State versus a Continental State. The community's ability to support government initiatives towards a "Green and Clean Environment" to allow for an increase in socially responsible economies are at stake, and this State is being put to test on how that appears for future generations. This State has no room for dancing around economic ventures such as the Commercial AQ Pet Trade industry, that do not replenish itself within a suitable time period for **ALL** to benefit.

HKN has concerns that the commercial aquarium pet trade will consume far greater tax payer's funds to support and regulate an industry that is unconscientious of their negligence to Public Trust resources. There is no evidence that removal of herbivore fish, regardless of population and abundance, supports the viability of corals; the current data reports that coral continues on a massive decline with the current population of herbivores. Therefore, removal of herbivore species would counter and cause any progress to halt. The State of Hawai'i and the Federal Government are investing millions of dollars to support coral and other marine rehabilitation, which in turn is supporting the generational fishers' sustainability and managed tourism throughout the state, only to be undermined by an extractive industry. An industry that does not practice reciprocation of the species they are allowed to remove. Further, since the 1980's the state has been working hard to build co-managing communities and several bills are going through this legislative session, only for it to be undermined by an extractive industry. There is no sustainability or reciprocation within the commercial aquarium pet trade industry to support the cumulative negative impacts on marine ecosystems. Even if the legislature mandates an increase in the budget for 24/7 enforcement, the commercial aquarium pet trade industry will have to deplete our resources before their revenues can subsidize enforcement support.

HKN believes this measure will reinforce the State's statutory obligation to uphold the Public Trust Doctrine (PTD) that the State government, as trustee, must protect



natural resources - including wildlife and reefs - for public benefit and future generations. The commercial collection of reef fish constitutes a breach of this trust, with cumulative impacts against the viability of our delicate reefs. shall be held for the public, rather than held as private property, especially in the face of climate change, pollution, and the massive declining reef health.

In 1969, Kealakekua Bay became a Marine Life Conservation District (MLCD), the highest form of protection legally offered by the State. MLCDs are only pockets of sanctuaries that are sporadically placed around the state, yet provide insight on how the entire state can support socially responsible enterprises. The Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) is providing avenues to maintain one Hawai'i's largest economic engine, only for another state agency to tear it down by allowing the desecration of fish populations that support coral reef health. The economic ramifications to the coral reef outweigh the profits generated by the commercial AQ Pet Trade.

This measure will further assist the DLNR in upholding their Hierarchy of Use Policy (1998), which provides guidance in prioritizing natural and cultural resources over commercialization¹.

HKN would like to thank this committee for hearing this measure and the opportunity to provide a voice. We strongly urge this committee to restore the measure to pass.

Mahalo Nui,

puakalo!

Shane Akoni Palacat-Nelsen
Executive Director/C.E.O.

¹ "The Department, when considering commercial activity proposals or management actions on state owned lands and waters, will use the following hierarchy priorities:

- A. The Natural and Cultural Resources - The highest priority should go to the conservation of the resource.
- B. The General Public - If use or activity by the public can be done without undue damage to the resource, it should be the next priority.
- C. Commercial Activities - Commercial activities should be considered only if their impacts do not impinge on the resource, #A, or use by the general public, #B, above."

Policy for Commercial Activities on State Owned and Managed Lands and Waters Department of Land and Natural Resources. (approved January 30, 1998, BLNR)

LATE

Oahu Aquarium Reef Fish Populations

AMAZING VIDEO OAHU FISH POPULATIONS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt8sRh493UI>

The current HB 2101 SD1 version is based on the misinformation that Oahu, with its *larger human population, has fewer fish, primarily stemming from Alan Friedlander's Ph.D. research in marine biology.* *Link to Study Below*

The HB2101 SD1 is just a further perversion of science, perpetuated by anti-fishery propaganda.

The higher human population locations showing lower fish populations, as reported by Friedlander, were based solely on larger marine reef fish used for seafood consumption, and the same studies clearly showed that reef fish used for aquarium purposes did not experience similar population declines.

Friedlander, one of Hawaii's leading scientists, spoke out in favor of the aquarium fishery.

Hawaii's top [leading](#) marine biologists [scientist speak](#) : William Walsh Ph.D., Ivor Williams Ph.D., Brian Tissot Ph.D.; Leon Hallacher Ph.D.; Bruce Carlson Ph.D.; Charles Birkeland Ph.D.; Jeremy Claisse Ph.D.; Mark Christie Ph.D.; Richard Pyle Ph.D.; Leighton Taylor Ph.D.; Randy Kosaki Ph.D.; Cynthia Hunter Ph.D.; Brian Bowen Ph.D.; Brian Zgliczynski Ph.D.; Jeff Ebel Ph.D.; **Alan Friedlander Ph.D.**; Kosta Stamoulis Ph.D.; Delisse Ortiz Ph.D.; Jan Dierking Ph.D.; Rob Toonen Ph.D.; and Jim Beets Ph.D. Thursday, June 25, 2020,

Dr. DAN A. POLHEMUS: "Currently, mortality rates from collection to wholesaler are estimated at 0 to 1 percent. In the wholesalers tanks, mortality rates range from close to 0% up to 2%. During shipment, rates range from 0.75% to 2%. This give a current total of between 1% and 5%, down from a range of 5% to 8% in the early 1980's (van Poolen and Obara, 1984; estimates of wholesalers and collectors, own study)." I haven't seen any work to support the figure of 99% mortality rate within one year for captive marinelife. So, in the grand scheme of things, the aquarium take on Maui is literally a drop in the bucket, representing less than 2% of the total mortality of reef animals" .

"This serves to point out that undue focus and hyperbole about aquarium collecting and its impact on the reefs is dangerously shortsighted and counterproductive. We need to think and act holistically".

Dr. DAN A. POLHEMUS Division of Aquatic Resources, State of Hawaii DLNR Date: December 23, 2009 8:25:16 AM HST To: Rene Umberger, she misquoted him and perverted his science, and continues to do so!

Opposed to HB 2101 SD1

The continued action is based on misinformation from a group of con men, which is the foundation of a huge disinformation campaign to discredit all the science supporting the sustainable aquarium fisheries. Continuing to listen to these pseudo-science disseminators will lead to dire consequences; it already has!

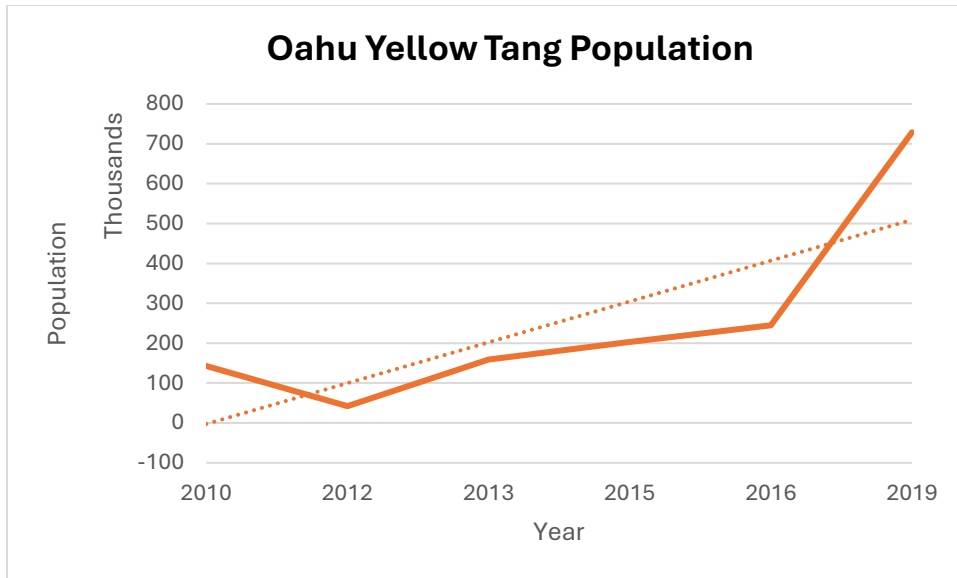
We have repeatedly provided proof of the lies and disinformation from those opposing the aquarium fishery.

The 21 Leading Scientists listed above: ***“As experienced Hawaii marine science researchers with a direct/intimate understanding of this issue, we find the disregard for the science-based management initiatives of DAR and island communities demoralizing and counterproductive. We expect better from DLNR leadership. We want to re-emphasize that the strong support we are expressing for this fishery is due entirely to the survey efforts and results of the DAR research team. There is a large body of data and other evidence showing that the aquarium fishery is sustainably managed and that the system works. This type of science-based management should be a model for other fisheries in Hawaii. The truth is out there; it needs to be embraced”.***

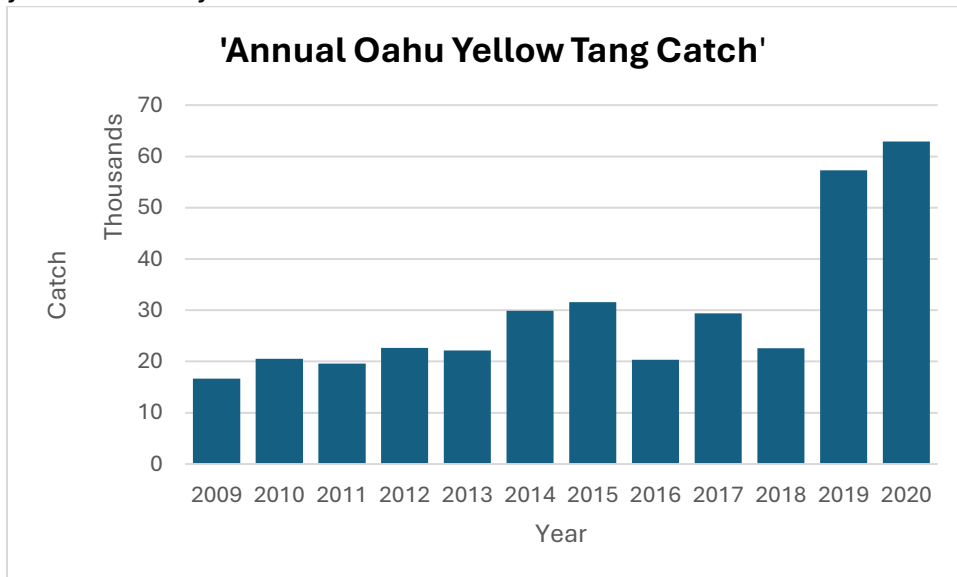
“There were no significant differences in damaged coral between control and collected sites to indicate the presence of destructive fishing practices. In addition, there were no increases in the abundance of macroalgae where the abundance of herbivores was reduced by aquarium collecting”.

Yellow tangs originated in the Western Pacific and migrated to Hawaii. Many considered endemic species have their origins elsewhere than Hawaii and rode in on currents from areas like Okinawa which is 4820 miles away from Hawaii. Once reaching Hawaii they evolved into distinct Hawaii species. DNA studies show Maui was an original destination current transport hotspot for these larval Hawaii Imports, which can now be exported.

Oahu Yellow Tang, ***Zebrasoma flavescens***, DAR Catch Report Data for the Aquarium Fishery between 2009 to 2020, comparison to Fish Populations 2010 to 2019 done by **PIFSC**, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC). One would expect to see an inverse relationship in these charts if the fishery were not sustainable. The Oahu Aquarium Fishery's most targeted species, Yellow Tangs, from 2009 to 2020, has the following data that supports the fishery despite increased take being done at a sustainable level.



2010 to 2019 done by PIFSC, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC)
 Yellow Tangs *Zebrasoma flavescens* 2010-2019 Oahu Population Hard Bottom
 0-98 ft only. Currently done only every three years. Data is only available for the
 years of surveys listed above



DAR Catch Report Stats Yellow Tangs *Zebrasoma flavescens* 2009-2020

Due to the West Hawaii closure in 2017, the yellow tang catches for Oahu increased, but the fish populations also increased (2017-2019 above). It is important to note that the Oahu Aquarium fishery operated between 2010, the first year of the fish surveys, and 2020. The above fish population data shows an increase in fish populations during the fisheries' activities from 2010 to 2020. Notably, the greatest increase in the yellow tang population occurred during the highest catch years of the Oahu fishery. After the Courts ordered the EIS requirement, the fishery on Oahu continued under CML licenses from 2017 to the end of 2020. Data from West Hawaii also show no significant declines in fish counts related to

fishery catches over the course of decades of surveys, indicating stable populations during the fisheries' open years. This stability also continues even in higher catch years.

Below is the raw data for the above charts.

2010 to 2019 done by PIFSC, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) NOAA
 Yellow Tangs *Zebrasoma flavescens* 2010-2019 Oahu Population Hard Bottom
 0-98 ft only.

The State of Hawaii public officers' oath is to uphold the state's constitution. If decisions are made that are biased and not based in facts it violates that oath. It is unconstitutional to shut out any ocean user group, to do so violates the Hawaii State and Federal constitutions, Ocean Law, and the "Oceans are the Common Heritage of All Men" United Nations. No one group can lay claim to any part of the ocean; it is public trust.

The continued actions based on misinformation from a group of con men, which is the foundation of a huge disinformation campaign to discredit all the science supporting the sustainable aquarium fisheries. Continuing to listen to these pseudo-science disseminators will lead to dire consequences; it already has!

PIFSC Raw data:

YEAR	Common Name	SCIENTIFIC NAME	Estimated Population	Standard error	LOWER_95CI	UPPER_95CI	cv
2010	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	142507	87648.3432	0	314297.7527	0.615
2012	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	42100	21170.1405	606.52462	83593.47538	0.5028
2013	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	158506	62575.02003	35858.9607	281153.0393	0.3947
2015	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	202817	96432.57772	13809.1477	391824.8523	0.4754
2016	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	245045	128527.4331	0	496958.7689	0.5245
2019	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	728777	443025.2708	0	1597106.531	0.6079

142507
 42100
 158506
 202817

245045
 728777
 1519752
 Divided by 6=
 253,292
 Average
 PopulationTake
 at 5%
 12664.6
 Each/yr is 5%

DAR Fish Catch Stats Yellow Tangs *Zebrasoma flavescens* 2009-2020

Year	Aquarium	Scientific	Sum of Number Caught	Sum of Total Value \$ Fisher
Fished	Name	Name		
2009	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	278,624	1,190,054.78
2010	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	364,487	1,459,174.72
2011	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	304,322	1,191,356.44
2012	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	332,295	1,350,707.94
2013	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	311,524	1,268,577.87
2014	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	338,360	1,423,912.30
2015	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	337,017	1,376,098.96
2016	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	332,963	1,229,805.91
2017	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	269,553	990,102.77
2018	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	79,775	368,202.00
2019	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	124,670	699,154.00
2020	Yellow Tang	<i>Zebrasoma flavescens</i>	95,157	592,358.50

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References

Video links aquarium fish EIS YouTube, **amazing video** of the environmental review:

Video of Fish on Oahu, Environmental Review:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt8sRh493UI>

Video of Hawaii's Most Abundant Wrasse: Flame Wrasse Oahu:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z45MzI_Nkt8

Video Of Oahu Yellow Tangs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psTHLKfsdIA&t=8s>

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<https://hawaiitropicalsaltwateraquariumfish.com/>

Friedlander-et-al.-2017-Human-induced-gradients-of-reef-fish-declines-in-the-Hawaiian-Archipelago-viewed-through-the-lens-of-traditional-management-boundaries.pdf

<https://share.google/te0NH4kECORq5a56X> (Only Larger Fish For Food Purposes are having Declines in High Population Areas)

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Hawaiian Humane Society
People for animals. Animals for people.

LATE

Date: April 1, 2026

To: Chairs Sens. Jarrett Keohokalole and Karl Rhoads
Vice Chairs Sens. Carol Fukunaga and Mike Gabbard
and Members of the Committees on Commerce & Consumer Protection
and Judiciary

Submitted By: Stephanie Kendrick, Vice President of Community Engagement
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2217

RE: Testimony in support of HB 2101, HD1, SD1:
Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection
Thursday, April 2, 2026, 9: 20 a.m., Room 229 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our support for House Bill 2101, HD1, SD1, which prohibits the capture and sale of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection in counties with a population greater than 500,000 and the consideration of rules for the issuance of permits for the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes; and repeals upon promulgation of certain rules by the Department of Land and Natural Resources for counties with a population greater than 500,000.

While the Hawaiian Humane Society promotes pet ownership, capturing wild animals and transporting them thousands of miles in conditions that are often fatal is not humane. More than 40 percent of wild caught fish bound for pet stores die before they arrive on the sales floor. Collection methods include cruel practices such as puncturing swim bladders to bring fish to the surface more quickly and cutting fins and spines to enable the use of cheaper, thinner bags for transport.

This balanced bill provides exemptions for captive-breeding, which is a more sustainable approach to providing fish to the aquarium trade. It also provides for the capture of aquatic life for scientific, educational, management, or propagation purposes. And it protects traditional and customary practices, as well as taking for consumption or bait.

While the O'ahu's reefs are under the most intense stress of any island, we want to note the vital role that Hawai'i County Council and residents of Hawai'i Island have played in advocating for this measure. We urge the committee to expand its provisions to cover Hawai'i Island as well. Please pass HB2101, HD1, SD1. Mahalo for your consideration.

LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 8:56:49 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Carroll	Testifying for Maui Humane Society	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We support this bill and strongly urge the committee to include Hawai`i County in its protections

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2026 11:37:34 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Godbey Carson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill, to help protect our reef fish. I have been a sport SCUBA diver for over 30 years, primarily on Oahu and Big Island. By my experience, both locations have shown a decrease in both the number and biodiversity of reef fish during that time. The more exotic fishes, and those that are more colorful, have been noticeably less prevalent, to where some are very rare and hard to find anywhere.

There are so few people who collect fish for the aquarium trade, and they hurt the reef for all the rest of us who want to enjoy seeing the fish, and want to have a rich biodiversity to keep our reefs safe. Plus, the number of fish that die during collection, shipping and sale, means that there is needless sacrifice of our reef fish for the small economic gain for a few people.

So please, help us protect the fish so all can enjoy them.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 8:24:06 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2101 HB RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 9:45:36 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Boisvert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT THIS BILL.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 9:46:19 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Jorgensen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I FULLY SUPPORT THIS BILL.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 9:57:33 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl hendrickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha-

Please permanently ban aquarium fish collection statewide. I am a diver and have lived on Maui for 40 years. I have noticed a big decline of reef fish populations through the years. Whether from warming waters, bleaching events, toxic run off & sedimentation, our reefs can not keep up and recover anymore.

Poaching cases and weak enforcement remain documented concerns.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 2:24:06 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Veronica De La Rosa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 4:40:42 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB-2101-HD-1

I am in full support, with amendments. This is a much needed bill. However, this should be a statewide ban, as was the intent of the origina bill. . Please amend the bill to make it a statewide ban. The fish cannot read. They do not know they are safe in some of our waters and not in others. This must be a statewide ban.

lynne matusow

Cindy Freitas

TO: Senate Committee on [Committee Name]

RE: HB2101 Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

POSITION: STRONG SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT (STATEWIDE BAN)

He Mele komo a he mele aloha no na kupuna o ke au i hala Aloha mai kakou.

Aloha,

My name is Cindy Freitas. I am a Native Hawaiian, born and raised in Hawai‘i, and a lineal descendant of the native inhabitants of these islands prior to 1778. I am also a practitioner of traditional and customary practices passed down through my kūpuna from mauka to makai.

I submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB2101**, with a critical amendment: that this measure apply to **ALL STATE MARINE WATERS across ALL ISLANDS**.

Under **Article XII, Section 7 of the Hawai‘i Constitution**, the State has an **affirmative duty** to protect traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights, including those exercised for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

The Hawai‘i Supreme Court has repeatedly reinforced that this duty is not optional:

In **Public Access Shoreline Hawaii v. Hawai‘i County Planning Commission (PASH)**, the Court held that the State must “**preserve and protect**” Native Hawaiian rights when making decisions affecting land and natural resources.

In **Ka Pa‘akai O Ka ‘Āina v. Land Use Commission**, the Court made clear that this constitutional duty places an **affirmative obligation on the State and its agencies** to actively protect these rights, not merely acknowledge them.

In **Pele Defense Fund v. Paty**, the Court confirmed that Native Hawaiian rights are **broad, living rights** that may extend beyond specific locations where they have traditionally been exercised.

These cases establish that the State must take **proactive steps** to prevent the degradation of resources necessary for Native Hawaiian practices.

Nearshore marine ecosystems are essential to the exercise of these rights. The gathering of fish, limu, and other ocean resources is explicitly recognized as a protected customary practice under Hawai‘i law.

Allowing commercial aquarium collection in any part of the State undermines these constitutionally protected practices by:

Depleting reef populations necessary for subsistence gathering

Disrupting ecological balance across interconnected marine systems

Interfering with the ability of Native Hawaiians to exercise traditional practices

A law that only protects one island, while allowing extraction elsewhere, fails to meet the State’s constitutional duty. It does not **preserve and protect** it merely **shifts harm from one place to another**.

The Hawai‘i Supreme Court has made clear that the State cannot take a passive or fragmented approach. It must ensure meaningful protection of Native Hawaiian rights wherever they are exercised.

As a lineal descendant and practitioner, I carry the kuleana to speak for the protection of these resources for future generations. Our reefs are not commercial inventory they are living systems tied to our identity, genealogy, and survival.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge this Committee to:

1. **Amend HB2101 to apply statewide to all marine waters**
2. Fulfill the State's constitutional duty under Article XII, Section 7
3. Protect Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices for present and future generations

Mahalo,

Cindy Freitas

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 10:37:27 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather Rose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill to ban aquarium collection. I feel it is of utmost importance to protect our natural ecosystems and the animals of those environments. Please protect nature and do not allow more exploitation. Thank you.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 11:14:46 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong Support HB2101 HD1 SD1

Dana Keawe

Moku o Keawe

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 6:24:41 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thalia Fajans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to support the ban of aquarium fish collecting on ALL islands. The reasons have been said and written many times over and over again. Please read and listen to your local communities - we don't want aquarium fish collecting in our waters. Please institute a state wide ban on all aquarium fish collecting.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 10:07:23 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, please support HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection. The fishes cannot fend for themselves. They are dependent on us to protect them. Most Hawai'i residents support this ban statewide, and with aquaculture now supplying the trade, there is no reason to take the wild ones. That's just cruel. Please support this bill.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 10:22:03 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Worchel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I'm a Hawaii Island resident calling in strong support of HB2101, which permanently bans commercial aquarium collection. Most Hawai'i residents support this ban **statewide**, and with aquaculture now supplying the trade, there is no reason to take the wild ones. Our marine ecosystem is already threatened by environmental factors. Further degradation from harvesting reef fish to benefit a select few people does not make financial, cultural, or environmental sense. Our reef fish are part of our heritage and must be protected for future generations. Residents and tourists deserve to enjoy this unique resource. Please support this bill

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 10:28:08 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Neil Frazer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I support HB2101 because (in no particular order): (1) Juvenile wild fish are essential to coral reef health, and Hawaii's coral reefs protect our shorelines from storm waves. (2) Wild fish are an essential component of Hawaii's food security. (3) Wild fish are an important contributor to Hawaii tourism. (4) A depauperate reef is one of the saddest underwater sights you will ever see. Please amend this bill to include Hawaii Island. Mahalo for your unselfish service to the people of Hawaii. -Neil Frazer, PhD

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole, and Rhoads, and members of the committees.

Strongly support HB2101_HD1

The need is clear for effective and comprehensive reef protection:

Our coral reef ecosystems are challenged with ocean acidification and human caused ecological impacts. These conditions necessitate the utmost stewardship for optimum reef vitality. Reef corals and fishes are wild creatures and are a public good. The public good is not for the plunder and exploitation by the *commercial Aquarium Fish trade!*

I urge banning commercial Aquarium Fish taking in Hawaiian waters.

Respectfully submitted,
Keith Neal
Waimea

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 10:53:23 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Barrett Fajardo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a life-long resident, I'm writing to **urge passage of HB2101 with an amendment to include Hawai'i Island**. We need a permanent, statewide ban of commercial aquarium collection. Most Hawai'i residents support this ban, and with aquaculture now supplying the trade, there is no reason to continue taking fish from our reefs and people for this purpose. Please support this bill.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 11:05:50 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert H Pecoraro Jr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's unfortunate that supporters of healthy Hawaiian reefs must keep fighting to defend the tropical fish that inhabit our waters and keep the aquatic environment in balance. You would think that it would be a no-brainer, and those charged with protecting it, would actually work toward those means. The Division of Aquatic Resources has a mission statement on the first page of their website, which reads: "The mission of the Division of Aquatic Resources is to work with the people of Hawai'i to manage, conserve and restore the state's unique aquatic resources and ecosystems for present and future generations." It seems to me that they are working for the benefit of a few of the people of Hawaii, to the detriment of all others. Hawaii's reefs are already suffering badly, because of climate change, recent storms and sewage spills/leakages into our once pristine ecosystem. Now they want to add the pressure of removing the fish that keep the algae at bay. These herbivores give the reefs at least a fighting chance to survive. Since the tropical fish collecting ban, the populations of these fish, and other popular aquarium trade fishes have increased. We are finally seeing once rare fish, such as Longfin Anthias, Bicolor Anthias, Flame Wrasse and other fish that had all but disappeared whilst they were being collected. The fish that are collected have a high mortality rate. Those that survive end up in an aquarium, for a few to enjoy, rather than remaining on the reef, free for all to enjoy, while keeping the ecosystem in balance. Before we moved to Hawaii, we traveled here frequently to dive and enjoy a unique environment, where about 25% of the aquatic life is endemic to Hawaii. We should strive toward preserving these creatures in their natural environment, rather than allowing them to be collected, killed and/or shipped out of Hawaii. It makes no sense to allow tropical fish collection again, especially since it has been banned for about eight or nine years. Please consider the wishes of those who care, including Native Hawaiian groups, and do the right thing. Please put a permanent ban on tropical fish collection statewide and help give the reefs a fighting chance to survive. Please include Hawaii Island in the ban. Mahalo.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 12:11:26 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Allen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am 100% in support of this bill to ban aquarium collection. This ban would protect the fish, the reefs, and our shoreline..

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 12:42:27 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heidi White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Richards,

Having lived on the big island nearly 50 years I know first hand the sad state of our reefs. Comparing when I arrived from the South Pacific to now it is truly shockingly baren!

Let us start working to restore a healthy reef such as the island Atoll of Palmyra, our national marine reserve, as an example.

But first, and more importantly, please schedule and support HB2101 to protect Hawai'i's reef fish.

Our reefs and communities cannot afford a return of the aquarium trade, EVER again. NEVER AGAIN!

We need to have at least 50 years for the reef to recover from the damaging effects of this terrible industry practice of Aquarium fishing.

I ask that you please:

- **Support and pass HB2101 to protect Hawai'i's reef fish.**

Mahalo,

Heidi White, Realtor (S)-57643

Direct: 808-895-4304

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 12:31:12 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith Soltz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is important to preserve reefs and fish. Amend the bill to include to include Hawaii Island. I have a home min Kealakekua. This very important.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 1:23:09 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MARY MORRIS	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“Aloha, I’m an island resident and home owner calling in strong support of HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection. Most Hawai‘i residents support this ban statewide, and with aquaculture now supplying the trade, there is no reason to take the wild ones. Please support this bill. There is still poaching of yellow tang along the Puako reef. The reef has not recovered fully and we need our reef fish! Thank you. Gail Morris

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 1:49:40 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Fisher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass HB2101 to end collection of our tropical fish by aquarium collectors.

Joy Fisher

Catherine Spina
HC3 Box 4652
Kea'au, HI, 96749
cat.spina@gmail.com
March 29, 2026

Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senators,,

Aloha,

My name is Catherine Spina, and I am a resident of Hawai'i Island. I am writing in strong support of HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection statewide, including Hawai'i Island.

We are living in a time of accelerating environmental change, alongside continued human population growth that places increasing pressure on natural systems. As our numbers expand, so do our demands, often driven not by necessity, but also by whims, hobbies, and follies. The aquarium trade is one such example, where wild animals are removed from complex ecosystems for display rather than need.

From a science perspective, reef fish, especially herbivorous species, play a critical role in maintaining coral reef health and resilience. Removing them adds stress to ecosystems already impacted by warming oceans, pollution, and habitat degradation.

At the same time, aquaculture has advanced to the point where the aquarium trade can be supplied without taking fish from the wild. Continuing to extract wild reef fish for non-essential purposes is increasingly difficult to justify, both ethically and ecologically.

Hawai'i has long been recognized for its commitment to conservation. Passing HB2101 is an opportunity to uphold that responsibility and protect reef ecosystems for future generations.

Please support HB2101.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Catherine Spina

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 2:09:47 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Wallace	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I ask you to please pass this essential bill and to please add an amendment to include Hawaii Island.

aquarium fishing is harmful to our local population to our coral reefs to our fish and to our tourism. please finally ban this wrongful collection, which benefits only a few few at the detriment to all.

thank you so much for your consideration

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 2:13:35 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tom Wallace	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support hb2101. Please make this statewide, including Big Island. I understand that aquarium collecting is not the only thing harming our reefs, but the negative effects of aquarium collecting are real and everything we can do to help the reefs is good for all of us.

Please do the right thing.

Warm Aloha,

Tom Wallace

Hawaii Kai

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 2:26:32 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Davies	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of the big island and swim everyday (when possible and safe) in the ocean. We are a group of octogenarians who wish to see our fish survive for our grandchildren to enjoy as we have done for many many years. Please support this bill.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 2:30:26 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne Allison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please ban aquarium collection of fish from our reefs which are already stressed!!!! They do not pay so it is NOT a trade. The taxpayer ends up paying hundreds of thousands of dollars for "programs." again they take all the profits while the tax payer is left holding the bill!!!!

- **Recent storms likely further damaged reefs** already stressed
- **DAR gutted the monitoring program comparing protected and collected reefs, eliminating the science needed to evaluate the fishery**
- West Hawai'i reefs **have not recovered as expected** since aquarium collection stopped in 2017
- Removing herbivorous reef fish **undermines reef resilience**
- Poaching remains widespread, with "**wild Hawai'i yellow tangs**" **openly sold online.**
- **Many reefs here on Maui are not very interesting for snorkeling any more for residents or tourists!!!! You have to have healthy reef fish to have healthy reefs!**
- Please support HB2101
- Anne Allison, resident of Maui

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 2:58:26 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
S.A. Marek	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

This bill is malarkey as it stands now.

Please amend HB2101 SD1 so it includes the Big Island of Hawaii (population 200,000-300,000) once again. And, remove the “repeal upon promulgation of certain rules” by DLNR, which makes the bill meaningless.

HB2101 SD1 has been amended so it no longer impacts the Big Island, where the majority of commercial AQ collection occurred in past years. With the new amendments, this bill now applies only to counties with a population greater than 500,000 (Oahu). And, HB2101 SD1 “repeals upon promulgation of certain rules” by DLNR for issuance of permits.

The Senators from the Big Island who voted for HB2101 SD1 with these amendments are not being truthful. They have voted against the wishes of the majority of residents and registered voters in Hawaii County who want commercial AQ collection banned.

Sincerely,

Sherry A. Marek, Big Island resident

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 3:07:59 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith Cucco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection. Most Hawai'i residents support this ban statewide, and with aquaculture now supplying the trade, there is no reason to take the wild ones. Please support this bill.

Candace Karvas

I oppose the Aquarium fishing ban HB2101. Aquarium fishing businesses gives jobs to people. Aquarium fishing is not bad for the ocean, so it should not be banned.

Scott Ramirez

I fully oppose HB2101 which prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes regardless of the method.

Dustin Amaral

I respectfully request that you vote no on HB2101. I don't support banning aquarium fishing. The aquarium trade creates jobs in Hawaii. The Aquarium fishery has completed an EIS that shows that it doesn't harm the environment. A ban could eventually extend to all fishing, so I oppose HB2101.

Patrick Amaral

I oppose HB2101. Catching and selling fish for aquariums should be permitted. I do not support bans on fishing, as restricting aquarium fishing could set a precedent that leads to bans on food fishing as well.

Kaylee Amaral

I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB2101. The collection and sale of aquarium fish should be allowed. I worry that banning this could pave the way for broader fishing restrictions, including for food.

Lisa Amaral

I testify to oppose HB2101 since aquarium fishing provides jobs to local people. It's important to support businesses so residents can make a living in Hawaii.

Chris Amaral

I oppose HB2101. I don't support an aquarium fishing ban. Aquarium fishing provides jobs and income for people. I support employment opportunities and local businesses in Hawaii. I ask you to oppose HB2101.

Jameson Powers

I testify in opposition to HB2101, I prefer rule-based management of the aquarium industry over an outright ban. Please vote no to HB2101.

Cory Shiraishi

I oppose HB2101. I don't support banning aquarium fishing. The aquarium fishery has an EIS that says there is no harm to the fish population.

George Karvas

I oppose HB2101 because it bans aquarium fishing rather than regulate the fishermen as the DAR plans to do. Effective environmental management comes from policies that encourage responsibility, not complete bans that restrict lawful behavior. Please vote no.

James Venable

I kindly ask you to look at options like fair regulations and public education and oppose this aquarium fishing ban. This would be a more effective approach to finding solutions to managing Hawaii's natural resources. Please vote no for HB2101.

Cecliy Okumoto

Chair and Members of the Committee of the Hawaii State Legislature, thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong opposition to HB2101. As a resident of Hawaii, I believe this measure moves our state in the wrong direction by expanding government bans rather than finding balanced solutions. I do not support banning aquarium fishing as a policy approach. Bans can create unintended consequences, including inequitable enforcement and strain on public resources. I respectfully urge you to reject HB2101 and pursue alternatives focused on education, responsible regulation, and community engagement. Please vote no on HB2101.

Lisa Amaral

I am writing in opposition to HB2101. While I understand the intent behind the bill, banning activities outright is not the most effective way to manage. Bans can disproportionately impact working families and small businesses while failing to address underlying concerns of pollution. When government overreaches, communities often experience confusion and compliance challenges. I respectfully ask you to oppose HB2101.

Chasen Komoto

Please accept this testimony in strong opposition to HB2101. I do not support an aquarium fishing ban. Public policy should be based on evidence and scientific research. Broad bans often lack flexibility and fail to consider responsible individuals who are not harming the the ocean's reef. Good governance requires careful consideration and not blanket restrictions. I ask the committee to stop this measure. Vote no on HB2101.

Clare Okumoto

I oppose HB2101 because it seeks to ban aquarium fishing instead of using thoughtful regulations. I do not support bans as an effective solution for environmental management. Hawaii will benefit when policies encourage responsibility and informed decision-making. Outright bans can erode public trust and foster resentment, especially when it restricts lawful behavior. I respectfully ask that you oppose HB2101.

Kevin Karvas

I strongly believe aquarium fishing bans are not the answer. Careful regulation and education would be more effective for managing our environmental resources. I urge you to vote no for HB2101. I oppose HB2101.

Heather Amaral

I am testifying in opposition to HB2101. I'd rather have the Aquarium industry managed by rules rather than an outright ban. I respectfully request that you vote no on HB2101.

Stacey Nakamoto

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony opposing HB2101. I support managing the aquarium industry with sensible regulations instead of a total ban. Please oppose HB2101.

Nick Ramirez

I respectfully requesting that you oppose and vote down HB2101 on Monday, March 2. I oppose HB2101.

Please don't ban commercial aquarium fishing in Hawaii. Allow the DAR to manage the fishery as it has done for decades. The EIS has shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery with rules from DAR is and was sustainable and low impact to Hawaii. Please ask DAR to explain more about this and allow the EIS and rule making process to be completed. I'm an aquarium fisherman and food fisherman that was born in Hawaii. I, as well as my family and friends oppose HB2101. Today we live in a State where most of the houses are purchased by mainland people who can afford to pay 10x more than kamaaina; which has created the problem of higher rates of poverty, homelessness, lower education, lack of economic opportunity to make money, lower community and government involvement in the local people. Please don't allow wealthy mainland people who claim to be activists make rules and laws to oppress and harm Hawaii's local people, businesses, and government.

Carla Venable

I oppose HB2101. HB2101 is a bill that is neither fair or practical. Public trust is strengthened when laws are proportionate and clearly justified. I respectfully ask the committee to reject HB2101 and vote no.

Angelina Galiza

My testimony is in opposition to HB2101. Limiting lawful behavior can hinder innovation and the economy. I ask you to oppose HB2101 and consider more thoughtful policy options.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 3:33:13 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TODD SHIRAKI	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB2101.

I was born and raised here in Hawai‘i, and like many local families, I grew up connected to the ocean—not just for recreation, but as part of our way of life. The practices this bill aims to restrict aren’t just “activities”—they are traditions, livelihoods, and knowledge passed down through generations.

What concerns me most about HB2101 is how disconnected it feels from the reality on the ground. The people making decisions often aren’t the ones waking up before sunrise, spending long days on the water, and relying on these resources to support their families. Local fishermen, collectors, and small business owners already operate with a deep respect for the ocean because we depend on it. We understand balance. We know that if we don’t take care, there will be nothing left for tomorrow.

This bill risks punishing responsible, law-abiding locals instead of addressing the real issues. Broad, one-size-fits-all restrictions don’t work in a place as unique as Hawai‘i, where each island and community has its own practices and needs. It feels like another step toward pushing locals out of their own resources while others, often larger outside interests, continue unaffected.

We should be focusing on collaboration—working with local communities, not against them. Education, targeted management, and community-based solutions will always be more effective than heavy-handed regulation that ignores local voices.

Please don't pass a bill that will hurt the very people who have the deepest connection to and respect for our natural resources. Listen to the community. Stand with the people who call Hawai'i home.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 3:50:30 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Folsom	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former marine biologist with University of Hawaii, Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, I am strongly opposed to this bill. All the data from DLNR and DAR prove the fishery is sustainable.

The passage of HB 2101 would ignore the HWN and WTL Senate votes to not pass the SB 2996 companion bill to 2101. The hearing and passage of this type of bill would go against the latest Supreme Court decision supporting the EIS-approved fishery opening, and it also contravenes the EIS laws and the EIS approval process.

Testimony from DAR in the SB 2996 hearing, “the fishery DAR review shows will be sustainable.” Watch on [YouTube](#) at 1:25 min. link. 2024 Report to the Legislature also shows very healthy fish populations during the report years. DAR also stated that “No negative impacts are expected by the fishery reopening.”

Pro-Hawaiian-based BLNR, Board of Land and Natural Resources, passes rules to proceed with permitting laws and supports the fishery in a unanimous 7-0 vote. Every year, DAR, the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and its leading scientists testify, drawing on decades of science, supported by all the leading scientists in Hawaii, in support of the return of the aquarium fishery. Passage of this ban bill would contradict the EIS, the Senate deferral, the BLNR unanimous decisions, and the courts' rulings, and it would not be based on science.

Please do not send messages to other businesses stating that Hawaii is closed to businesses, even if they are eco-friendly, pass an EIS, and are sustainable.

EIS laws are meaningless if they are bypassed by the legislature!

Please vote no on this bill.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 4:23:13 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cynthia Walsh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The fish have still not recovered after all these years from the collectors. I snorkel Honaunau bay almost every day for the last 30 years. There were 10 times as many fish back then This is an obvious solution, and the bill should include the Island of Hawaii.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 4:29:17 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Christopher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I'm a Big Island resident writing in strong support of HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection. Most Hawai'i residents support this ban statewide, and with aquaculture/captive breeding now supplying the aquarium trade, there is no reason to steal the wild fish. Why would we allow a few people to take for profit something that is supposed to be for everyone to enjoy? They would literally be taking from the this and the next generation for their sole profit. No one needs to point out how much of our economy revolves around tourism. What do tourists want to see? They want to see the ocean, reef, and the beautiful fish. What will happen if we don't protect this valuable asset? If we lose the reef we will lose tourism not to mention our food supply. Please support this bill.

Ryan Christopher, Honokaa HI

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 4:51:06 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have lived here on the Hawaiian Islands for over 30 years and over that time have seen first hand the destruction that the AQ business has wrought upon ALL the islands and especially on the island that I currently reside on - The Big Island. I dive and free dive. Ask anyone that truly appreciates and treasures what a special place for marine life, that we are but custodians of, and they will tell you that what the AQ business does here isn't right and we don't want it to come back ever. We have endemic species that must be protected. We have species that are truly special that will live longer and produce off spring that an enclosed aquarium for ornamental desires can't provide. The diving and snorkeling businesses bring in more revenue for the state and the people then aquarium collectors filling their pockets and destroying OUR marine environment! Please consider your decision because a lot is at hand.

If my wife Dionne were still alive she would be by my side holding strongly to stop all of this. If it doesn't happen I know she is weeping for the fishes are all of us that care.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:32:53 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Inam Rahman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

My name is Dr Inam U. Rahman, MD, a physician and community advocate serving West O‘ahu families. I support HB2101 HD1 SD1 with amendments to strengthen the bill and ensure it fully protects Hawai‘i’s people, resources, and future.

As a physician, I see firsthand how environmental health directly impacts human health. Our nearshore ecosystems are not only ecological assets—they are foundational to food security, cultural practices, mental well-being, and economic stability for our communities.

I strongly support the intent of this bill to limit commercial aquarium collection. However, I respectfully recommend the following amendments to make the measure more effective, equitable, and sustainable:

1. Restore a Statewide and Permanent Ban

The current version limits the ban to O‘ahu and ties it to future rulemaking. This creates inconsistency and risks shifting collection pressure to other islands. A clear, statewide, and permanent prohibition, as originally proposed, will provide uniform protection and regulatory clarity.

2. Protect Reef Ecosystems Through a Precautionary Approach

Hawai‘i’s coral reefs are already under stress from climate change, warming waters, and pollution. Removing key species—even in limited numbers—can disrupt fragile ecological balance. A precautionary approach is both scientifically sound and morally responsible when dealing with shared public trust resources.

3. Prioritize Community and Cultural Interests

For decades, Native Hawaiian practitioners and local communities have raised concerns about the depletion of nearshore resources. This bill should affirm that public trust resources are to be preserved for the benefit of the people of Hawai‘i, not primarily for export and private commercial gain.

4. Reduce Enforcement Burden and Improve Resource Allocation

Quota-based systems require intensive monitoring and enforcement, placing strain on already limited DOCARE resources. A clear statutory prohibition would simplify enforcement and allow agencies to redirect efforts toward more urgent threats such as illegal fishing, invasive species, and reef degradation.

5. Provide Transition Support for Affected Workers

While the industry is small, we must acknowledge and support those impacted. I recommend including economic transition assistance, workforce retraining, or integration into sustainable marine industries such as aquaculture or reef restoration efforts.

6. Maintain Existing Exceptions with Clear Oversight

I support the bill’s existing exceptions for traditional practices, scientific research, aquaculture, and personal use. However, these should include clear safeguards and transparency to prevent misuse.

7. Include a Scientific Review and Accountability Mechanism

I also recommend inclusion of a periodic scientific review mechanism, including reef health assessments every 3–5 years with transparent public reporting. This will ensure accountability, allow adaptive management, and provide measurable indicators of reef recovery over time.

Hawai‘i’s reefs are a cornerstone of our identity, economy, and resilience. Protecting them is not only an environmental issue—it is a public health, cultural, and economic imperative.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with amendments to restore a statewide and permanent ban, strengthen enforcement clarity, provide equitable transition support, and include scientific accountability measures.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Dr Inam Rahman, MD

West O‘ahu (Waipahū, ‘Ewa Beach, Pearl City)

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 5:11:05 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lon Wallace	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators~

I am writing today to offer full support of and sincere urging for passing the ban bill regarding the aquarium gathering business here in our islands, and to also strongly request that you please add an amendment to include Hawaii Island. I am a long-time resident of West Hawaii island, and avid waterman. Through the decades, I have personally seen and experienced the grossly imbalanced impact this industry has had on our reef fish, from witnessing the large haul outs at Kawaihae Harbor with their collateral damage to more importantly the intense diminishing of the various populations out on our reefs. It was and is clearly an unsustainable practice that has negatively impacted the health of the waters and reef and clearly disturbed the ecological balance.

Since the temporary ban went into effect around 2016, I and many others who use the waters for recreational, health and spiritual benefit have seen a slow but notable come back, even with the poachers still out there. It is FAR from back to a fully healthy, balanced state, especially with the added stressor of coral bleaching we have experienced, but the improvement is obvious and a very and welcomed and needed change. Anyone who dives on our reefs with an open, objective mind will see that they cannot come close to sustaining any semblance of health if reef fish are allowed to once again be removed via aquarium gathering.

We desperately need to keep Hawaii's fish in our waters for the continued health and restoration of the reef, and for all those locals and tourists who enjoy and derive benefit on many levels from their presence and corresponding healthy reef; not be taken for the relatively very few who want to capitalize on their removal for monetary gains with no or too little regard for the negative impact they generate and short-sighted damage they leave behind.

Though I truly empathize with those few who desire to make this their business, it cannot be allowed at the expense of our reef's ecological systems, especially when there are alternatives like aquaculture now available to supply the recreational demand for tropical aquarium fish.

I respectfully ask that you take this deeply into consideration when weighing out this decision that would profoundly affect the health of our reef systems and waters.

Mahalo nui loa,

Lon Wallace, PhD.

Kamuela, Hawaii

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 5:11:50 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB2101 HD1 SD1 opens with several paragraphs describing why collecting Hawaiian wildlife for sale for private aquarium display is not pono and should be abolished. It then follows with language to enact a ban on this practice only "in counties with a population over 500,000," of which there is only one in Hawaii, and it is not the one targeted by the aquarium collection industry. Clearly a backroom deal has been made to placate a politician or politicians who are protecting a small harmful industry in opposition to the wishes of the vast majority of their constituents, and to the detriment of the larger non-extractive industries and many non-commercial users of the same resource. This bill should be passed after amending it to remove the language "in counties with a population over 500,000."

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 5:16:01 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jeanne wheeler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha: I'm wiring again to register strong support for this bill, with an amendment to include our Hawai'i Island... PLEASE pass it! Mahalo, JW

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 5:46:45 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susie Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! My name is Susie Davis and I am a resident of Kapaau, on the Big Island.

As an ardent supporter of Hawaii healthy oceans, coral, and fisheries, I strongly encourage you to pass HB2101 with an amendment to include Hawai'i Island.

Our oceans and fisheries are already in peril due to warming, acidification, overfishing and pollution. All these dangers pose a grave threat to our coral reefs and the biodiversity in our marine ecosystem. Tropical fish are stewards of the reef. They help keep coral reef ecosystems healthy and in balance. By removing these fish, coral reefs get out of balance and become more susceptible to stress from warming oceans, bleaching, and ocean acidification. Keeping fish on the reef is essential for healthy and resilient coral reef ecosystems.

Populations of Hawai'i's most important fish species have declined by 90% since the early 1900s. A 2012 report revealed that over the last several decades, some places in Hawai'i have lost up to 60% of their coral cover, which is essential for creating habitat for healthy fish populations. Adding further stress to these resources, the 2015 mass coral bleaching event caused a loss of 30% of coral cover statewide.

Please protect Hawaiian Oceans and reefs and vote to ban the aquarium trade.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 5:50:12 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Hixon	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and Members of CPN/JDC:

The present version of this bill (HB2101 HD1 SD) is completely ineffective because it would ban commercial aquarium fishing only on the island of Oahu (i.e, population greater than 500,000), where there is virtually no aquarium fishery. I hope this was an honest mistake or a typographical error rather than politics. In any case, nearly the entire fishery is located on the island of Hawaii, so if you choose to ban the fishery, then please do so where the fishery occurs.

Mahalo--Mark Hixon (UH Manoa professor of marine biology)

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 6:08:11 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Kumata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support HB2102 and pass this bill to ban aquarium collection and make amendments to remove the human population stipulation and reinstate the statewide ban from the original bill.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 6:10:25 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelli Soileau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I **strongly support** with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. **However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently**, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O’ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which (an estimated 90%) die within a year after collection. In the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai‘i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawai‘i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law.

Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Ultimately, the legislature as our elected branch of government has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

Hawai‘i’s reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Additionally, on-reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and healthy ecosystems and generate approximately \$1.2 billion annually in economic benefits – about a thousand times more than commercial aquarium collection which generates only \$1-2 million per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continent.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai‘i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai‘i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kelli Soileau

Kāne‘ohe, O‘ahu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 6:14:51 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee,

I stand in strong support of a permanent, statewide ban on the commercial collection of aquatic life for the aquarium trade. However, I must **strongly and respectfully oppose the amendments inserted by previous committees**, which continue to fundamentally gut the original bill and transform it from a decisive public trust protection into a procedural illusion.

The latest draft does not ban the aquarium trade. It delays, localizes, and conditions a ban in a way that ensures meaningful action never actually occurs. This is not what the community has demanded for decades. This is not what the Hawai‘i County Council unanimously requested. This is a betrayal of the public trust.

The Shift to Honolulu County is Not a Fix—It is a Shell Game

The amendment now targets counties with a population greater than 500,000—effectively, the City and County of Honolulu. This is not an improvement on the previous version that singled out Hawai‘i County; it is simply a different form of geographical carveout. The fundamental problem remains: **the ban is not statewide.**

If the aquarium trade is destructive enough to be banned on O‘ahu, it is destructive enough to be banned on every island. The ecological damage does not respect county lines. The cultural harm is not confined to a single jurisdiction. The industry operates across this archipelago, and a piecemeal approach simply pushes extraction from one island to another while leaving the majority of our reefs unprotected.

The DLNR Rule-Making Condition is a Poison Pill

The most damaging change in this draft is the insertion of language that prohibits the Department of Land and Natural Resources from considering rules or issuing permits **until** it has promulgated rules under the Holomua Marine Initiative—with the entire ban **sunsetting** once those rules exist.

Let us be clear about what this means:

- **The ban is temporary.** The moment DLNR finalizes its Holomua rules—rules that the same agency has already signaled it intends to use to *restart* commercial aquarium collection—this prohibition vanishes.
- **DLNR retains full control.** This is the same agency that, in 2023, unanimously supported a permanent ban, then reversed itself, claimed it lacked authority, and subsequently repurposed the community's proposal into a framework for resuming large-scale extraction. We are now being asked to pass a bill that says, in effect: "We will temporarily pause the aquarium trade, but only until the agency that has already betrayed this issue finishes writing the rules to bring it back."
- **The Holomua Marine Initiative is not a conservation mandate.** It is a planning process. There is no guarantee—and based on recent history, no reason to believe—that the rules DLNR promulgates will result in a genuine, permanent ban. The more likely outcome is a regulatory regime that permits commercial collection under the guise of "sustainable management," repeating the failures of the past.

This amendment is not a compromise. It is a trap door.

The State's Agencies Have Failed in Their Trust Duty

The recent history surrounding this issue is a story of profound institutional failure. In 2023, the Board of Land and Natural Resources unanimously supported a community-led proposal for a permanent ban via administrative rule—only to abruptly reverse itself and claim it lacked authority, pushing the responsibility to the Legislature.

In a stunning act of bad faith, the Division of Aquatic Resources then took that same proposal and transformed it into a framework to restart large-scale commercial extraction. This is a direct subversion of the community's clear demand and the BLNR's own initial, correct instinct. The legislature is now the last line of defense—but the current draft hands the issue right back to the very agency that created this crisis.

Science Confirms the Damage and the Failed Recovery

The scientific case for a ban is unequivocal. A recent independent expert analysis of DAR's own data reveals a shocking truth: despite the 2017 court-ordered shutdown of the aquarium trade, yellow tang populations in West Hawai'i failed to recover as biologically and historically expected.

Decades of extraction have done deep, lasting harm. Instead of ramping up science to understand this crisis, DAR has chosen willful blindness, slashing robust, 20-year monitoring programs from 4-6 survey rounds per year down to just one. The state is now managing in the dark—a dereliction of its constitutional public trust duty.

The Industry is Fundamentally at Odds with Our Values and Law

This trade is a model of exploitation, not conservation:

- **It is Culturally Destructive:** It conflicts fundamentally with Native Hawaiian values and pono fishing practices, which limit take to what is truly needed for sustenance and ceremony—not for the decorative pet trade.
- **It is Criminally Compromised:** Despite four major criminal convictions in the past five years involving at least 10 industry members, illegal poaching for this trade continues. A legal framework only provides cover for ongoing black-market activity.
- **It is a Net Loss for Hawai‘i:** Published cost-benefit analyses confirm that the people of Hawai‘i receive no public benefit from this trade. Our residents bear all the environmental loss, enforcement costs, and cultural degradation, while a handful of private interests profit.

The Legislature Must Uphold the Public Trust—Not Defer to Failed Agencies

The BLNR and DAR have demonstrated they cannot or will not solve this problem. The Hawai‘i County Council has spoken unanimously. The scientific data shows a reef in crisis. The community's opposition spans decades.

The current draft of HB2101 does not meet this moment. It does not ban the aquarium trade. It creates a narrow, temporary, conditional pause in a single county, contingent on rule-making by an agency that has already shown it intends to reopen the industry.

I urge this committee to:

1. **Remove the population-based restriction entirely** and restore a clean, permanent, statewide ban.
2. **Strike the DLNR rule-making condition and the sunset provision**, which together ensure this bill has no lasting effect.
3. **Pass a genuine, permanent, statewide ban** that honors the decades of community advocacy, the unanimous call of the Hawai‘i County Council, and the constitutional public trust obligation to protect our marine resources for current and future generations.

Anything less is not a ban. It is a delay dressed as action. The community demands better. Our reefs deserve better. And the Legislature must deliver.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:09:16 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Kipapa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong Support for HB2101 SD1 – April 2, 2026

Aloha e Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary,

My name is Malia Kipapa from Pahoehoe, Kona on Moku o Keawe, and I submit this written testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB2101 SD1. I respectfully urge that this bill be passed with an amendment to ban aquarium fish collection **STATEWIDE**, not only on O‘ahu.

I am a lineal descendant of Pahoehoe Kona and come from a long line of traditional fishing families on Hawai‘i Island. It is critical that we recognize the impacts of aquarium fish collection as an extractive commercial practice that profits from public resources while impeding on the traditional and customary rights of my ‘ohana and other Kanaka ‘Ōiwi.

This practice disrupts the balance of our nearshore ecosystems by removing key species that help maintain the health of our coral reefs. These reefs are essential to sustaining our food systems, cultural practices, and the overall well-being of our communities. Protecting them is not only an environmental issue, it is a matter of cultural survival and generational responsibility.

I respectfully urge your joint committees to **PASS** this bill with recommended amendments to include a **statewide ban**. This measure affirms our kuleana to mālama kai and helps to perpetuate ‘āina momona for present and future generations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

With aloha,
Malia Kipapa

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:19:25 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zett Elyss Amora	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha: Nature belongs to everyone not just a few parties who seek to make a profit from wild harvesting from Hawai'i Islands. PLEASE STOP THIS CRIME AGAINST NATURE AND THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII and PERMANENTLY BAN reef fish collection by supporting HB2101.

Mahalo,

Zettelyss Amora, 22 year resident of Kamuela and a daily ocean swimmer.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:23:15 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Fernley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Committee on Judiciary

Akpha Commuttee Members,

My name is Randy Fernley and **I strongly oppose HB 2101** and urge you to vote against it's passage..

Science plays a very important role in determining "Sustainability". This is not to downplay the very important aspects of culture,economics and ethics,however,science is critical in determining the issue before us now.Decision makers should be armed with the best available data thru science.....and that includes both DLNR biologists and outside consultants from recognized experts on reef fishes. The introduction of this bill shows that due diligance has **NOT** been done.

I needto mention that Oahu has just recently submitted our EIS at much expense and countless hours of work.Likewise, the Big Island has completed all the requirements of HEPA and are now awaiting final approval on their EIS

Please allow this to play out and vote "NO' pn HB 2101

Thank you for allowing me to testify,

Randy Fernley

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:30:30 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cory Harden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha legislators,

Please vote YES to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection, and make the ban statewide.

If people want fish for their tanks, they can obtain fish raised by aquaculture, instead of jeopardizing our reefs by taking wild fish.

mahalo,

Cory Harden, Hilo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:37:01 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John von Schlegell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a landowner, investor and lover of Hawaii, I am reiterating my support for this legislation to protect Hawaii's reefs and particularly on the Big Island of Hawaii. The underpinning of one of the state's largest source of revenue (tourism) is our ocean and waters. It's difficult to believe that a very small group of individuals who harvest fish for aquariums can have so much influence on our policy making when the damage they cause our marine life is so great. Biologically and economically HB2101 is important to enact. Mahalo, John von Schlegell

Kailua Kona

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:41:59 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Greene	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE This PROSTITUTION of Our OCEAN.

Before in 1990's Our Ocean Was OVER FISHED SELLING OCEAN EVERYTHING DEPLEATING OUR NATURAL OCEAN LIVING CREATURES.

TRULY OVER FISHED & PLENTY MONEY MAKING OUTSIDERS DEPLEATING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

IT IS NO ALWAYS MAKING MOBEY OFF OF OUR ENVIRONMENTS JUST LIKE

ITS A NO TO GEOTHERMAL / ALL OF THIS IS PROSTITUTION OF OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ! G E T O U T 🦴🦴🦴

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 7:52:29 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jerrean Kaikaina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Jerrean Kaikaina

Waianae, HI

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 8:37:38 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ihilani Buffett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HB2101, with a strong request that Hawai‘i Island be clearly and explicitly included in this measure.

Our ocean and reefs are not just resources-they are a part of our identity, our culture, and our responsibility. The relationship between people and the ocean in Hawai‘i is one of kuleana:we have a duty to care for and protect these ecosystems so they may continue to sustain future generations.

Hawai‘i Islands reefs are unique and deeply significant to the communities who depend on them for subsistence, cultural practices, and connection to place. If this bills language is not clear, it risks leaving gaps in protection that could harm these vital resources.

For this measure to truly uphold the values of mālama ‘āina and ensure fairness across our islands, it is essential that Hawai‘i Island is fully and explicitly included.

When we mālama kai, our kai will mālama us. This is the way it has and always will be.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a

‘Ihilani P Buffett

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 8:57:40 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ikaika Dwight	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Ikaika Dwight

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 9:51:34 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Meyer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

David E Meyer

431 Nahua Street

Honolulu, Hi. 96815

323-377-3801

Re: Testimony supporting HB2101 – the proposed ban prohibiting the collection of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes regardless of the method of collection Focus on the Yellow Tang.

To the legislature:

I have snorkeled in Hanauma Bay over 800 times since mid-2004 when I began visiting my brother, a prominent physician who has lived in O’ahu since the late 1960’s.

As a pastime, I have submitted hundreds of surveys of reef fish populations for Reef.org - a non-profit environmental research group based in Key Largo, Florida. Ten percent of these surveys were done in Hawai’i and the majority of those were done in Hanauma Bay.

Part of surveying is identifying species and marking the numbers observed as “single,” “few” (two to ten), “many” (11 to 100) and “abundant” (over 100).

In the early parts of the 21st century, I would often see large schools of yellow tangs in abundant numbers at Hanauma Bay. Now if I see a school of twenty-five I feel fortunate.

I can attest that not once since I moved to O’ahu permanently in November, 2024 I have not been able to mark Yellow Tangs as “abundant” on a survey.

The Yellow Tangs, I think, are the “canaries in the coal mine” (please forgive the mixing of metaphors) when it comes to the health of reef animals. Though the tangs maybe the most obvious, I have noticed declines in other species, too. In addition, I do not know if nudibranchs

are being collected but while it was not uncommon for me to spot them snorkeling I have seen only one in Hanauma bhay since I moved.

As the bill indicates, Hawai'i's coral reefs are in danger from climate change and other stress that we cannot control or easily regulate.

Collection of reef creatures by the commercial trade is one matter we can control. We can abolish it.

In addition, DNLR 's Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has cut its former programs of reef fish monitoring. I understand that the West Hawai'i aquarium fish monitoring was cut from four to six rounds a year to one round. Without adequate scientific monitoring, how can Hawai'i track the effect of the commercial aquarium trade?

The profits of the aquarium trade stay with the aquarium trade. The islands bear the loss of their species. The commercial collecting trade will go somewhere else for its short-term profits after it has decimated the reef-fish population of Hawai'i.

Thank you for accepting my testimony

Best regards

David E Meyer

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 10:27:05 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brooke Porter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Brooke Porter and I write in strong support of HB2101, with an amendment to extend its protections to Hawai'i Island. Though I now live abroad, I was a Hawai'i resident for ten years, and the health of these reefs remains deeply personal to me. Healthy, fish-filled reefs protect local shorelines from erosion and rising seas. They also sustain the global marine ecosystem that connects us all, regardless of where we live. I urge the committee to extend these protections to Hawai'i Island and ensure the longstanding closure of commercial aquarium collection becomes permanent law.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2026 11:15:04 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
christy vail	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

as a long time, scuba diver and snorkeler I support the banning of aquarium collection everywhere in the state of Hawai'i. I am hoping our legislators will do the right thing and ban it outright, everywhere. No one would consider traveling up the mountain and taking native forest birds to sell on the Internet. It is exactly the same thing and these fish cannot be fed or kept alive for very long off their home reef. Please do the right thing. Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 12:10:43 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregg Gruwell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the banning of aquarium collection of reef fish on ALL 'Hawaiian islands!

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:36:13 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe Culbertson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ALOHA SENATORS!

I am submitting this testimony for strong support of HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection, *WITH THE RE-INSTATEMENT OF HAWAII ISLAND AS PART OF A STATEWIDE LAW!*

Most Hawai'i residents support this ban statewide, and with aquaculture now supplying the trade, there is no reason to take the wild ones.

Please understand that West Hawaii Island reefs and reef fish (Yellow Tang etc.) are ground zero for this industry's ambitions.

That simply is no longer acceptable.

Right now, these fish are hard at work cleaning up our reefs everywhere after the recent storms inundated corals with polluted run-off.

These fish are nature's 'tools' for reef recovery and resiliency.

Please honor that process now by banning their removal at the hands of greedy Aquarium extractors!

Mahalo nui loa!

Joe Culbertson

Keaau, HI 96749

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:36:28 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly Salter Jacobson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I fiercely support with all of my love and aloha, HB2101 HD1 SD1 with amendments to ban commercial aquarium collection. I request, however, that the proposed ban be emended to apply - as originally propped - statewide and permanently, forever. I SUPPORT A PERMANENT STATEWIDE BAN.

We need to keep our ocean healthy now and for all generations to come. The fish are not for a few, they are for all to enjoy. They are part of the vital ecosystem. Snorkeling, diving, swimming are all a huge part of the tourism here, a billion dollar business, crucial for so many who live here. I am in the ocean swimming and paddling every week. I feel when the ocean needs to heal after a storm. I see the same fish families in their neighborhoods as my group swims our weekly 1.2 mile route. I hope that we all do the right thing and protect our ocean for all, now and in the future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kimberly Salter Jacobson (Waikoloa, Big Island)

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:01:46 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brent Carman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I worked for DLNR/DAR for 16yrs researching the AQ Fishery. Our data showed it was not a sustainable fishery even with all the management. There were numerous violations of the AQ fishing rules going on with little to NO enforcement. User surveys were conducted with tourists on ocean activity tours, many saying Hawaii's reefs and fish populations were not good and they would not be coming back; there were better places to go for snorkling and diving. When Maui banned AQ fishing the collectors all came to Kona, creating greater overfishing and rule breaking. We need to keep the fish on the reefs. Economic times are bad and worsening. This is when Hawaii's people look to the reefs to feed themselves. This is the priority, Not sending fish to the continent for people to look at in tanks. The reefs are critical to Hawaii and it's peoples health and AQ fishing harms that. So as before I am encouraging our elected officials to permanently Ban the AQ fishery Statewide especially on the Big Isalnd Moku O Keawe. The people have loudly spoken for decades to get rid of the AQ fishery so please listen. Kona DAR tried hard to mange it, We Failed.

Mahalo,

Brent

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:03:26 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
james ward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As I understand it, the aquarium collecting ban now applies only to Oahu. As a resident and scuba diver in south Kona I want to reiterate the importance of amending the bill to include Hawaii Island. as I've witnessed the harm caused to the reef fish population along with the lack of DNLR personell to police kona waters, I request the bill be amended to include Hawaii island. Reef fish collection will always continue, but the bill will at least keep the honest people honest and act as a deterrent.

Mahalo

James Ward 808-895-9656

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:01:52 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Klayton Kubo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly In Oppose

I am a Fisher/Hunter/Gatherer from Waimea, Kaua'i. West Hawaii Island Aquarium Fishers/Gatherers went through the court process. There is Public Hearings through the Division Of Aquatic Resources (DAR) to reopen this fisheries because it is proven to be a Sustainable Fisheries. I have concerns if this Fishery is Banned then what will be the next Fisheries on the Ban List? To summarize the Collection List went from 20? some what species to 5 species(BLNR) to be collected.

Mahalo,

Klayton Kubo

Waimea, Kaua'i

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:07:01 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
McMichael Simmy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'am writing in support of HB2101 to pass this bill to BAN AQUARIUM COLLECTION.

Important is to Save our Reef Fishes forever for the now and next generation!!

The Ban not just Oahu but ALL ISLANDS!!

January 2026, the Hawai'i Island County Council unanimously passed Resolution No. 422-25 sending a clear and unified message to the State Legislature to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life from state marine waters for ornamental commercial aquarium purposes. Mahalo for this as they represent the people of Hawai'i and are voted by the public. I admire them for this, and special Mahalo to Dr. Holeka Goro Inaba who traveled to Oahu to testify in person to Ban Aquarium Collection.

Please do what is Pono for Hawai'i Public Trust. Not private for profit.

Aloha,

Simmy McMichael

Kailua Kona, Hawaii

Born in the Territory of Hawai'i

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:10:14 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liz Lees	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the FULL ban on all Hawaii islands including HAWAII ISLAND for aquarium collection.

I am a full time resident of the Big Island and an active ocean swimmer. I have observed first hand how the current limitations have benefited our local area to increase fish stock and overall reef health.

There is not enough manpower to manage limits and restrictions to protect the fish and the reef. Aquarium collection benefits very few and hurts many.

Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:12:53 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aspen Russell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Keohokalole, Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Aspen Omapang and I am a staff member at Ho‘āla Kealakekua Nui, inc. (HKN). I come from five-generations of kama‘āina of Moku o Keawe, Hawai‘i Island. **I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2101 SD1.**

With broad support spanning all major Hawaiian Islands, **it is imperative that the protections defined in HB2101 SD1 extend to the whole pae ‘aina (archipelago).** The stated aims of this bill and the kuleana of state officials is not limited to one city or one island. This spans Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing, the Hierarchy of Use policy, Public Trust Doctrine, and varying resolutions passed across the pae ‘aina. Our waters do not obey state-defined boundaries and as such neither do our fish. Ecologically, limiting the scope of protections makes little sense. Localizing protections to one city or one island sets back the clock on recovery and throws off the balance of recovery and extraction. Our fish are at risk, which means our coral, our waters, and our lands are also at risk.

There is significant support and momentum to ban commercial aquarium collection from major public and private interests across Hawai‘i. Now is the moment to put this momentum to good use and pass HB2101 SD1 with protections extended to all major Hawaiian islands.

Mahalo for allowing my submission of this testimony and represent community voice. I strongly urge this committee to pass HB2101 SD1.

Mahalo nui,

Aspen Omapang (Russell)

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:55:09 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai‘i’s marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai‘i is

sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Jennifer Crawford

Nānākuli, O‘ahu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:59:11 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gail McKay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ALOHA SENATORS!

I am submitting this testimony for strong support of HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection, with the re-instatement of Hawai'i Island as part a statewide plan!

Most Hawai'i residents support this ban statewide, and with aquaculture now supplying the trade, there is no reason to take the wild ones.

Please understand that West Hawai'i Island reefs and reef fish (Yellow Tang etc.) are ground zero for this industry's ambitions.

That simply is no longer acceptable.

Right now, these fish are hard at work cleaning up our reefs everywhere after the recent storms inundated corals with polluted run-off.

These fish are nature's 'tools' for reef recovery and resiliency.

Please honor that process now by banning their removal at the hands of greedy Aquarium extractors!

Mahalo nui loa!

Gail McKay

Keaau, HI 96749

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 9:13:43 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
P Hauoli'ipo Wright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

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sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

P. Hau'oli ipo Wright

Moku o Keawe

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 9:24:04 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megaan M. Clark	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support amendment HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply permanently and statewide, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu, as originally drafted. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and Maui County. Meanwhile other representative bodies - namely the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u - have called on the legislature to ban this practice.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in economic benefits – about a thousand times more than commercial aquarium collection which generates only \$1-2 million per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continental US. Healthy reefs also provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience, and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) created a quota-based permit system which would reopen West Hawai'i to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of DOCARE officers, thus using resources that could be directed elsewhere to benefit a small number of industry participants.

In conclusion, it is important to remember that Hawai'i's constitutional public trust doctrine requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good rather than private gain, and commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of this doctrine. The vast majority of marine life extracted and exported for commercial sale (an estimated 90%) die within a year after collection while in the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

Commercial aquarium collection has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of local reef systems, undermined the state's food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of Hawai'i's tourism-based economy. Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai'i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai'i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, I stand with the majority of Hawai'i residents in support of a statutory ban to protect our coral reefs, a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Yours truly,

Megaan M. Clark

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 9:24:45 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannette Heidrich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jeannette Heidrich and I live in Kailua Kona, Hawaii. The reef fish need to stay on the reef!!!! the coral needs these fish to remain healthy and to get strong for climate change events. also, the reef fish is why many tourists come to Hawaii so we need to keep the fish where people can see them over and over again.

I Urge passage of HB2101 **with an amendment to include Hawai'i Island**

Sincerely,

Jeannette Heidrich

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 9:42:25 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Metcalf	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Hawaii State Legislators,

I am writing with utmost urgency in strong support of HB2101, which needs to be amended to include all Hawaiian islands.

The life of our coral reef habitats are in dire threat of collapse, compounded by by the recent Kona Low flood runoffs which blanketed our reefs with layers of mud and toxins. The numerous extreme and severe weather events from climate change are accelerating and killing our coral reef ecosystems, one of the key economic drivers in our state.

You can take action now to help mitigate these increasing coral reef threats by passing this bill and keeping our reef fish where they are most needed to help protect our coral reefs. At the same time, passing this bill will help stimulate a new industry in the state, using aquaculture to grow reef fish onshore for the aquarium pet trade.

Please follow the wishes of the vast majority of your constituents. Pass this bill amended to include all Hawaiian islands and preserve our wild reef fish for their vital environmental services, community food sustenance and in keeping with Hawaiian cultural practices and Hawaii's public trust doctrine.

Malama pono,

Mary Metcalf, Kailua Kona, Hawaii

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:31:55 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Koch	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and fellow committee members,

I am writing today on a matter of great importance. This bill carries life-changing consequences for many local families and businesses. My concern is straightforward: I have submitted written and oral testimony since the first hearing, and I have watched this bill evolve through multiple versions. The most recent committee attempted to find a reasonable middle ground short of an outright ban. However, I question whether this bill is still necessary. This issue has already been addressed through a thorough, community-driven process that includes a court ruling, a detailed environmental review, and the ongoing Chapter 91 rulemaking process. Fishermen have already invested a tremendous amount of time and resources to work through this current process. A ban at this stage would impose devastating losses on them. The fishery is demonstrably sustainable—this is not a resource management issue, except in the view of those who are not scientists. Linking Oahu to a separate rulemaking process, specifically Holomua, is both redundant and illogical. Like West Hawaii, Oahu is already part of an inescapable current process. Upon completion, this process will implement new, highly restrictive rules using carefully controlled management tools. The approach proposed by DAR will establish strong guardrails for both fisheries, eliminating any realistic chance of overfishing or meaningful impact on the resource. I believe the previous committee's goal was to ensure Oahu's impacts were fully considered before reopening. In reality, this is precisely what's currently happening—through a process specifically tailored to aquarium fish (AQ) collection. This process accounts for each island's unique circumstances, remains focused solely on aquarium fishery issues, and includes a multi-year HEPA review with numerous opportunities for public participation. My recommendation is simple: Remove any reference to the Holomua rules from this measure. Maintain the current moratorium on Oahu until the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is complete. Once the EIS is finalized, Oahu can proceed with its Chapter 91 regional rules, which will then be incorporated into the statewide framework. This approach achieves the intent of the current version of the bill while ensuring the fishery does not reopen without proper controls in place, based on the considerations of the science and community---and it avoids inflicting unnecessary hardship on the fishermen who have already borne significant costs. I think this is a practical and fair solution

Sincerely and with great appreciation,

Eric Koch

Hawaii Island

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:33:10 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Liggett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Pass this with an amendment to be a statewide ban please.

Mahalo,

Travis Liggett, M.S.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:35:22 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Marrack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection on all islands. Hawai'i's reefs face warming seas, bleaching events, sedimentation, and declining resilience.

Removing thousands of reef fish each years works against reef recovery, not for it. It disrupts the delicate ecology, and hastens the destruction of our waters, and is contrary to the responsible use of a public trust resource.

Please vote yes on HB2101.

Mahalo,

Julia Marrack

Kamuela, 96743

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:47:48 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aldene Albinio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

I strongly **support HB2101 HD1 SD1, with amendments** to make the ban on commercial aquarium collection permanent and statewide, rather than temporary and limited to O‘ahu.

Commercial aquarium fishing conflicts with Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires natural and cultural resources to be protected for the public good, not private profit. The industry has removed millions of reef animals for export, with an estimated 90% dying within a year, despite lifespans of 30–40 years in the wild.

This practice has harmed reef ecosystems, weakened food security and climate resilience, and damaged a key part of Hawai‘i’s tourism economy. A majority of residents, especially Native Hawaiian subsistence communities, support a ban.

Although aquarium collection has effectively been halted for years, proposed rules could reopen West Hawai‘i waters. As acknowledged by DAR, rulemaking governs how an activity occurs, not whether it should occur. That decision rests with the legislature.

Healthy reef ecosystems are essential to Hawai‘i’s food systems, cultural practices, shoreline protection, and tourism. Reef-based tourism generates about \$1.2 billion annually, far exceeding the \$1–2 million from aquarium collection, most of which leaves the state. When accounting for enforcement, environmental review, and legal costs, the industry’s burdens outweigh its benefits.

Given these impacts and increasing environmental pressures, a permanent statewide ban is necessary to protect Hawai‘i’s reefs and future generations.

I respectfully urge you to **pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with amendments**, to ensure a permanent statewide ban.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 11:15:13 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
manuel kupahu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.
Manuel Kupahu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 11:32:15 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ok, all the usual great reasons to support this bill are probably being submitted many times over. I'll just say that reef fish belong on our reefs and not floating dead in fish tanks. I say this because most harvested reef fish don't live very long in captivity. They can do far more by remaining on the reefs. Thank you.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 12:10:14 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jenny Yagodich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support of HB2101 with comments for ammendment:

State officials within the Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources, including its Chair and the full Board of Land and Natural Resources, have made clear that although there is broad agreement on the need to better protect Hawai‘i’s marine environments, the department does not currently have the legal authority to carry out a prohibition on commercial aquarium collection as has been requested.

This reality makes it evident that action from the Legislature is necessary. HB2101 HD1 SD1 represents an important step toward granting that authority and reinforcing the State’s responsibility to care for Hawai‘i’s marine resources as part of the public trust. However, to fully meet this need, **the measure should be strengthened to ensure its protections apply consistently on a statewide level.**

Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 12:18:09 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taffi Wise	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. **I support a permanent statewide ban.**

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 12:23:17 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynda Wallach	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I live in Kapa'au in North Kohala on Hawaii Island and I strongly urge you to pass HB2101 including the amendments that will reinstate the on ban commercial aquarium collection statewide Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 12:51:38 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Bodien	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill.

The time has come to put an end to this.

The reefs and fish are under more stress than ever before.

Richard

Hāwī

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 1:37:23 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Hoff	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the passage of HB2101 banning aquarium fish collecting of all kinds and fully support an amendment to reinstate a statewide ban with the original bill. Our reefs are being decimated by overfishing, harmful run-off from the human population, warming oceans and acidification, invasive species, and other factors. There has not been enough research on the impacts of excessive algal growth caused by removing this many fish from our waters. Please consider that the harm to our reefs merely to support a handful of small operators is a terrible trade-off for the people of Hawaii and our valuable reef systems. Mahalo!

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT TO HOUSE BILL 2101 SD1
RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION

SENATE COMMITTEES on COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION, and
JUDICIARY

Hawai'i State Capitol

April 4th, 2026

9:20AM

CR 224

Aloha Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga and Gabbard, and members of Senate Committees,

My name is Keanu Binney-Medeiros, and I am a lineal descendant of Kealakekua Bay and a proud Hoa'aina of Ho'ala Kealakekua Nui Inc.

I am in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB2101 SD1**, which prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection, in counties with a population greater than 200,000 and less than 300,000.

As a lineal descendant of Kealakekua Bay, I have spent most of my life on its shores and in its waters, relying on its resources to sustain me and my 'ohana, as many generations before me have done. Today, as a Hoa'aina of Ho'ala Kealakekua Nui, my focus is on restoring, preserving, and protecting the natural resources of Kealakekua Bay and Hawai'i's reefs.

My work as a scientific diver and digital media specialist focuses on documenting reef health through species presence, human-use impacts, and environmental stressors such as climate change, warming oceans, and water quality.

Hawai'i's coral reefs are more than ecosystems, they are natural protection for our communities. They act as barriers that reduce wave energy, prevent erosion, and help protect our homes and infrastructure from storms.

Our reef ecosystems are already under pressure from climate change, warming oceans, and pollution. When these systems are weakened, the impacts ripple outward, affecting our communities, our livelihoods, and the health of our ecosystems.

The removal of vital reef species, especially herbivores that control algae, weakens the very systems that keep our reefs alive. The commercial aquarium pet trade focuses on the removal and capture of these vital species for ornamental use, not for food or sustenance.

This is not a practice rooted in balance or reciprocity. There is no exchange, only extraction for profit and much of that extraction results in loss, with many fish dying during collection, transport, or shortly after entering captivity. This is not a neutral use of our resources. It removes life from reef systems that are already under stress and weakens their resilience and ability to recover.

This commercial aquarium pet trade was halted in 2019 due to legal challenges and the failure to meet environmental review requirements. That pause was not accidental, it reflected recognition that this activity has real impacts that must be accounted for.

Choosing to move forward again, despite that history, raises the question of whether we are upholding our duty to protect public trust resources. Allowing or reopening this activity creates a pathway for expanded extraction that will further harm our environment. What we are looking at is a potential growth industry built on extraction.

We would be opening the door for a shared public resource to be extracted for private export, while the long-term costs to our environment, our communities, and our limited enforcement capacity are left for the people of Hawai'i to carry.

We cannot continue to stretch limited resources trying to manage an activity that increases pressure on an already fragile ecosystem. Choosing to reduce extraction pressure on our reefs is not extreme, it is choosing to be socially and ecologically responsible.

The commercial aquarium trade serves few, but healthy reefs serve all of Hawai'i. They feed our communities, support our cultural practices, and sustain the places where we learn, gather, and pass down knowledge.

Protecting the life that sustains our reefs is not just environmental work, it is protecting our communities and planning for the future.

Passing HB2101 SD1 is a commitment to that responsibility. It ensures that what we leave behind is still abundant, still functioning, and still alive.

I respectfully urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha'aha'a

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Keanu Binney-Medeiros". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Keanu Binney-Medeiros

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 3:04:42 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Garry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom it May Concern:

I strongly urge you to SUPPORT HB2101.

Hawaii's reef fish belong on our reef, not in aquariums. The aquarium trade is known for its blatant disregard of its effects on the health of the fish it captures and the reefs it exploits.

Since the 2017 ban on collection for the aquarium trade, an independent analysis of DAR's own data shows yellow tang populations has not recovered as biologically and historically expected.

Poaching and weak enforcement remain documented concerns. Our reefs face warming seas, bleaching events, sedimentation, and declining resilience. Removing thousands of herbivorous reef fish each year works against reef recovery, not for it.

It is our kuleana to malama the reefs, not sell out.

Respectfully,

Maureen Garry

Waikoloa Village

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 4:10:26 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Graham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2101 though I am saddened to see that the current Senate version does not apply to the Big Island. I am a resident of Hawi.

Protection of our land and waters should supercede any taking of marine life for a small economic benefit by a small number of individuals in Hawaii. The fact that the EIS for this activity was funded and undertaken by a mainland lobbying group only goes to verify that the economic benefit is not for Hawaii.

Fishing for food is valuable for our very sustenance. Aquariums are not.

Please use your common sense to see that unnecessary and substantial messing with our reef ecology is a bad idea.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 4:14:46 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Metzler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committees,

My name is Glenn Metzler and I live in Keaau on Hawaii Island. I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 4:27:41 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lory Ono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Lory Ono, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

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Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

No one *needs* an aquarium. It is unacceptable to subject our marine life to being captured and possibly caused to die simply for human beings who want to use them as decorations. They should not be pets, either. They should be allowed to live their lives as they were meant to be, in the ocean, not in homes or businesses.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Lory Ono

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 4:32:15 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 4:36:52 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tia pearson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Tia Pearson and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Tia Pearson

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 4:38:34 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bobby Camara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I share my **unequivocal strong SUPPORT** of the passage of **the BAN** of Commercial Collection of Aquarium Fish, **with an AMENDMENT to include ALL ISLANDS.**

A kama‘āina of Honoka‘a, Hāmākua, I first visited the coastal lands of Kekaha Wai ‘Ole, Kona ‘Ākau (North Kona), in 1972. I became entranced with the ‘āina and kai, and over decades developed deep aloha for those lands. Back then, one could choose what fish to have for dinner, or select which ‘opihi to pick and eat. Lamentably, those days are long gone.

More people forage for foods as our economy worsens.

‘Opihi are illegally gathered and sold to make money for family sustenance or to feed drug habits.

Increasing populations, road access, and access by boat add immense pressure to harvestable resources.

Social media encourages many to seek out formerly isolated places.

The thought of Community and Sharing, and leaving some for the future, seems to have fallen by the wayside.

Me, me, me, seems to be a common mantra.

We have nearly lost the spirit and feel of Aloha ‘Āina. We cannot let that happen.

We know that our dire economy drives many to find ways to support themselves. But, ravaging our reefs to collect fish for aquariums cannot be part of that "solution". Why not fund captive breeding programs?

We have witnessed recent storms send incredible amounts of runoff into our beloved ocean. Nearshore waters are brown with mud, the feces of untold numbers of ungulates, including deer, pigs, goats, cattle, and sheep, as well as pesticides and fertilizers. How dare we do that to our kai? More importantly for this matter at hand, removing herbivores such as lau‘īpala and kole upset the delicate balances inherent in healthy reef ecosystems. The addition

of tons of mud and fecal matter will likely add to growth of invasive limu, making herbivores all the more important and essential for reef health.

PLEASE, have the courage to stand up for Aloha Ke Kai as we all do for Aloha 'Āina! I pray for enlightened decision-making.

Mahalo, a me ke aloha,

Bobby Camara, Kea'au Hawai'i

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:00:14 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Schlaack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Nicole Schlaack, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

I learned about the recent activity to reopen the aquarium collection industry after its successful shut down by court order in 2017. It is irresponsible at this time of natural disasters and a fragile ecosystem for the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) preparing to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

I have seen Hawaiian water with few reef fish, and they are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Nicole Schlaack

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:13:11 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jay Penniman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I am Jay Penniman, I live in Hamakualoa, Ulumalu, on the island of Maui.

I fully support, with amendments, HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. **I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:**

Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain. Commercial aquarium fishing dramatically degrades our coral reef habitats with its extraction and exporting of millions of valuable public trust marine organisms for commercial sale. This commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy.

The majority of Hawai‘i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

The cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai‘i includes required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation: the cost of the industry to Hawai‘i far outweighs its benefits.

Please pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply *statewide and permanently*, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for your attention and action!

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:21:17 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Cates	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to this bill for the following reasons:

1) This bill removes the statutory authority and jurisdiction of DLNR to effectively manage the aquarium fishery. Permanently banning an entire fishery that has been closely monitored, regulated, and studied not only undermines the mission and purpose of DLNR, it is unnecessary. Pursuant to Act 49, BLNR has the authority to amend, repeal, or implement rules swiftly and surgically. If DAR scientists recommend updating rules for bag limits, seasonal closures, or moratoria on a specific fish species, BLNR can implement those changes through emergency rulemaking. The purpose of the legislature is to support and fund state agencies in order for Departments to carry out their statutory duties, not remove their authority to manage fisheries programatically.

2) The aquarium fishery on Oahu is in the middle of a new environmental review process pursuant to HEPA, which is required due to judicial rulings of the Supreme Court. The aquarium fishers on Oahu, required to submit the first EIS in 2018, were left with an environmental review that was terminated before completion. Judicial hearings delayed submission of a revised EIS, and the time limitation under new EIS rules (effective in 2019), prematurely ended years of effort.

To ban the fishery during an environmental review that is providing a comprehensive evaluation and informational document disclosing the environmental impacts of the fishery is premature and unnecessary. Let the environmental process continue to completion, keeping in mind that acceptance of the EIS does not mean the fishery will re-open. That decision is under the discretion of DLNR. If DLNR decides not to issue commercial aquarium permits, that will serve as a de facto ban upon the fishery anyway. The Department, and agencies within the department, have the knowledge, scientific data, skill, and experience to decide whether the fishery should open or not.

For these reasons, please defer this bill.

Mahalo,

Lisa Cates

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:25:12 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Bambara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support Bill HB2101 to ban commercial aquarium collection and make an amendment to REINSTATE the statewide ban from the original bill.

This isn't rocket science. We should not have to keep asking you over and over to protect our sea life and aina. Each time you have modified this bill to take out its guts to penalize and make it illegal to fish out our sea life for commercial enterprises,

Your constant changing and gutting the teeth of this bill shows you who don't support this bill are corrupted by lobbyist's persuasion to not protect our aina or, clearly, you'd just do the right thing and support this bill!

DO THE RIGHT THING and support this bill along with REINSTATING the statewide ban from the original bill!! Please REPRESENT us, THE PEOPLE of this State and the WILL OF, WE THE PEOPLE, WHO YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE REPRESENTING and who keep begging you to support this bill, rather than hedging for offshore businesses that want to profit by Commercial Aquarium Collection!!

Do the RIGHT THING. SUPPORT this Bill and put the guts of enforcement back into it!! It's really getting nauseating having to beg you folks, over and over again, to do the right thing!!!

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 5:26:55 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandee Yuen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which (an estimated 90%) die within a year after collection. In the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai‘i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawai'i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law.

Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Ultimately, the legislature as our elected branch of government has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

Hawai'i's reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Additionally, on-reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and healthy ecosystems and generate approximately \$1.2 billion annually in economic benefits – about a thousand times more than commercial aquarium collection which generates only \$1-2 million per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continent.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai'i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai'i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Brandee Yuen

Pearl city, Oahu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:02:50 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean Spencer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection.

I am requesting that the ban be amended to encompass the entire State of Hawaii and not just Oahu.

Mahalo,

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:20:31 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mathew Belcher, DVM	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: HB2101

Mathew Belcher –Resident of Kamuela, HI 96743

I am writing in strong support of HB2101

Removing herbivorous reef fish undermines reef resilience. The Aquarium Collection trade *does not support* a healthy reef fish population.

A healthy reef fish population is critical to me on an almost daily as a swimmer and diver. Adding my voice and action to protecting the herbivorous reef fish for current and future generations is my responsibility.

Stop the taking of marine life for commercial profit to be sold as pets or for ornamental display.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:21:05 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vivian S. Toellner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please **RETURN** this bill to what the House of Representatives sent over to the Senate: Protect Hawai'i County Reef life. The entire Hawai'i County Council passed Resolution 422-25 asking you to protect marine life, on January 23, 2026.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Hawai'i County Council, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Your Committee on Governmental Operations and External Affairs, to which was referred Resolution No. 422-25, reports as follows:

Resolution No. 422-25, transmitted by Council Members Holeka Goro Inaba and Michelle M. Galimba via Communication No. 656, dated December 4, 2025, urges the Hawai'i State Legislature to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life from state marine waters for commercial aquarium purposes.

Member Inaba shared that this resolution came about due to meeting with community members who have been working on this issue for over a decade. He said that aquatic life being harvested for commercial aquarium purposes is difficult to monitor and doesn't benefit our community. He mentioned that Representative Nicole Lowen will be introducing a bill in alignment with what this resolution urges and that he will also be following up with a County bill similar to what Maui County has done. Member Galimba added that this is a large issue in her district and that most people, beyond the small portion of those benefiting directly, are in agreement that this practice should be stopped.

Committee Members James E. Hustace, Rebecca Villegas, and Matt Kaneali'i-Kleinfelder spoke in favor of Resolution No. 422-25.

Committee Member Ashley L. Kierkiewicz requested that the introducers of this resolution notify the other members when this legislation is in process at the state level in the coming months so that they can mobilize their communities to send testimony in support of a ban on this extractive practice.

Your Committee on Governmental Operations and External Affairs is in accord with the purpose and intent of Resolution No. 422-25, and recommends its adoption.

Passed by ALL NINE - Hawai'i County Council Members: Galimba, Hustace, Inaba, Kagiwada, Kanealpi-Kleinfelder, Kierkiewicz, Kimball, Onishi and Villegas, on January 23, 2026.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:39:54 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Estigoy-Kahoonei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Julia Estigoy-Kaho'onei

Moku o Keawe

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:48:06 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronnie Tiner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Reef fish are not ornaments, they are living, breathing life forms just like humans. They do not belong in a tank to die and suffer. They belong in the ocean contributing to the circle of life. We need them in the ocean. They are a part of our ecosystem and are a part of the continuation of life on Earth and in the sea. They are also important to the native people of these islands.

I support the banning of commercial reef fishing.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:50:02 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Noritake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Wendy Noritake and I'm a resident of North Kohala, Hawaii Island. I support HB2101 and pass this bill to ban commercial aquarium collection and to make an amendment to REINSTATE THE STATEWIDE BAN from the original bill. This is horrible that Hawaii Island/County was excluded??!! It must be reinstated. The majority of residents of Hawaii State as well as Hawaii County want to ban this inhumane collecting of reef fish. It's time to hear the constituents and not special interests.

Thank you.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:02:56 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Gurewitsch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! I'm writing in impassioned, unconditional support of HB2101. Hawai'i needs a permanent, statewide ban commercial aquarium collection! My wife and I have been full-time Maui residents for 15 years. Weather permitting, we're in the ocean every day exploring the reef and its wildlife. We've been seeing a heart-breaking decline in fish stocks. Tourists on the beach are forever asking us, "What happened to all the fish?" Often, they've been here before--and they tell us that they won't be back, since our reefs are in such diminished shape. To support our economy, protecting our wildlife is VITAL. Also, it's just the right thing to do! Especially now that aquaculture farms fish that can thrive in aquariums, the practice of collecting wild specimens is totally absurd. Example: the seahorse farm on the Big Island breeds specimens that each food you can get in a pet store, Wild seahorses can't survive on commercially available food. So, when they are taken, they get delivered and die. What's the point? Our wildlife deserved to thrive! A few unscrupulous poachers get a windfall while destroying our aina. Support HB2101!

30 March 2026

Re: HB2101 HD1 SD1 Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Aloha e Committee Chair Keohokalole, Vice Chair Fukunaga, and Members of the Senate Committee of Commerce and Consumer Protection,

‘Ano‘ai e Committee Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

My name is U‘ilani Naipo, and I am in strong support of HB2101 HD1 SD1 and request an amendment to have a statewide scope.

I come from a long line of lawai‘a and konohiki of Kapalilua in South Kona, and today I serve as a co-manager with the State for the Miloli‘i Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area. Alongside many others in West Hawai‘i who steward our nearshore and marine ecosystems, I work as a marine advocate advancing place-based governance, traditional and customary practices, and the protection of our biocultural resources.

I strongly oppose commercial aquarium collection in our state waters, as it undermines the health of our nearshore ecosystems and the sustainability of our biocultural resources.

Impacts to Hawai‘i The continued degradation of Hawai‘i’s reefs represents a growing financial liability for our State. Coral reefs serve as natural infrastructure—protecting shorelines from erosion and storm surge, sustaining local fisheries, and supporting Hawai‘i’s visitor industry. When reefs are damaged by extractive and exploitative practices, these costs do not disappear; they are transferred to our communities through diminished fisheries, declining visitor experience, increased coastal erosion, and rising public expenditures for shoreline protection and ecosystem restoration.

Our State and its communities ultimately bear the expense, not the industries responsible for the impacts. Short-term private extraction creates long-term public debt.

Beyond these measurable financial losses are costs that cannot be quantified. Our reefs are foundational to Native Hawaiian culture, subsistence practices, education, and community identity. They are living ancestors, sources of food, knowledge, and connection between generations. The loss of reef health represents not only environmental decline but cultural erosion — impacts that no economic model can fully capture.

HB2101 HD1 SD1 recognizes that the true cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of protection. This measure moves Hawai'i toward responsible stewardship that values long-term resilience over short-term extraction.

A Cultural Perspective I was raised grounded in the values such as taking only what you will eat, mālama 'āina, and sustaining 'āina momona — an abundance that comes from a reciprocal relationship with our environment and stewardship. Commercial aquarium fishing was opened in 1953 under the false premise that reef fish had no purpose beyond looking pretty, despite their ecological and cultural importance.

Traditional lawai'a practices emphasize care for our 'ice box' and fishing to feed family and community, and when fish are sold, it is to feed people — not for ornamental trade. Removing reef fish for aquarium purposes conflicts with these values and with the principle of taking only what is appropriate.

Community observations and lived experiences reflect growing concern about our reef health and the impacts of extraction, including effects on tourism and healthy nearshore habitat. I believe that management decisions must reflect what is seen and experienced in the water, and not just the 'science'.

At its core, this perspective calls for responsible stewardship: to fish in ways that sustain food systems, protect reef health, and ensure abundance for future generations.

Hawai'i's Constitution Public Trust Doctrine Under Article XI, Section 1 of the Hawai'i State Constitution, the State has a constitutional obligation to manage natural resources pursuant to Hawai'i's Public Trust Doctrine. These resources are held in trust for the benefit of present and future generations and require the highest level of scrutiny when proposed for private commercial use.

Hawai'i's reef fish are among the most unique and fragile in the world. Many species exist nowhere else on Earth and play essential ecological roles that maintain reef health, biodiversity, and resilience. For decades, millions of fish have been removed from Hawai'i's reefs, disrupting the balance of already vulnerable marine ecosystems. The commercial aquarium trade further undermines these ecosystems at a time when reefs are under increasing stress from climate change, warming oceans, coral bleaching, invasive species, and land-based pollution.

- **Hierarchy of Use & Public Trust Duty**

Under a reasonable hierarchy of use, the health and long-term sustainability of public trust resources must remain the foremost consideration. Subsistence use and fishing for local food markets follow as a priority, consistent with sustainable

management practices. All other uses must be evaluated to ensure they do not impair the resource or diminish its availability to the public. Commercial aquarium fishing is an extractive activity that serves external commercial markets rather than the people of Hawai'i. It is inconsistent with the principles of mālama 'āina and mālama kai and with the State's public trust responsibilities, as it provides no meaningful public benefit while placing additional pressure on shared natural resources. It also works against the efforts of the Green Fee projects that are to monitor, evaluate, and restore our 'āina - to include our reefs. Commercial aquarium collection fails the State's obligations. As 2026 Legislation is about to invest millions of dollars into Green Fee projects that include coral restoration, we have this unsustainable practice commercial aquarium collection that must be terminated.

- **An Alternative to Harvest in the Wild**

The Ka Pa'akai Analysis requires evaluation of alternatives. A very viable alternative to aquarium fishing already exists – aquaculture. The lau'īpala (yellow tang) and Potter's angelfish, two of the most sought-after species in the aquarium trade, have both been successfully cultured in captivity, with yellow tang aquaculture established since 2017.

Investments made by the University of Hawai'i and Hawai'i Pacific University resulted in the successful captive breeding of species for the pet trade.

Rather than removing 100,000s of lau'īpala from already stressed reefs, along with over a thousand of endemic species Potter's Angelfish, aquaculture provides a sustainable alternative that avoids further depletion of public trust resources. In pursuing any for-profit activity, the State must prioritize its fiduciary and cultural responsibility to Hawai'i's 'āina and shared natural resources over privatized economic benefit.

Cost of the Fishery – The full public cost of managing this fishery has not been disclosed by the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) or DOCARE. A 2021 study estimated annual administrative, operational, compliance, and enforcement costs between \$300,000 and \$500,000 when the fishery was last active in 2017. Adjusted for current conditions, a realistic estimate today would likely exceed \$500,000 annually. This public expense would occur while collecting only approximately \$100 per permit, limited to seven permittees and a small number of safety divers, while commercial collectors and associated businesses may generate millions of dollars in gross revenue.

Public Opposition to Commercial Aquarium Collection Call for a Ban & BLNR Decision Making – Public opposition to commercial aquarium collection has been clear and consistent.

In October 2025, over 1,400 written testimonies were submitted, opposing the reopening of commercial aquarium fishing in a BLNR meeting.

In November 2025, the Hawaiian Civic Club of Hilo introduced a resolution calling for a ban on commercial aquarium collection in Hawai'i's waters, which was unanimously adopted by delegates at the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs Convention, representing more than 4,000 members.

Following this unified position, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs drafted similar legislation, and its Board of Trustees unanimously voted to include the measure in its 2026 Legislative Package.

In January 2026, the Hawai'i County Council unanimously voted to adopt Resolution 422-25, Urging the legislature to prohibit the take of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes.

'Aha Moku has also consistently testified in support of a ban at Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) hearings, representing 147 moku throughout the pae'āina.

Decision Making. In December 2023, the Board of Land and Natural Resources was petitioned by marine advocates to direct the DAR to initiate rulemaking to prohibit commercial aquarium fishing. The Board unanimously voted in support of the petitioners' request for a ban, contrary to DAR's recommendation. However, the Office of the Attorney General advised that a ban could not be implemented through administrative rule-making alone and requires legislation.

DLNR's lack of authority to implement a ban underscores the critical need for legislative action through HB2101 HD1 SD1. It will provide the clear authority and direction necessary to safeguard these cultural and natural public trust resources now and for future generations. However, in its current form, HB2101 HD1 SD1 requires an amendment to ensure meaningful statewide impact.

The Division of Aquatic Resources is proceeding this week, March 31–April 1, with public hearings on rules that would enable commercial aquarium fishing in West Hawai'i. We must act quickly. We urge you to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 and end commercial aquarium collection in Hawai'i immediately.

Since 1976, more than 8.6 million fish have been removed from Hawai'i's reefs for the commercial aquarium trade. Permitting the continued take of aquatic life effectively legalizes the privatization and exploitation of public trust reef fish resources for the benefit of a small number of operators, placing short-term commercial interests above the long-term sustainability of shared natural resources.

So how long, and what will it take — another paid-for EIS or one more collector — before we decide our reefs have taken enough? How can we justify allowing an extractive practice like this while we are investing so heavily in recovery and restoration? At a time when climate change, sea level rise, and failing wastewater systems already threaten our reefs, all hands on deck — and all fish on reefs!

This policy decision ultimately rests with the Legislature, and passage of HB2101 HD1 SD1 provides an urgent and effective path to establishing clear policy on this issue.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment for this to be statewide because all of Hawai'i Nei deserves this.

Mahalo,



U'ilani Naipo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:16:03 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

I SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Shay Chan Hodges

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:24:25 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jody Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

I SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS to reinstate a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

The aquarium trade was shut down by court order in 2017 after years of controversy and opposition from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, yet DAR is now poised to reopen West Hawai‘i under current law. This bill is the Legislature’s opportunity to make clear that Hawai‘i’s waters—now and in the future—should not be reopened to this industry anywhere in the state.

Limiting the ban to O‘ahu and making it temporary is insufficient. With West Hawai‘i facing imminent reopening, protections must be expanded statewide and made permanent.

Aquarium collection removes key herbivorous reef fish that maintain coral health. Past extraction—hundreds of thousands annually—degraded reefs, undermining food systems, cultural practices, and shoreline protection. At a time when coral reefs are already under severe stress, reopening this industry risks pushing ecosystems past recovery.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for lasting protections—not the return of harmful extractive practices. The Legislature should act decisively to reflect that will.

I respectfully urge you to strengthen this measure by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Jody Smith

Honolulu 96825

Aloha,

- My name is Janet Mercer and I'm a Maui] resident .
- I strongly support of HB2101 to permanently ban commercial aquarium collection.
- I ask you support HB210 and finally put an end to tropical fish collection anywhere in our state.

Mahalo,

Janet Mercer

MauuiMerer@gmail.com

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:36:50 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Herring	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu.

I am an avid snorkeler and actively participate in coral reef education through the ReefTeach program of the Kahalu‘u Bay Education Center on Hawaii island. In this day and age it is inconceivable that the collection of animals in the wild for the purpose of display in aquariums can be morally justified. The reef ecosystem which surrounds the Hawaiian islands is a vital part of life on the islands both for residents and tourists. We must do everything we can to help preserve this ecosystem both for ourselves and for future generations. Healthy and vibrant coral reefs around the Hawaiian islands also generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species. Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state and the tax payers. It simply makes absolutely no financial sense to support an industry which costs us, the tax payers, more to manage and regulate than it brings in in revenue.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Paul Herring

Kealakekua

HI 96750

Ban aquarium collecting in Hawai'i

I strongly support HB2101 HD1 SD1. I support a complete ban on aquarium fishing in Hawai'i. We are stewards of the lands and seas of Hawai'i and we need to protect ALL the flora and fauna of our 'aina and kai. Banning aquarium fishing will allow our reefs to flourish and thrive, not to just be sustainable. The flora and fauna of this 'aina belongs to everyone, not just a handful of greedy fisherman who will plunder our reefs just for a temporary gain. The cost to our 'aina is too high for just a few individuals. The price to monitor and enforce aquarium collecting is too high for the minimal reward. Please ban all aquarium collecting in Hawai'i waters. Mahalo.

Buffy Nakachi

Kailua Kona, HI

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:07:26 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Ashmore	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which (an estimated 90%) die within a year after collection. In the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state's food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai'i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawai'i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law.

Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Ultimately, the legislature as our elected branch of government has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

Hawai'i's reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Additionally, on-reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and healthy ecosystems and generate approximately \$1.2 billion annually in economic benefits – about a thousand times more than commercial aquarium collection which generates only \$1-2 million per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continent.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai‘i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai‘i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Justin

Mountain View, Hawaii Island

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:11:32 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Keali‘i Pang, Ph.D., and I reside in Kaimukī, Honolulu, O‘ahu. I am a retired federal biologist with 26 years of service at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office, with direct experience in Pacific island reef ecosystems, invasive species management, and conservation partnerships across the pae ‘āina. I hold a Ph.D. in Botanical Sciences from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

I SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS to reinstate the original statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

The commercial aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. That closure was not an accident — it was the result of sustained community opposition, scientific concern, and legal accountability. Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, conservation practitioners, and the broader public made clear that removing hundreds of thousands — if not millions — of reef fish annually for private commercial profit was incompatible with Hawai‘i’s public trust obligations and the ecological needs of our reefs.

The Division of Aquatic Resources is now poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed administrative rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is the Legislature’s opportunity to make the opposite clear in statute: that Hawai‘i’s nearshore waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across the island chain.

I appreciate the intent of the current draft, but limiting the ban to O‘ahu — and only temporarily — falls far short of what our reefs and communities need. The ecological case for a statewide, permanent prohibition is strong. Herbivorous reef fish, including lau‘īpala (yellow tang) and other species specifically targeted by collectors, are essential to coral reef function. They control algae that would otherwise outcompete coral, and their presence directly supports reef recovery from bleaching events and other stressors. When the aquarium industry was active in West Hawai‘i, its disproportionate removal of these species measurably undermined reef health, with cascading effects on shoreline protection, food systems, and cultural and subsistence practices that communities across the island chain depend on.

Coral reefs worldwide are under growing threat of irreversible collapse. Hawai'i's reefs are no exception. Against that backdrop, reopening a fishery with this documented history of harm is not a reasonable tradeoff. The Legislature has both the authority and the responsibility to act.

Communities across Hawai'i have consistently called for lasting protections of our nearshore waters. It is time for statute to reflect that clear and sustained public will. ***I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.***

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,
Keali'i Pang, Ph.D.
Kaimukī, Honolulu, O'ahu
Retired Federal Biologist

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS – HB2101 HD1 SD1

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Frederick Smith. I live in the Kealakekua ahupua'a in the Kona moku and am a graduate student at UH Hilo focused on marine science and policy. I **support HB2101 HD1 SD1**, provided that its geographic scope is amended to align with the Holomua Marine Initiative on Hawai'i Island.

As amended, the bill applies to counties with a population greater than five hundred thousand, effectively limiting it to O'ahu. Because aquarium collection has historically occurred primarily on Hawai'i Island rather than O'ahu, and rulemaking for aquarium collection is currently underway on Hawai'i Island, the bill is misaligned and will have no meaningful effect as written.

The bill also ties its prohibition to completion of rulemaking under the Holomua Marine Initiative in that county. The Holomua process will not even begin on O'ahu for several years, but it just started on Hawai'i Island.

To better align the bill with existing Department of Land and Natural Resources processes, the bill should apply where aquarium collection has historically occurred and where the Holomua process is currently active. The Division of Aquatic Resources is currently implementing the Holomua Marine Initiative on Hawai'i Island. I support this initiative as a strong, community-based approach to fisheries management, and it is important that legislative action align with, rather than conflict with, that process.

I respectfully recommend amending the bill to apply to Hawai'i Island, where commercial aquarium collection has historically occurred, until Holomua rulemaking is completed there. This ensures the bill has an immediate practical effect while aligning with the State's primary fisheries management process.

Proposed Amendment to HB2101 HD1 SD1, Section 2

§188- Harvesting aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes; prohibition. (a) No person shall harvest aquatic life from state marine waters for commercial aquarium purposes in counties with a population greater than 200,000 and less than 300,000. The department of land and natural resources shall not consider promulgating rules or issue permits for the harvest of aquatic life from state marine waters for commercial aquarium purposes until the department has promulgated rules pursuant to the Holomua marine initiative and chapter 91 for Hawaii Island.

A temporary application of this measure on Hawai'i Island until Holomua rulemaking is completed there represents the most aligned and reasonable approach. It ensures the bill has an immediate effect while respecting the State's ongoing management process.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Frederick Smith

Captain Cook, Hawaii Island

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:58:30 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary True	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have previously testified, but I would like to add, PLEASE, PERMANENTLY BAN COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION ON ALL ISLANDS, NOT JUST O'AHU! This is especially important to those of us on the Island of Hawaii.

Aloha and mahalo, Mary True, Pepekeo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 8:59:44 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith Graham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators:

I am Judy Graham of Waimea, Hawaii Island, and have lived in Hawaii over 50 years and participated in several EISs as well as testimony for BLNR hearings on aquarium collection. Please consider 3 points:

1. I understand this bill originated with action by the Hawaii County Council but somehow has now become restricted to Oahu. This isn't fair or honest at all.
2. Note that Oahu's reef life has been seriously depleted, but West Hawaii's reef has not. That's the reason you should kindly restore the original bill's application to West Hawaii.
3. You probably know that the DLNR's catch reports from fishers are on the honor system. But may not know how much each of these fish is worth. For example a few years ago an Achilles tang, one fish, was offered for \$250 by an Oahu wholesaler (this species is now not a permitted catch). Or a yellow tang, one fish, was for sale on the web for \$70. If the effective date of enactment of this bill is not very soon, isn't there possibility for a real scouring of the West Hawaii reef?

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 9:26:51 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elisabeth Sherman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 with amendments to strengthen & reinstate the original STATEWIDE ban on commercial aquarium collection & make it permanent. Our fish, reefs & ecosystems need our protection, not exploitation & destruction.

Mahalo,

Elisabeth Sherman

Kapa'au, HI

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 9:26:54 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kainalu Steward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public-trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which (an estimated 90%) die within a year of collection. In the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai‘i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawai‘i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated by state law.

Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Ultimately, the legislature, as our elected branch of government, has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

Hawai‘i’s reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Additionally, on-reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and healthy ecosystems and generate approximately \$1.2 billion annually in economic benefits – about a thousand times more than

commercial aquarium collection, which generates only \$1-2 million per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continent.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai‘i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai‘i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kainalu Steward

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 9:36:52 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
WILLIAM MIDDLETON	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB2101. Commercial export of Hawai'i reef resources is unacceptable. The resources are needed locally and also critical to the health of the entire ecosystem of Hawaii. I support a statewide ban on commercial aquarium harvest.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 9:51:43 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawaiohawaiki Anakalea-Kila	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kawaiohawaiki Anakalea-Kila

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:01:46 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rebecca Gonzalez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support 2101. Please ban this non sustainable short sighted industry on all the islands. The environmental challenges are great and exploitation of a finite resource is unnecessary and ignores the impact for future generations.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:02:52 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Momivee@gmail.com	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Ms Momi Kaleohano I am a resident, calling upon the world to be in strong support of HB2101 Permanently Banning commercial aquarium collection throughout Hawai'i Nei. Most of the residents in Hawai'i support this Ban statewide, and the readily accessible aquaculture now supplying the trade. We are able to seriously take measures Now to protect our ocean environment, we have lost Soo much of what is uniquely Hawaiian in Hawai'i? Please we implore you to take your place and support this bill. DAR is advancing a rule to reopen aquarium collection in West Hawai'i – meaning large-scale extraction could resume as soon as this summer.

At the same time:

- **Recent storms likely further damaged reefs** already stressed
- **DAR gutted the monitoring program comparing protected and collected reefs, eliminating the science needed to evaluate the fishery**
- West Hawai'i reefs **have not recovered as expected** since aquarium collection stopped in 2017
- Removing herbivorous reef fish **undermines reef resilience**
- Poaching remains widespread, with **“wild Hawai'i yellow tangs” openly sold online**

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:13:53 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Reese Liggett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is William Reese Liggett, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
William Reese Liggett

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhodes, Vice Chairs Fukanaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary,

I support HB 2101 HD1 SD1

But it's more than only Oahu, this should be statewide legislation. Especially in light of increased reef smothering sedimentation the recent storms have wrought on all our islands, we need more fish, not less fish.

My name is Lynn Ryan, Hawaii Island, Kailua Kona. I snorkel often with other respectful ocean loving people. We are part of the tourist dollars Hawaii appreciates. We see the decline in reef fish. Please support HB2101 and ban commercial reef fish collection statewide. Removing thousands of herbivorous reef fish each year stops reef recovery. We need our reefs to be healthy to offer resilience against warming seas, bleaching events, and ever increasing sedimentation, Reef fish monitoring has been drastically reduced. DOCARE officers spend valuable time policing fish extracting industry permittees.

It is time to stop allowing commercial reef fish collection and time to stop spending time and resources on an activity that is detrimental to the health of our state and an affront to native cultural values. The cost of the industry to Hawai'i far outweighs its benefits. Data shows that yellow tang populations have not yet recovered from the 2017 aquarium collection shutdown 8 years ago. Poaching cases and weak enforcement remain a documented concern. Fewer than of wild-caught fish live more than a year in hobby tanks, such a waste. We must protect our ocean wildlife.

Sincerely,
Lynn Ryan

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:48:09 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Dadds, PA-C	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members,

I strongly support HB 2101 HD1 SD1, which would prohibit the commercial collection of reef fish for the aquarium trade. Hawai'i's coral reefs are critical to water quality, marine ecosystems, and coastal protection. Removing reef fish for the aquarium trade harms reef resilience and the communities that depend on these resources.

I also urge you to expand this measure statewide, rather than limiting it to a county-based approach that primarily affects O'ahu.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:56:46 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bo Breda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Bo Breda, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Bo Breda

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 10:57:47 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Peter Wilson, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Peter Wilson

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 11:54:25 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Earl Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Earl J. Kim, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Earl J. Kim

Aloha mai,

I am writing in strong support of HB2101 HD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection statewide.

My name is 'Alohi Nakachi, I was born and raised on moku o Keawe but I now reside on the island of O'ahu as I moved here to pursue a PhD. I have obtained a PhD from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in the department of Natural Resources and Environmental management. In my PhD research I focused on cultural ecosystem services looking at how humans interact with and relate to our surrounding environments (Nakachi, 2024). My research focused on contemporary research fields such as environmental science, ecological economics, environmental psychology, and Indigenous research.

The aquarium trade has been a major driver in my pursuit of contemporary higher education. I have been in hearings on this issue since I was 5 years old and I have long felt that Native Hawaiian voices have not been well heard or included in contemporary management and 'ike Hawai'i is not well understood or acknowledged. As an Indigenous environmental scientist, the aquarium trade shows ecological, socio-economic, and cultural harms. The aquarium is a clear example that Native Hawaiian values and 'ike Hawai'i continue to be disregarded.

I conducted my master's degree studying the aquarium trade. I used the levels of conflict model (Draheim et al., 2015) in order to understand and look into why the aquarium trade has been such a contentious and long lasting conflict. The levels of conflict model has 3 levels to look at a conflict to understand what may constitute a conflict and how contentious it may be. The first tier is the dispute—observable, tangible, immediate expression of a conflict. In this case the aquarium trade being a positive or negative with collectors and proponents of the trade seeing the aquarium trade as a positive for themselves, their livelihoods, and perhaps Hawai'i. The opponents of the trade see the trade as a negative and see harms from the trade either from collectors and or/the trade as a whole. The next level is the underlying conflict or the history of unresolved disputes. Underlying conflicts exist when past interactions, decisions, or events leave the parties feeling dissatisfied, disrespected, or disempowered (Draheim et al., 2015). The final level is Identity-based, or deep-rooted, conflict. Identity-based conflict involves deeply held values, beliefs, or social-psychological needs that are fundamental to the identity of at least one of the parties involved in the conflict (Draheim et al., 2015). I will expand on the underlying and deep-rooted conflicts of the aquarium trade, beyond my masters research and the issues today and why this trade is so problematic and contentious.

Let us look at the underlying conflicts of the aquarium trade 1st) in the distrust and shown lack of enforcement and effective management from DLNR, 2nd) the lack of trust and harm from aquarium collectors, and 3rd) the lack of faith and harm from regulatory processes and bodies. Expanding on the lack of enforcement and effective management, it has been widely accepted for decades now that marine management entities have limited capabilities/capacity, management efforts are ineffective, and marine enforcement is lacking and fairly non-existent (Ayers, 2016; Ayers et al. 2018; Friedlander et al. 2014, 2010; Tissot et al. 2009). The fisheries of Hawai'i have greatly declined under state management due to limited funding and staffing as

well as an inadequacy of addressing place-based local social-ecological complexities (Ayers et al. 2018; Montgomery and Vaughan, 2018). The aquarium trade is commonly referred to as the “most regulated fishery in Hawai‘i”. It is true the aquarium trade likely has the most rules and management efforts placed on these fisheries. However, so many rules have been placed on this trade because it has been such a contentious issue raised in front of the legislature, DLNR/BLNR time and time again because of the shown harms and inacceptability of this fishery that does not feed. Despite having the most rules in place, opponents often do not feel these rules are adequate from the historic and proven ineffective management and the limited capacity of management and enforcement agencies (Ayers, 2016; Ayers et al. 2018; Friedlander et al. 2014, 2010; Tissot et al. 2009). Additionally there is a lack of trust and proven harms from aquarium collectors such as mass mortalities (as shown in the widespread image known to this community also featured in this article <https://www.thedodo.com/aquarium-trade-fish-2361244128.html>) and repeated poaching events (as described in: [West Hawai‘i Today](#) 2020, [Hawai‘i News Now](#) 2020, [Tribune Herald](#) 2020, [Maui Now](#) 2021). While perhaps a fishery with the most rules with lack of enforcement and limited management capabilities it is a far cry from effective management and “regulation”.

The aquarium trade also continues to be raised time and time again in legislative and management processes as these have continued to be perceived as inadequate and continue to dismiss Native Hawaiian voices and ‘ike Hawai‘i. I expand upon this further when discussing deep rooted and identity based conflicts. DAR recognized the harms and the impacts of the aquarium trade and pointed to the root of the conflict as a user conflict (Walsh, 2004). DAR employees and lead scientists took efforts to mitigate conflict and implement management efforts. Previously much of DAR efforts were tied to the perceived success of aquarium management efforts and their objectiveness was questioned by proponents as concerns continued to be raised of lack of inclusion of Native Hawaiian voices and concerns. The conflict surrounding the trade was perceived as a user conflict and by having closed areas this would mitigate conflict as users would be separate. However, data has shown that population recovery is variable with significant decline in open areas DLNR (2024) and opponents of the trade continued to raise up. With variable populations and continued declines concerns are still prevalent calling out the harms and the unsustainability of this fishery. Additionally, this conflict was perceived as a user conflict between tour operators and aquarium collectors which is inaccurate. The aquarium conflict remains contentious and pervasive because closures to separate conflict users is not inclusive and does not address the actual concerns and root of the conflict stemming from Native Hawaiian voices and cultural harms. In 2023, the BLNR unanimously voted to ban the aquarium trade as the EIS was rejected and they noted the clear cultural harms that were ongoing and the Cultural Impact Statement findings were completely inadequate and unacceptable as there was clear evidence of harm. However, a legal loophole about fine mesh nets held up the BLNR legally banning aquarium collection and it was suggested to go to the legislature to help combat that. The BLNR suggested DAR create rules with as close of a ban to support their findings of cultural harms. This trade legally has even been proven and shown in these processes to not be acceptable. However, the processes and hiccups continue to create obstacles and lack of faith in these processes continuing to serve the underlying harms of this conflict. Instead of creating a near ban, DAR then proposes rules

allowing hundreds of thousands of fish to be taken and food species included. While cultural harms have clearly been proven meanwhile rulemaking processes continue to ping pong and pass off responsibility for restrictions on aquarium collecting. BLNR passing it off to opponents to go to the legislature and the legislature saying it should be DAR/BLNR. Meanwhile the Native Hawaiian voice continues to feel diminished and dismissed contributing to the ongoing and historic unresolved conflicts and the deep rooted identity based conflict.

Expanding on the underlying conflicts we get into the deep-rooted and identity based conflicts. There is a continued lack of acknowledgement and inclusion of Native Hawaiian voices and values. This further contributes to environmental justice and social inequities. The aquarium trade directly conflicts and is incompatible with Native Hawaiian values and a Native Hawaiian worldview. To Native Hawaiians 'āina or the land, waters, and all native inhabitants are part of a reciprocal 'āina system to feed and be fed. In this 'āina system all are related with Native Hawaiians being the youngest in this familial system with land, water, elemental forces, and more than human inhabitants coming before us (Andrade, 2013; Kame'eleihiwa, 1992; Kikiloi, 2010; Kikiloi et al., 2017; Kurashima et al., 2018). This is commonly referred to in the literature kincentric worldview foundational to many Indigenous nations including Native Hawaiians (Hernandez, 2022; Osorio, 2018; Salmón, 2000; Topa and Narvaez, 2022). 'Āina or that which feeds is a reciprocal system in which people are also part of this 'āina system and reciprocal relationship to feed and be fed (Oliveira et al. 2017; Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). A practice that removes an inhabitant such as fish to not nourish 'āina and be taken out and removed entirely from the pae 'āina is unacceptable and should not be allowed. This practice, a fishery that does not feed should not even be considered a fishery especially from a Hawaiian perspective. Important in Native Hawaiian methodologies is to look at 'āina as our source and our kumu and mo'olelo as guidance for our learnings and practices (Oliveira et al. 2017, Osorio 2021). Our mo'olelo warn us to live in balance with 'āina and the repercussions greed and arrogance can have. A practice that removes a fish from 'āina to serve a luxury hobbyist industry where if that fish survives is then meant to serve its entire life in a tank strictly for human entertainment/decor seems to be an embodiment of human greed and arrogance our mo'olelo warn us of and is completely contradictory and incompatible with reciprocal 'āina systems and Native Hawaiian values.

In addition to being conflicting with Native Hawaiian values, there is also an underlying and identity based conflict that overlaps with the underlying conflict of historic mismanagement. I include it and expand upon this problem in this section because that historic and continued mismanagement stems from not including or understanding Native Hawaiian voices or 'ike Hawai'i in management processes. A lack of acknowledgement of Native Hawaiian values is problematic enough but when we dismiss Native Hawaiian voices and 'ike Hawai'i as not relevant or contributing to ecological understandings that presents further problems and conflicts. The cultural concern is not just a value based conflict but an ecological conflict as well. This is particularly pervasive as our environmental management entities should be using the best available science. This should include 'ike Hawai'i and social science. Without such we are missing and excluding a huge basis of understanding and moving further away from holistic and effective management. In this legislative session we have heard representatives from the

Department of Aquatic Resources referring to the Native Hawaiian voices as just contributing to the values based conversation of the aquarium trade. DAR does not have any social scientists or Indigenous science based positions. This lack of expertise in our management agencies and continued dismissal of concerns raised from Native Hawaiians and from social science data and sources contributes to Indigenous erasures and environmental injustices (Bacon, 2019; Darrah-Okike, 2020; Grandinetti, 2019; Hernandez, 2022; McGill et al., 2022; Parsons and Fisher, 2022). The concerns continued to be raised by proponents include ecological harms and data points that continue to be dismissed! To call this fishery sustainable and low impact is completely irresponsible. Even looking at just contemporary scientific fish surveys we do not see stable fish populations. Researchers showed that aquarium collection had significant negative ecological impacts with fish populations declining (Tissot and Hallacher, 2002; Walsh et al. 2004). The most recent DLNR report (DLNR, 2024) shows fish populations as variable by site and species with many species and sites still in decline or declining. Coupled with the ecological observation and 'ike Hawai'i continuously described in the many legislative and BLNR testimonies we have seen irreversible fish behavior and ecological changes that have never bounced back even with management efforts and regulations in place. Clear ecological and cultural harms have been shown and yet are seemingly not acknowledged or accepted.

The only way to resolve identity-based and deep rooted conflicts is through reconciliation. As long as the cultural harms continue to be dismissed, Native Hawaiian voices ignored, and 'ike Hawai'i not acknowledged or understood we will continue to have this conflict. With the deep-rooted and identity based conflict of the aquarium trade this also contributes to Indigenous erasures contributing to environmental injustices and social inequities. The injustice and inequities of this conflict is hugely concerning. Proponents of this trade are almost entirely non-Hawaiians that moved to Hawai'i for a lucrative exploitive practice. If you look at the opponents for this bill, the legislature lists: the Native Hawaiian Gathering Rights Association, Hawaii Tropical Fish, Hawaii Island Association of Aquarium Fishermen, and individuals. If you look at the proponents for this bill that the legislature lists that is: Hawaii County Council; Moana 'Ohana; Kai Kuleana; Earthjustice; Ho'āla Kealakekua Nui, Inc.; Tunningley Marine; Ko'olauupoko Hawaiian Civic Club; HULI PAC; Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce; Center for Biological Diversity; 'A'ole AQ Hui; Friends of Hanauma Bay; Sierra Club of Hawai'i; Pono Advocacy; Kalanihale; Sierra Club Hawai'i Island Group; Animal Rights Hawai'i; Big Island Reef Keepers Hui; Kihei Community Association; Ka Ohana O Na Pua; Kona Indivisible; Big Island Aviation, LLC; Hawaii Marine Education and Research Center; Kūpuna for the Mo'opana; Fair Wind Cruises; Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo; Free Access Coalition; Marine Genetics LLC; Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs; Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i; Hui Hoomalu i ka Aina; Puakō for Reefs; South Kohala Reef Alliance; Hawai'i Reef Ocean Coalition; FreediveSafe! Hawai'i; Shimanchu Mamuyaa; Hui Maka'āinana o Makana; Hawaii Organization for Progress and Equity; Biota Group; Surfrider Foundation, Hawai'i Region; Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force; Sea Paradise; Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club; Chamber of Sustainable Commerce; The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra; Hawaiian Humane Society; Conservation Council for Hawai'i; Kia'i Kanaloa; Activities and Attractions Association of Hawai'i; and numerous individuals. Those lists are telling enough. We have opponents of this bill that represent a small number of collectors and individuals involved in Hawai'i in the aquarium trade.

The aquarium trade only economically benefits those engaging in collecting and shipping fish, with the main economic benefits existing outside of the state as an estimated 95% of fish collected are sent out of state (Dierking, 2002; Schaar and Cox, 2021). Schaar and Cox also discuss the numerous social and economic costs held by the state and the people of Hawai'i from this trade. If you use NOAA numbers (NOAA, 2024) to use the max number of participants in the aquarium trade you have 90 individuals. Let's double that and add some to say with all collectors and wholesalers in Hawai'i the trade benefits and contributes to 200 individuals. That is 200 advocates compared to the thousands of individuals in the organizations, networks, and ahupua'a groups calling out to ban the trade. It is hugely concerning if our rule making entities and management authorities do not see the disparities of these groups and the contributions of this practice and these processes to inequities, environmental injustices, and cultural harms. Continue to hold these groups on an equal grounding and seeking for compromise when the inequities and disparities of this group are clear is a huge slap in the face to the People of Hawai'i urging a ban and to the Native Hawaiian groups and individuals that come out time and time again raising concerns and not feeling heard. Allowing a trade that exists nearly entirely out of the Pae 'āina, a fishery that does not feed, to continue is almost laughable at this point if it was not so disappointing.

As we face compounding and increasing ecological threats in Hawai'i, struggle to maintain 'āina systems and 'āina integrity, struggle to feed Hawai'i, and face increasing diaspora, removing fish from 'āina to support a hobbyist industry outside of the pae 'āina is completely unacceptable and disrespectful to continue this trade. The aquarium trade has shown clear ecological, socio-economic, and cultural harms. Let us do better to not continue to contribute to social inequities and environmental injustices. I support SB2078 and HB2101 and would urge you to ban the aquarium trade statewide.

Mahalo nui,
'Alohi Nakachi, PhD

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HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 1:44:56 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisette Akamine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. **I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.**

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which (an estimated 90%) die within a year after collection. In the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai‘i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawai‘i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law.

Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Ultimately, the legislature as our elected branch of government has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

Hawai‘i’s reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Additionally, on-reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and healthy ecosystems and generate approximately **\$1.2 billion** annually in economic benefits – *about a thousand times more* than commercial aquarium collection which generates only **\$1-2 million** per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continent.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai‘i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai‘i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to **pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Lisette Akamine

Kahalu‘u, O‘ahu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 2:05:50 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Napua Froman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keolokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with the amendments HB2101 HB1 SB1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply statewide and permanently. Here are my reasons:

Commercial aquarium collection goes against Hawai'i's constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale - most of which die within the first year after collection. In the wild , these species can live live 30-40 years.

This commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of Our reef systems, undermined the state's food security and climate resilience and degraded a cornerstone of Our tourism-based economy. The majority of Hawaii residents and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

On- reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and HEALTHY ecosystems and generate about \$1.2 Billion annually in economic benefits whereas the commercial aquarium collection industry generates a mere \$1-\$2 million annually.

We need to protect Our fish that protect the reefs that protect Our home.

I respectfully urge the Committees to PASS HB2101 HB1 SB1 with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and PERMANENTLY.

Ua mau ke ea o ka aina I ka Pono

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Napua Froman

Hau'ula, O'ahu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 4:47:00 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawika Ruddle	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection & Judiciary

RE: HB2101 HD1 SD1 – Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kawika Ruddle, and I am testifying in strong support of HB2101 HD1 SD1.

I submit this testimony both as a small business operator and on behalf of my ohana from Moku o Keawe. My family and I have operated an ocean-based business on the Kohala Coast for over 40 years. Our livelihood depends entirely on healthy reefs, and we carry a deep kuleana to malama i ke kai.

This measure represents a clear and necessary policy decision grounded in Hawaii’s constitutional obligations and public trust responsibilities. Hawaii’s coral reef ecosystems are not private commodities—they are public trust resources that must be managed for the benefit of present and future generations.

HB2101 appropriately provides a ban on commercial aquarium collection while the State completes the Holomua marine initiative and associated rulemaking. This is a measured and legally sound approach that ensures resource protection while allowing for future, science-based management decisions.

Importantly, the bill is carefully structured and narrowly tailored. It does not prohibit:

- Captive breeding and aquaculture activities
- Scientific, educational, or management-based collection
- Traditional and customary practices
- Lawful fishing for food or bait

By preserving these uses, the measure balances conservation with cultural, subsistence, and economic considerations, while clearly distinguishing between public trust uses and commercial extraction for export.

From both a legal and practical standpoint, clarity is essential. A statewide ban provides a clear, enforceable standard for DLNR and DOCARE. Without that clarity, enforcement becomes more difficult, and illegal take continues to place strain on limited state resources.

Even during periods when aquarium collection has not been permitted, poaching has persisted. This demonstrates that enforcement challenges already exist, and reopening or maintaining a framework for commercial extraction would only increase that burden.

At the same time, this measure supports a more sustainable economic pathway. Captive breeding and land-based aquaculture are explicitly allowed and represent a forward-looking alternative that can create local jobs, reduce pressure on wild reef systems, and align with Hawai'i's long-term economic and environmental goals.

Healthy reefs also support a much broader economic network, including ocean tourism, local businesses, cultural practices, and subsistence fishing. Protecting reef ecosystems is not only an environmental priority, it is an economic and community necessity.

While I strongly support the measure as drafted, I respectfully urge the Legislature to recognize that the need for protection of Hawaii's reef ecosystems is not limited to a single county. Reef systems across all islands face similar pressures from climate change, overuse, and declining ecological resilience.

For this reason, I encourage the Legislature to view this measure as an important first step toward a consistent, statewide policy that provides long-term clarity and protection for Hawaii's marine resources. A fragmented, county-based approach creates inconsistency in management and enforcement, while reef ecosystems themselves do not adhere to jurisdictional boundaries.

In addition, while the linkage to the Holomua marine initiative provides a pathway for future rulemaking, it is critical that long-term protections remain in place beyond that process. Hawaii's reefs require enduring stewardship grounded in public trust responsibility and intergenerational care, not temporary protections that may be revisited or reversed.

Ultimately, HB2101 provides the legal clarity, enforceability, and policy direction needed to uphold Hawaii's public trust obligations while allowing for thoughtful, future management through the Holomua process.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo,
Francis Ruddle & Kawika Ruddle
President & Vice President, Mauna Lani Sea Adventures, Inc.
For the Ruddle Ohana

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 5:18:26 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannine Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu.

My ancestors were lawai‘a (fishermen and women) and kālai wa‘a (canoe-builders) from Kapāilua (Kona Hema) since 1777. My father was a lawai‘a from Miloli‘i and I spent many summers growing up there. The beauty of the fish and reefs near Miloli‘i were incomparable then. Many in my ‘ohana still live a life deeply connected to the land and sea and believe we should protect our ocean resources. It's my understanding that the aquarium fish collectors have caused significant reductions in the abundance of fish and their destructive fishing practices destroyed reefs all along the Kona coast. Hawaiians have a saying, “Ke ike a ka lawai‘a he na ka ‘upena.” (The knowledge of the fisherman is absorbed by the net.) Just like the ‘upena (fish net) which the Hawaiian people meticulously maintained to flourish and prosper, we need protect our coral reefs and ecosystems that support our cultural and subsistence practices. Allowing commercial aquarium fishing diminishes the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef system and flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good rather than private gain. In addition, the aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life, the vast majority of which die within a year after collection, for private primarily out of state profit.

E ola ke kai, e ola kākou (as the ocean thrives, so do we.) No laila, please kōkua and help protect and preserve the valuable ocean resources we have left so that our keiki and mo‘opuna will be able to fish like our kūpuna and pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted. Mahalo.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 5:19:46 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cynthia Harbert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e

Please implement this bill for the health of the ocean, the life forms that live in and around our precious waters, as well as perpetuate of aloha 'āina.

Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 5:35:39 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Middleton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I remember growing up seeing yellow tangs color the water gold, they were so plentiful. Now there are barely any. We need to stop collection for the aquarium industry, it is not sustainable and wasteful at the same time as many fish die in transport. Please protect our reef fish. Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 5:35:39 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Middleton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I remember growing up seeing yellow tangs color the water gold, they were so plentiful. Now there are barely any. We need to stop collection for the aquarium industry, it is not sustainable and wasteful at the same time as many fish die in transport. Please protect our reef fish. Mahalo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 7:05:33 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pamela Small	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 31, 2026

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2101

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Pamela Small, and I am a resident of Kawaihae on Hawaii Island. I am writing today to express my heartfelt support for HB2101 which originally proposed to BAN aquarium collection activities within the entire state of Hawaii. **IT HAS BEEN AMENDED TO EXCLUDE EVERY ISLAND BUT OAHU. PLEASE AMEND IT BACK TO INCLUDE THE ISLAND OF HAWAII AND THE REST OF THE STATE.**

We have been in a yo-yo situation concerning commercial aquarium collection for over a decade and it is time to put a stop to the exploitation of our precious coral reefs and aquatic life for good.

As a scuba diver and boater, I have been watching the quality of Hawaii's coral reefs deteriorate since I was young. The number of reef fish has been horribly depleted by, and for, the profit of a few local collectors and aquarium keepers on the mainland. There are entire dive sites and portions of the coast that are riddled with algae that the herbivore fish would have eaten if they were still in the ocean in large numbers. Yellow Tang, once a prolific herbivore in Hawaii waters, are so depleted that I sometimes only see two or three on a dive when I used to swim among a beautiful sea of yellow.

With ongoing climate change causing stronger storms, algae blooms, and rising ocean temperatures, the health of the sea has never been more important. A healthy ocean equals a healthier planet. All species in the sea work symbiotically. Remove or deplete one key species and the entire ecosystem suffers or collapses.

The ocean is Hawaii's most precious resource. Surfing, canoeing, paddle boarding, diving, snorkeling, boating, and fishing are cornerstones of Hawaiian life and culture. **The state has a**

public trust obligation to protect natural resources for present and future generations. This is your opportunity to honor that obligation by supporting and passing HB2101.

Additionally, I would like to suggest that Hawaii not only ban commercial aquarium collection, but it is of the utmost importance to implement rigorous enforcement, monthly reef fish monitoring, and severe penalties for poachers (including significant fines, jail time for repeat offenders, and boat seizure).

You have the power to have an influence on the health and survival of Hawaii's reef fish and the overall health of the ocean. I beg you to please do the right thing and pass HB2101. As previously mentioned, a complete ban on collection is the best option for Hawaii's reefs and ocean health, but there need to be swift and severe penalties for those who break the aquarium collection laws.

Mahalo,

Pamela Small

Kawaihae, HI

SUBJECT: Testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB2101 SD1 - Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection**

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees on Commerce & Consumer Protection and Judiciary,

My name is Kēhau Springer, and I am a kanaka ʻōiwi practitioner and researcher residing in Keaʻau, Moku o Keawe. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB2101 SD1**, with a critical recommendation to amend the measure to restore a **statewide prohibition on commercial aquarium collection**, as originally introduced.

This issue is not only regulatory, but about the conditions needed to restore ʻāina momona—abundance that sustains our communities and future generations. The question before you is whether the commercial extraction of reef fish for ornamental export is an activity that should be permitted at all under Hawaiʻi law. After years of sustained community concern from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the commercial aquarium collection was halted by court order in 2017 and has remained largely inactive for nearly a decade. Despite this, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is now advancing administrative rules to reopen this fishery. This underscores the need for legislative clarity. While agencies may regulate how an activity operates, only the Legislature can determine whether that activity should be allowed at all.

As many community organization and stewardship networks have expressed, this rulemaking process is moving ahead of meaningful, place-based planning and risks undermining community-driven efforts such as the Holomua Marine Initiative. This creates a contradiction within the system: a slow, community-paced approach to stewardship on one hand, and the potential for renewed extraction on the other. Resolving this contradiction requires legislative action.

Regulatory Clarity and Efficient Use of State Resources:

Continuing to develop and defend a permitting framework for a highly contested and currently inactive industry—comprising only seven permittees on Hawaiʻi Island— is an inefficient use of public resources. The State has already expended significant time and funding on environmental review, litigation, and rulemaking processes related to this extractive ornamental fishery. HB2101 SD1 provides an opportunity to resolve this longstanding uncertainty and allow agencies to redirect limited capacity toward higher-priority needs including fisheries restoration and community based stewardship that supports long term abundance.

Legal Authority, Consistency, and Statewide Application:

While HB2101 SD1 is an important step forward, its limitation to specific counties introduces regulatory inconsistency. Marine waters are held in trust by the State of Hawaiʻi for the benefit of all people. A county-based prohibition creates a fragmented framework, where the same activity is permitted in some areas and prohibited in others—raising concerns around equal application of public trust responsibilities, enforcement complexity, and administrative burden. Hawaiʻi Island has long been the primary target of commercial aquarium collection, and communities in West Hawaiʻi have consistently opposed this practice for decades. Any legislative solution must, at a minimum, include Hawaiʻi Island, and ideally restore a statewide prohibition that reflects the scale of both impact and responsibility. If the Legislature finds that commercial aquarium collection is inconsistent with Hawaiʻi's ecological and cultural values, then that finding should apply uniformly across ALL islands—not selectively by county.

Timing, Process, and Legislative Responsibility

DAR is currently advancing the Holomua Marine Initiative on Hawai'i Island anticipated in 2027, followed by O'ahu and Kaua'i thereafter. This reflects DAR's approach of moving at the pace of the community through place-based, incremental processes. While this approach is appropriate for community-based stewardship, it is not designed to resolve immediate, statewide policy questions. At the same time, DAR is moving forward with rulemaking to reopen the aquarium collection. This creates a contradiction within the same system: a slow, community-paced process on one hand, and the potential for renewed extraction on the other.

This is precisely why legislative action is needed. The question of whether commercial aquarium collection should be allowed at all cannot be resolved through incremental programmatic processes or administrative rulemaking. It requires a clear statutory determination. HB2101 SD1 provides that pathway. Unlike agency processes, the Legislature has the authority to establish immediate, statewide policy direction and bring finality to an issue that has remained unresolved for decades.

Constitutional Alignment and Risk Reduction

The Hawai'i State Constitution affirms that natural resources are held in trust for present and future generations (Article XI, Section 1) and protects Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices (Article XII, Section 7). The framework established in *Ka Pa'akai o ka 'Āina v. Land Use Commission* (2000) further requires agencies to assess impacts and protect these practices in decision-making.

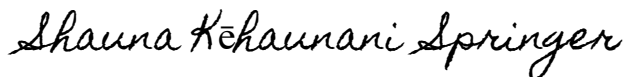
From a Kanaka 'ōiwi perspective, these fish are not merely "resources." Through the lens of the Kumulipo, they are part of our genealogical relationships—our kin, our teachers, and our ancestors. The removal of these i'a for ornamental purposes disrupts not only ecological balance, but cultural relationships and responsibilities that have been maintained for generations. A partial, county-based prohibition does not fully uphold these constitutional and cultural obligations. A statewide standard better aligns with the State's duty to mālama these relationships and protect the practices that depend on them.

A Necessary Legislative Determination

For decades, this issue has cycled through administrative processes, litigation, and repeated legislative attempts without resolution. HB2101 SD1 provides an opportunity to bring clarity and finality. The question before this body is not how to better regulate commercial aquarium collection, but whether it should be allowed to continue at all.

Mahalo nui to this committee for advancing HB2101 SD1. I respectfully urge you to **PASS this measure WITH AMENDMENTS to restore a statewide prohibition**, ensuring clarity, consistency, and alignment with Hawai'i's constitutional, cultural, and ecological responsibilities. Mahalo for your consideration.

Na'u



na Shauna Kēhaunani Springer
Kea'au, Moku o Keawe, Hawai'i
Founder & Executive Director, Ka Pa'akai Consulting
Member of Nā Kai 'Ewalu
PhD Candidate, Te Whare Wānaga o Waikato (The University of Waikato)

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 7:19:28 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Geoffrey Collins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Friends,

Please pass HB2101 with an ammendment to include Hawai'i Island. I have been snorkeling west Hawai'i waters for 26 years. In that time, I have seen a significant decline in reef health. There are less fish. More algae covers the reefs, preventing coral from being able to take root. Coral bleaching events have been severe and caused widespread destruction. By taking more fish, particularly herbivores off of the reef, this will only contribute to the poor health of the reefs. I beg you to please advance this measure and to please amend it to add Hawai'i Island to it. Thank you for your time and for all that you do.

Geoff Collins

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 7:40:24 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Priscilla Stuckey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chairs and Members of the Committees,

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. This was its original intention.

I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

- **To Protect Targeted Communities:** Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for someone else's profit—likely someone who doesn't live here. Taking fish from local reefs harms the ability of local fishers to provide for their families.
- **To Ensure Reef Health:** Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue. Already so much fish diversity has been lost that people are not enjoying the experience they could enjoy even a decade ago. Reefs protect shorelines and provide food. Banning commercial aquarium collection protects our priceless reefs, which are the foundation of people's health. We have a responsibility to pass on a healthy reef system to our children and their children. If we wreck our reefs we can't just manufacture new ones. It's the fish who help create and maintain the reef, and we need the fish present to keep our reefs and shorelines healthy and vibrant.
- **To Reduce Regulatory Costs:** Clearly banning commercial aquarium collection would make enforcing the collection laws simpler and cheaper. A simple ban is better than a quota system, because a quota system needs a lot of attention and resources, and it benefits a small number of takers.

The fish are critical to our reefs. Please pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban on collection for aquariums statewide and permanently, as it was originally drafted.

Mahalo,
Priscilla Stuckey, PhD, Kihei

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 7:52:34 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Long	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs, et al.,

I stand in strong support of bill HB2101 HD1 SD1. As one born to kanaka maoli and Hawaiian Kingdom nationals, I oppose the collecting and sale of our natural national resources, namely, our reef fish, for private collecting and sale for profit. To allow such is an egregious breach of trust.

Let us safeguard our waters and our natural resources. We, as a small island nation, cannot compete with the unnatural and effectively, greedy demand for 'pet' reef fish. Most of which fish don't survive the unnatural and controlled, confined aquariums for private use environments.

I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo,

James Long

Naalehu, HI 96772

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 7:57:21 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isabel Hanalea Riethbrock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members,

I strongly support HB 2101 HD1 SD1, which would prohibit the commercial collection of reef fish for the aquarium trade. Hawai'i's coral reefs are critical to water quality, marine ecosystems, and coastal protection. Removing reef fish for the aquarium trade harms reef resilience and the communities that depend on these resources.

I also urge you to expand this measure statewide, rather than limiting it to a county-based approach that primarily affects O'ahu.

Mahalo for your consideration.



Testimony of SUPPORT
HB2101 HD1 SD1
Mar. 31. 2026

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Taha'a H. Kahele, I am a lineal descendant of Miloli'i, one of the last fishing villages on the island of Hawai'i (Moku O Keawe). I come before you all in **testimony in Strong Support of House Bill 2101 HD1 SD1 Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection** which prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes—regardless of collection method—in counties with populations between 200,000 and 300,000. This measure directly protects the reefs and marine resources of Hawai'i County (our Big Island) while preserving important exemptions.

HB2101 simply codifies into permanent law the status quo that has existed since the aquarium trade was shut down by court order in 2017. For nearly a decade, Hawai'i's nearshore waters have been free from the commercial removal of hundreds of thousands to millions of reef fish each year. These fish—especially herbivorous species like yellow tangs, kole, and others—are essential to coral reef health. They keep algae in check, protect corals from overgrowth, and support the entire marine food web that our reefs, shoreline protection, and local fisheries depend on.

It does **not** ban all collection—it stops only the commercial pet-trade harvest that treats our public trust resources as inventory for the global aquarium industry.

As a lineal descendant of Miloli'i who regularly enjoys our nearshore waters for diving, fishing, and simply being in nature, I have seen firsthand how healthy reefs benefit our community, our visitors, and our kama'āina way of life. Reopening commercial aquarium collection would once again prioritize corporate profits over reef resilience, especially in West Hawai'i where collection pressure was historically heaviest. At a time when our reefs already face coral bleaching, ocean acidification, pollution, and overfishing for food, we cannot afford to divert the Division of Aquatic Resources' limited staff and budget toward regulating an industry that has no place in modern Hawai'i.



KAHELE

Testimony of SUPPORT
HB2101 HD1 SD1
Mar. 31. 2026

HB2101 frees DAR to focus on what truly matters: climate adaptation, marine protected areas, sustainable fisheries, and reef restoration. It also honors the overwhelming support from the majority of Hawai'i residents and the Board of Land and Natural Resources for a permanent ban.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB2101 without weakening amendments and send it forward for final passage. Our reefs, our fish, our culture, and our future generations deserve nothing less.

I would like to leave you all with this *'Olelo No'eau* that I constantly reminisce on. ***"He Ali'i Ka 'Aina He Kauwa Ke Kanaka."*** (The land is a chief and man is its servant).

Mahalo for allowing me to present this testimony,

Me ka pomaikai a me ke aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Taha'a H. Kahele', is written in a cursive style.

Taha'a H. Kahele

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:12:41 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Saxony Charlot	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to support HB2101, which aims to ban commercial aquarium collection and reinstate the statewide ban from the original bill.

Many of Hawai'i's native fishes and marine life have faced significant population declines in the modern age, with aquarium fishing having a demonstrated impact. Pressures on Hawai'i's reef ecosystems are already dire from climate change, pollution, invasive species, and coral bleaching, and should not be compounded by commercial pressures. The aquarium trade depletes important fishes and marine life that positively regulate reefs, and their mass removal is a detriment to entire systems, not just the species collected.

Please support HB2101 and keep commercial interests out of Hawai'i's already degraded reefs.

Aloha,

Saxony Charlot

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:22:43 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laila Moire-Selvage	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Laila Moire-Selvage, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Laila Moire-Selvage (96771)

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:31:35 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Cuthbert	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for taking my testimony. I am submitting my HB2101 HD1 SD1 testimony as 'comments' only. I would prefer to be able to strongly Support or strongly Oppose the bill but the arguments on both sides are compelling.

I have read all of the testimony on SB2996 (the Hawai'i State Senate version). I have also read an abstract of the paper, The future for Hawai'i's marine aquarium fishery: A cost benefit analysis compared to an environmental impact assessment, Siena I. Schaar, Linda Cox. I have read other papers and articles on this subject. Some of these are objective while others are biased.

At this time I am of the opinion that harvesting aquatic wildlife for commercial aquarium purposes should be carefully managed rather than outright banned.

David Cuthbert, Pahoa

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:42:31 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kapiolani Spencer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary,

My name is Kapi‘olani Spencer, a lineal and cultural descendant of these islands, and I am writing in strong support with amendments for HB2101 HD1 SD1 relating to the prohibition of commercial aquarium collection. I have also been actively supporting the protection of reef ecosystems and advocating against commercial aquarium harvesting practices in our communities.

While I support the intent of this bill, I respectfully urge the Committee to restore the measure to a permanent, statewide ban, rather than limiting its application to O‘ahu or making it temporary.

Our nearshore reefs are not simply ecosystems. They are our kitchen, our classroom, and our inheritance. For generations, Kānaka Maoli have relied on these resources for sustenance, cultural practices, and intergenerational knowledge. The removal of reef species for commercial export disrupts not only ecological balance, but also our relationship to ‘āina and kai.

Commercial aquarium collection is geographically targeted, and West Hawai‘i has long been one of the most heavily impacted regions. This targeted extraction has reduced populations of key herbivorous fish, disrupted reef resilience, and placed additional strain on already stressed ecosystems. Communities in these areas, including cultural practitioners, have consistently opposed the reopening of this industry.

Under Hawai‘i’s public trust doctrine, our natural resources are to be protected for the benefit of the people, not for private commercial gain. The aquarium trade extracts public trust resources, exports them for profit, and leaves the environmental and cultural cost behind. This is not pono.

Commercial aquarium collection has effectively been halted since 2017 pending environmental review. During this time, our reefs have had an opportunity to recover, and communities have adapted without reliance on this industry. Reopening aquarium collection, especially in West Hawai‘i, would reverse that progress.

This industry benefits a small number of operators while requiring significant DOCARE enforcement resources. It diverts attention from more pressing issues such as illegal fishing,

invasive species, and reef degradation. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i’s reefs support food security, cultural practice, and a tourism economy valued in the billions.

A partial or temporary ban is not enough. We must ensure consistency across the pae ‘āina, prevent shifting pressure from one island to another, and protect all communities equally.

As a lineal descendant, I carry kuleana to protect our natural resources for future generations. Our reefs are living systems that sustain us. They are not commodities.

He ali‘i ka ‘āina, he kauwā ke kanaka.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS and restore the ban to be STATEWIDE and PERMANENT.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kapi‘olani Spencer

Kailua-Kona, Hawai‘i Island

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:57:46 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
C.Yamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support. Please pass this bill to ban commercial aquarium collection and make an amendment to reinstate the statewide ban.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:01:27 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Humphrey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This permanent ban on aquarium collecting **MUST** include the entire state. Protect all our reefs.

Mahalo

Ann Humphrey

Hawai'i County

March 31, 2026

Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection & Committee on Judiciary
Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Re: Testimony in support of HB2101

My name is Kaikea Nakachi and I **strongly support HB2101.**

I submitted testimony supporting this bill when it was heard on 3/24 by the HWN-WLA committees, 3/1 by FIN committee, 2/18 by EEP-WAL, and I submitted testimony supporting SB2078 on 2/18 and 2/26, and in support of SB2996 on 2/9. I submitted testimony at the beginning of this year to the county council where they unanimously approved and adopted Resolution No. 422-25 urging the state legislature to prohibit commercial aquarium collection. Last year I joined dozens of communities and over 1300 individuals from across the pae'āina to urge the BLNR to not move forward with a permit process for commercial aquarium collection. In 2024 I supported the resolution sent to BLNR for administrative rules to ban commercial aquarium collection. I detail the many reasons why I believe this industry needs to end below, but will start by urging the committee on commerce and consumer protection and the committee on judiciary to please honor the voices of the people of Hawai'i. Please **pass HB2101** and please **amend it to at minimum include Hawai'i Island in the ban in perpetuity**, since it is at the most risk for impact by this industry trying to start up again, despite continued illegal poaching. However, the best decision to uphold the public trust resources of Hawai'i and increase reef health for resilience in the face of climate change and to improve fishing for every other type of ocean user is to **amend HB2101 back to its original scope and intent: a statewide ban on commercial aquarium collection.**

As a kanaka maoli who holds a master's degree in tropical conservation biology and environmental science and bachelor's degree in biological oceanography, I have both the mo'okū'auhau containing generational knowledge of pono and sustainable practices in Hawai'i, as well as the academic background of western research and management. It allows me clarity in seeing how wrong this industry is, and that it should never have been allowed to begin with.

Cultural Impacts

I participated in the cultural impact statement (CIS) conducted by the industry as part of their environmental impact statement (EIS). My entire 'ohana, including my grandpa who has since passed away, were interviewed. Along with dozens of other West Hawaii families, we gave them pages and pages of 'ike directly explaining the kānaka 'ōiwi values and practices that are impacted by the aquarium industry. The CIS presented to the state for the West Hawai'i EIS was copy and pasted from the earlier O'ahu CIS and EIS (which did not pass), and simply said "no impact to Hawaiian culture." All of our voices were ignored and placed outside of the report in an appendix. The first submittal of the West Hawai'i EIS was unanimously rejected. I had hope then that DLNR was seeing the harms of this industry. The second submittal of the EIS was barely changed yet passed by default after a 3-3 deadlock, and none of our concerns of the cultural impacts were ever addressed, with the CIS continuing to state "no impact to Hawaiian culture."

I have heard many attempts to define the aquarium collection industry as “sustainable” over the years, most of them voiced by foreign-born collectors. Here in Hawai‘i we have a unique and incredible definition of sustainable that is just as much of a lifestyle as it is a benefit to every animal in Hawai‘i, including us humans. This definition of sustainable is the cultural practice of reciprocity by lovingly taking care of your home and its resources to achieve ‘āina momona, where the environment is able to produce so much abundance that our human needs can be met from the generated excess. Conversely, a definition of sustainable as the maximum amount of fish that can be killed or removed and still sustain a population is unacceptable and just as dangerous to our culture and way of life as it is to the resources that feed it. Not only does this false idea of sustainability ensure that ‘āina momona can never be achieved and all of the cultural practices associated with it impossible to do, but it also directly takes away from the health and wellbeing of subsistence Native Hawaiian fishermen while simultaneously increasing the burden on them to lovingly take care of the resources being so heavily impacted by others. Enacting a statewide ban on commercial aquairum collection in Hawai‘i empowers Native Hawaiian resource stewards and gives us a fair chance to foster ‘āina momona and utilize our traditions to benefit all marine life in Hawai‘i, including humans.

This is especially important now, as we face unprecedented global threats of climate change, coral bleaching, and ocean acidification, we cannot afford to overfish our local ocean. I will always support what our kūpuna taught us: reciprocal practices to steward healthy marine resources that allow sustainable subsistence fishing.

Ecological Impacts

Our reef wildlife face unprecedented impacts that are only getting worse. Increased storms and associated damage due to climate change, coral bleaching, pollution, sea level rise, ocean acidification, nutrient loading, habitat destruction, and trophic cascades all threaten our reef wildlife in Hawai‘i. Overharvest is one of the few impacts we can directly control. The state of Hawai‘i understands the need to protect wildlife and has even proposed protections to protect herbivorous fish with the intent to prevent over harvest and maintain their ecosystem services. Prohibiting the commercial collection of reef wildlife accomplishes this intent and is a prime example of us to controlling the most direct human-induced negative impact on our marine life in Hawai‘i.

The precautionary principle policy is used to develop laws for a healthier and more just Hawai‘i by looking at a wide variety of alternatives and the best available science to select the option that presents the least potential threat to the state’s natural systems. The best available science shows that places with community-led management have higher fish biomass than even fully protected areas without community-led management ([Friedlander et al. 2013](#)). Part of this is due to the prohibiting of aquarium collection by communities in their managed areas. Our best available science also shows the various and dangerous declines in the entire ecosystems and in species targeted and in areas open to aquarium collection (The large majority of West Hawai‘i was open to aquarium collection and found to have the lowest total fish biomass, lowest herbivore biomass, least amount of juvenile lau‘īpala, lowest coral cover, and highest algal cover in West Hawai‘i in 2003, 2017, and most years in between – [Gove et al. 2019](#)). Finally, the best available science is also developing methods for captive breeding. This method could provide more jobs than a mere handful of collectors while also preventing wild fish from being removed from our reefs.

According to the precautionary principle policy, the state should be focused on expanding captive breeding and prohibiting collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium industry, since it is the alternative with the least potential threat to the state's natural systems.

A study from [2003 by Tissot & Hallacher](#) found that there was a significant difference between the abundance of aquarium fishes between paired adjacent control (no aq collection allowed) and collection sites, but no differences in nonaquarium species. 7 of the 10 fishes targeted by the aq trade were significantly lower in abundance in areas subjected to collecting than in areas where collecting was prohibited. While describing the impacts seen in the study, the authors also noted a personal communication with DAR aquatic biologist Bill Walsh where Walsh said "both the breaking of coral and the use of bleach to collect aquarium fish have been observed in Hawaii although they are prohibited by law." The authors warned that large scale removal of herbivorous fishes can alter reef community structure. 4 fish herbivores (which include yellow tang and potters angelfish which are being proposed for take in West Hawai'i) account for 61% of the herbivores at the control sites. Those 4 species were reduced in overall mean abundance by 32% at the collection sites. The authors stated that in 2003 that monthly reports were not being compared with actual catches and therefore had no assurances that they were accurate.

Enforcement

The proposal by DAR for commercial aq collection in West Hawai'i continues this glaring issue by not requiring confirmation or verification of catch numbers. Despite "white lists" and court ordered moratoriums, we have continued to see collectors illegally collect. The only times these poaching events were caught were when community members worked closely with DOCARE to report. Simple online searches will show rare and endemic species for sale in North America, despite them not being allowed to be fished for because of the white list and supreme court moratorium. Yet we are still considering a legal pathway for them to collect again, while they illegally take. The proposed annual catch limits come from historic catch records which came from volunteer catch reporting. The only safeguard in DARs proposed rules is to make sure catch reports match fish wholesaler numbers. But if there is no one from DAR or DOCARE physically checking fish at any of these stages, then it does not matter. The fisher and the wholesaler are making money, both have reasons to lie. And both work closely together to catch and move fish to make money. It will be incredibly easy for them to ensure their numbers "match" even if the number of fish they catch and move are more than what is allowed. I gurantee that is what will happen, and they will profit off the destruction of our reefs. Native Hawaiian subsistence fishers will dispropotionally feel these impacts. Which is why the best decision is to end this trade. It is much easier for 7 fishers to be absorbed into other areas of the Hawai'i workforce than to force every other fisher, community member, native Hawaiian, visitor, and industry to live with the impacts caused by a handful of aquarium fishers.

Communities have been instrumental in helping DOCARE enforce rules in the past and nearly all of the poaching incidents in the last 8 years were only caught because of communities watching out for resources. Even now, a collector that was caught has fled the state and has a warrant out for his arrest. He left two women stranded with their catch and they were forced to swim ashore and seek aid from a gas station, still in their wetsuits. <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2020/09/17/breaking-news/state-officers-arrest-big-isleaquarium-collector-after-bizarre-kona-incident/>

The head of DAR, Brian Nielsen, was quoted in 2020 after that incident “Illegal collection of aquarium fish in West Hawaii is turning into a persistent problem... this is the third arrest that we’ve seen associated with illegal aquarium harvest in West Hawaii just this year which indicates this is a larger problem the department’s going to need to deal with.” Well to me the best way to deal with this is banning this harmful industry and the increasing penalties and enforcement to ensure poaching does not occur. It is also easier to enforce a rule banning commercial aquarium trade than it would be to regulate an annual catch limit. There will be no way for the state to ensure they are only catching and shipping out the allowed amount, and if the past is any indication, they will not report accurate numbers so that they will be able to continue business.

If communities volunteering time with understaffed DOCARE are struggling to enforce rules now, how can we expect a legal framework to be enforced? It will only open pandora's box and fishers will go right back to their business of extracting as many fish as they can.

Economic Impacts

The hierarchy of priorities policy for the DLNR regarding commercial activities in state waters ranks the conservation of the resource as the highest priority. If, and only if, the commercial activity can be done in a way that does not unduly damage the resource, should it be allowed. If so, then the next priority is for the use/activity of the general public. A commercial activity should only be considered if it does not impinge on the resource or use by the general public. Every fish that is removed from the reef by aquarium collectors is a fish that cannot contribute to conserve its own population, a fish that cannot fulfil its role in its ecosystem either as an herbivore or prey item, and is a fish that cannot be seen or fished for by Native Hawaiian subsistence fishers or any other member of the general public. Now multiply that impact by the hundreds of thousands and up to the millions of fish that are removed by aquarium fishers and it is evident that this commercial industry greatly impinges on the resource as well as the use by the general public. A rule to prohibit collection of reef wildlife for the aquarium industry will righteously restore the highest priority, which is to conserve the resource.

The commercial aquarium fishers have shown us year after year their true colors. Whether by poaching, or by their actions in these hearings. They often use their one minute of testimony to belittle and insult legislators, BLNR members, or the native Hawaiians who are trying to protect their ancestral shores from the impacts of their industry. They also make it very apparent what their values are. They continue to ignore cultural concerns over their methods, and they focus entirely on numbers and prices. This is particularly apparent in their recent testimony for SB2996 using DAR’s population estimate for yellow tang in West Hawaii to estimate the total amount of money they are worth (which was something like \$180 billion). I cannot stress enough how dangerous this mindset is, when public trust resources and being viewed only as dollar signs. When 2078 was heard in WLA on 2/18, it was added to amend HRS § 188-31 to clarify BLNR has the power to ban the industry. This removes the excuse given when the AG interceded in 2023 when BLNR unanimously voted to accept the resolution to initiate rulemaking to ban commercial aquarium collection. Immediately after WLA passed the bill with those amendments, the fisheries program manager from DAR notified us that the 7 aquarium collectors who are trying to fish again in West Hawaii saw the writing on the wall that they might get banned and wanted their permits to be bought out. We are trying to end the aquarium trade because it is bad for everyone else in Hawaii, and the aquarium fishers are willing to impact everyone else if it means they can make

money. Even as their trade is being banned they are seeking every dime they can get from our islands and our people.

I hope the committees do not fall for their outcry that a small handful of fishers will be out of jobs. When the impacts of those handful of fishers is felt by every other user group. Their take impacts subsistence fishers, other commercial fishers, recreational fishers, and all the tourism operators. The other fishers always claim we are going to come for them next, but that has never been the case. I advocate for sustainable subsistence fishing. And the AQ trade is not that. In west Hawaii those 7 fishers wouldn't have been here if DLNR had listened to these communities sooner.

Native Hawaiian Community Voices

Native Hawaiian communities in West Hawai'i have been instrumental in upholding the mission of DAR and DLNR, often while having to actually oppose and go against the very efforts of those divisions. While Act 306 from 1998 created the West Hawai'i Regional Fisheries Management Area to instruct DAR to protect a percentage of the coast from this very fishery, the Fish Replenishment Areas were not designated until Native Hawaiian communities took charge and called for their ancestral shores to be protected. Act 306 also called on DAR to create areas of no take. For nearly 20 years DAR did not act. I am proud to say one of the communities I am a part of took action in 2016 and was able to pass the Ka'ūpūlehu Marine Reserve as a 10-year no take zone. That ends this year, and remains the only no take zone despite Act 306 approaching 30 years of being in effect. This pattern of DAR not adequately protecting Hawai'i and its public trust resources and Native Hawaiian legacy is troubling, particularly because it not only continues, but it has gotten worse.

There are thousands of Native Hawaiian community members from West Hawai'i who vehemently oppose them starting up again. The Hawai'i County Council unanimously passed a resolution supporting legislation to end the aquarium trade. Every Hawaiian Civic Club passed a resolution supporting a ban on aquarium fishing. Please listen to us and help us.

I urge these committees to please **pass HB2101**, and help protect our ocean from the greed of this industry. Please amend HB2101 to add Hawai'i Island back to the ban, and restore the original scope and intent of HB2101 to be a statewide ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo nui,
Kaikea Nakachi

References

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HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:05:22 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Conall K. Ravenscraft	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ano ai ke aloha Senators, Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs, and members of the CPN/JDC committees

Please allow this letter to affirm testimony for myself Conall Kahaka'ioikamālie Ravenscraft, lineal descendant of Napoopoo, Kealakekua, HI and Director of Field Operations and Interpretation for Hoala Kealakekua Nui Inc., voicing STRONG SUPPORT for HB 2101 HD1, which '*Prohibits the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection, in counties with a population greater than 200,000 and less than 300,000*'. Furthermore I strongly urge the committee to adopt and pass the original language of HB 2101 which calls for *statewide* protection against commercial collection.

If I may offer the credentials to my stance on this matter, I am a Hawaiian cultural practitioner, historian, and an academic informant on traditional ecological knowledge, as well as a second generation SCUBA diver who recently attended scientific research diver certification through the American Academy of Underwater Sciences.

In prior testimony submitted within the House committees, and as recently noted in FIN committee by House Representative District 5 Jeanne Kapela, I addressed concerns for commercial Aquatic life collection and reasons to support a bill prohibiting collection of Aquatic life on three fronts, including:

1. Align with the DLNR's Hierarchy of Use policy:

a. Natural and cultural resources: The highest priority is the conservation and protection of Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources. Commercial or public activities cannot be allowed if they would cause undue damage to these resources.

b. Public access and activity: Second in the hierarchy is access for the general public, provided that it does not damage natural and cultural resources. If restrictions on access become necessary, they will be applied to commercial users before the general public.

c. Commercial activity: The lowest priority is commercial activity. It is only permitted if it does not damage resources or compromise general public use.

2. Align with the Sate of Hawaii's Public Trust Doctrine:

The Hawai'i Supreme Court described the public trust doctrine as “the right of the people to have the waters protected for their use [which] demands adequate provision for traditional and customary Hawaiian rights, wildlife, maintenance of ecological balance and scenic beauty, and the preservation and enhancement of the waters...” “For the benefit of present and future generations, the State and its political subdivisions shall conserve and protect Hawaii’s natural beauty and all natural resources, including land, water, air, minerals and energy sources, and shall promote the development and utilization of these resources in a manner consistent with their conservation and in furtherance of the self-sufficiency of the State. All public natural resources are held in trust by the State for the benefit of the people.

3. Align with the mission statement of the State of Hawaii Department of Aquatic Resources to:

'Work with the people of Hawai'i to manage, conserve and restore the state's unique aquatic resources and ecosystems for present and future generations'.

The aforementioned concerns present evidence to reason why legally the proposed fishery violates the state's own policy meant to protect its constituents and the resources we depend on. However, the issue at hand stems deeper than policy decisions, and the threat of ecological collapse is not dramatic theatrics but a reality our communities are already experiencing.

The industry considers our view an assault on its existence, which is fundamentally untrue, ours is a fight against the method, not the industry, it is at the caveat of compromise that these two modalities find themselves clashing. We are not asking the industry to cease existing, we are informing it and our agency partners within the state of Hawaii of the need for this industry to adapt and evolve its practices and standards to align with our ecology and our community - because they are one and the same - because the fishery, as currently proposed, places our ecosystems at the undeniable risk of irreparable loss.

The practice of *lawai'a* – traditional fisheries management – by our native Hawaiian ancestors is a practice rooted in generations of Traditional Ecological Knowledge, a keystone of which is the practice of cultivation. Our ancestor's practice was not simply '*take only what you need*', it was a practice of '*take only what you can cultivate*'. That is to say, resources could only be extracted if and in a manner by which they could also be replenished. Lawai'a is not “fisherman” or “collector of fish”. It is *lawa-i'a* “enough-fish” “an abundance of fish”. Lawai'a was not the practice of collecting fish, it was ensuring there was an abundance of fish for generations to come. The fishing itself was a celebration of the practice, of community, and of the accomplishment of abundance. Ours was not a nomadic civilization of hunter-gatherers fighting to survive, it was a civilization of cultivators.

At Kealakekua Bay we bring in 700+ years of Traditional Ecological Knowledge into the work we do with Hawaii State Parks, DAR, and our working group's community and organizational partners.

And 700+ years does not just amount to lofty ideals and clever acronyms for state sponsored programs; programs are performative, the benefit of 700+ years of knowledge requires adaptation on a fundamental level. And a method for true integration of adaptive management

exists and has existed for generations and is called **Hanai Ko'a**. Hanai Ko'a is the routine feeding and maintenance of traditional fishing grounds and serves as the most crucial regenerative element in the practice of lawai'a, a practice that all forms of commercial fishing have eliminated and alienated themselves from. Hana'i Ko'a is the *compromise* because it offers true solutions to this issue all of us were born into.

On the floor of the recent joint HWN/WLA committee, I testified that the mentality '*take only what you need*' was not the deep-rooted tradition of lawai'a but rather "a response to the post-colonial extraction our people experienced" again, the true practice of lawai'a is "take only what you can cultivate". From 1904 to 1919 the Waikiki Aquarium – then known as the Honolulu Aquarium – was established and operated as a subsidiary of the Honolulu Rapid Transit and Land Company – now known as TheBus – and was primarily stocked by 'local fishermen' for its first 15 years of existence before becoming an institution of the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Despite its important role in scientific research and its efforts in coral conservation, the Aquarium opened initially as a draw for tourism in Waikiki and paved the way for extractive practices of Aquatic life collection in Hawaiian waters, creating an industry which relied on traditional knowledge and skill and yet used it to suffer tremendous impacts on our reefs including the degradation and depletion of essential reef species and their natural habitat. In a stark case of irony, the Potter's Angelfish – named for the Aquarium's first director Fredrick Potter – has become one of the industry's high ticket items for commercial sellers, averaging \$150-\$200 per specimen, and requires breaking and/or damaging coral structures to collect due to its natural habit of nesting and inhabiting inner-reef crevices.

The current proposed rules for this fishery offer arbitrary catch limits based on outdated research and largely unmanageable regulations that the state's own enforcement agencies currently struggle to uphold. The true compromise we are seeking is not catch limits or blacklisted species, it is a fundamental shift in practice from extractive, ecologically destructive means, to a regenerative, ecologically beneficial practice of cultivation that promotes abundance and supports human use and consumption without depleting our ecosystems.

Hanai Ko'a and ***Kanawai Kihoiho'i*** hold the key to sustainable, adaptive fisheries management. Our community-based conservation management efforts at Hoala Kealakekua Nui Inc. are rooted in this philosophy, practice, and methodology. The *Billion-Dollar* Aquatic Collection Industry has a tremendous capability and potential to participate in regenerative practices and support efforts for the ecological benefit of not just its own industry but the community on which the industry depends for its *product*. Again, the industry's *product* is a vital element in our collective, community ecosystem. If an industry is going to extract a resource from our community, it needs to prove to the community that it can and will – through strategically defined planning and action – support the cultivation of these same resources.

An industry which only serves to extract resources, especially those as crucial and fundamental to the ecological health and balance of our waters, without clear evidence of effort to replenish said resources - especially when clear methods to do so already exist and are currently in practice - must not be allowed to violate the public trust doctrine, the responsibilities of the State of Hawaii, DLNR, and DAR, and the traditional and customary rights of the native Hawaiian people.

I appreciate your time, attention, and consideration on this most important of matters.

Me ke aloha haahaa.

Nou no ka pono,

C. Kahaka'io Ravenscraft

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:15:51 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Ma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am Angel Seery writing in from Hawai'i Island, and I am in strong support of HB2101, which permanently bans commercial aquarium collection. I also ask that the board reinstate the original statewide ban of aquarium fish collection by amending this bill.

Aquarium fish collection is an extractive practice that benefits only a few collectors. Any argument that this ban is impacting lively hoods are grossly exaggerated as this industry has been closed for the last decade. Furthermore, the abundance in fish population that DAR argues can sustain such an extractive practice is significantly due to the grassroots organizations that are working tirelessly to protect their 'āina. As our reefs at higher risk than ever from environmental harm with bleaching events, sedimentation and reduced ability to recover after such events, it is necessary that we keep our herbivores on the reef.

I urge you not to undermine the work of our coastline protectors and strive towards an 'āina momona. Listen to the overwhelming testimonies that are in **support** of HB2101 with the amendment to reinstate a statewide ban on commercial aquarium fish collecting.

Mahalo for your time,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angel L. Seery".

Angel Seery

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:21:08 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Pinto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge strong support for HB2101. This bill is urgently needed to protect our reefs and fishes. All our islands' reefs should be protected from harm by the aquarium trade. Fish on the reefs have tremendous value and should not be hunted, removed from their home and cruelly confined and shipped off to an early death. They are critically important to the health and survival of the reefs. Our reefs are already suffering the effects of runoff pollution, global warming, and other threats that increasingly put them on the brink of survival. Many people pay a lot of money to snorkel and dive our reefs. They have other choices of places to go and maintaining the health of our reefs is critical to our ecosystem, our enjoyment of the reefs and to the tourism economy. It is morally and economically wrong to sell off our ecosystem to the aquarium trade. Please vote in support of HB2101.

Mahalo,

Erin Pinto

Maui

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:21:42 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffany Bruno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Tiffany Bruno. As an avid freediver, I've seen firsthand how essential healthy fish populations are to the balance and resilience of our reefs. For this reason, I am writing in strong support of HB2101. Our reefs are already under significant stress from climate change, pollution, and overuse. Removing key species—especially herbivorous fish that help control algae—further weakens reef health and resilience and ultimately causes long-term harm. Healthy reefs are vital to Hawai'i's future. They support biodiversity, protect our shorelines, sustain local food systems, and are deeply connected to Native Hawaiian cultural values such as mālama 'āina and kuleana. Allowing continued extraction of reef wildlife for global trade is inconsistent with these principles of stewardship and long-term sustainability. HB2101 helps ensure lasting protections while still allowing for traditional practices, food gathering, and scientific research. While I recognize that some rely on this industry economically, the long-term health of our reefs and communities must come first. A thriving reef ecosystem provides far greater and more sustainable benefits for Hawai'i than the removal of reef wildlife for commercial gain. Mahalo for your consideration. Sincerely,

Tiffany Bruno

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:25:51 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Trevor Atkins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB 2101 UNAMENDED. Making this bill temporary and O‘ahu specific is not solving the problem. On Hawai‘i Island, people fly in to dive and poach and raid our reefs. The little fish feed the big fish. Our ecosystem is collapsing. Our collective food supply supercedes profit for a few poachers. We still have fish because we protect them. If you are not helping to protect them, you are an enemy of the people and the environment. Change the bill back to its original intent.

Mahalo!

Trevor

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:26:23 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suparna Vashisht	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HB 2101 HD1 SD1, which would prohibit the commercial collection of reef fish for the aquarium trade. Reef fish are vital for the health of coral reefs and Hawai'i's coral reefs are critical to water quality, marine ecosystems, and coastal protection. Removing reef fish for the aquarium trade harms reef resilience and the communities that depend on these resources.

I also urge you to expand this measure statewide, rather than limiting it to a county-based approach that primarily affects O'ahu.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:27:02 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kumella Aiu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kumella (Meli) Aiu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:28:52 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter S Berezney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection, and that the ban be amended to apply – as it was originally proposed – on all the islands and that the ban be permanent, and not temporary and only on the island of O‘ahu.

Support a permanent ban for collecting reef fish for aquarium sales on all the islands of Hawaii .

Protect the entire reef ecology throughout Hawaii and practice common sense sustainability taking only what one needs. No one needs to collect aquarium fish. In the event that this is their primary source of income than they will need to find another job as this activity is illegal and contradicts the values of the people of Hawaii.

Mahalo ,

Peter S Berezney

Waimea, Hawaii

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:47:32 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorenn Walker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

I strongly support HB2101 HD1 SD1 with one critical amendment: restore the ban to apply **statewide and permanently**, as originally drafted, not temporarily and only on O'ahu.

Protecting Reef Communities Commercial aquarium collection strips vital species from reef ecosystems for export and captivity, with measurable impacts on fish densities in targeted areas. Affected communities have consistently demanded closure. The Counties of Hawai'i and Maui, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and multiple Neighborhood Boards have all called on the Legislature to act.

Protecting Our Economic Foundation Healthy reefs generate over \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide irreplaceable shoreline protection and food security. A permanent statewide ban protects this foundation and ensures herbivorous species critical to reef health stay on the reef, for future generations.

Reducing State Costs The current quota-based permit system in West Hawai'i locks out new entrants while requiring intensive enforcement that pulls DOCARE officers from other vital duties. A clear prohibition simplifies enforcement and stops directing limited state resources toward a handful of industry participants.

I urge the Committees to please pass HB2101, HD1, SD1 amended to restore the original statewide, permanent ban.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:49:00 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kilihea Inaba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My apologies for this late testimony.

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

This testimony is in strong support of HB2101 HD1 SD1 with amendments to ban commercial aquarium collection. I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for many reasons:

I am a kanaka of the ahupuaa of Kaloko, Kona on Hawai‘i island. In my short time of existence, I have witnessed the change of our fish and aqua life populations here in Kona. It is imperative that we not allow the further removal of species in our waters.

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai‘i’s marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai‘i is

sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kilihea Inaba

Kaloko, Kona, Hawai'i

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:55:13 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Falinski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I SUPPORT this bill in my personal capacity. I am a resident of Liliha on O'ahu, yet live on Hawaii island. I would recommend making sure to include Hawaii island in the revisions - as this is where the industry is located.

Kim

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 10:10:45 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanoë Morishige	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Kanoë‘ulalani Morishige. I am a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi marine biologist, an Assistant Professor at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and I have spent over 15 years working alongside communities across Hawai‘i to monitor, understand, and care for our nearshore ecosystems. I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT of HB2101 SD1** and in strong support of a **statewide ban on the aquarium (AQ) fishery**.

From both a scientific and ‘ike kūpuna perspective, the aquarium fishery is fundamentally extractive to the ecosystems that our communities and future generations depend upon. Reef fish—particularly the herbivorous species targeted by the aquarium trade—are critical to maintaining coral reef resilience. They regulate algal growth, support reef recovery, and sustain the ecological balance necessary for healthy nearshore systems. The removal of these species at commercial scales directly undermines these functions and contributes to reef degradation.

Beyond ecological impacts, these species are also integral to Native Hawaiian subsistence practices, cultural relationships, and ‘ike systems. Our nearshore resources are not commodities—they are part of reciprocal relationships that sustain ‘ohana, communities, and ‘ike passed down through generations. The aquarium trade, whose sole purpose is to generate profit from the export of live reef fish for ornamental use, stands in direct conflict with these values.

Historically, the aquarium industry removed hundreds of thousands of reef fish annually from Hawai‘i’s waters. This level of extraction disproportionately impacted certain regions, particularly West Hawai‘i, and contributed to long-term ecological and social consequences. The court-ordered shutdown in 2017 reflected not only legal deficiencies, but also widespread community concern and opposition. Since then, communities and researchers alike have worked toward rebuilding abundance and strengthening place-based stewardship.

It is deeply concerning that the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is now moving forward with rulemaking that could reopen this industry. At a time when Hawai‘i faces urgent challenges—including reef decline, climate change, and increasing pressure on nearshore fisheries—state resources should be directed toward strengthening co-stewardship, community-based management, and long-term ecosystem resilience. Diverting limited funding and capacity

toward reviving a controversial and extractive industry is not only misaligned with these priorities, but actively undermines them.

The State of Hawai‘i has a kuleana to protect public trust resources for the benefit of present and future generations. A statewide ban on the aquarium fishery affirms this responsibility and provides clear direction that our marine resources should not be exploited for short-term economic gain at the expense of ecological integrity and community well-being.

Accordingly, I respectfully and strongly urge the Committees to **PASS this measure** and amend it to establish a **permanent, statewide ban on the aquarium fishery in Hawai‘i. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.**

Sincerely,

Kanoe‘ulalani Morishige, Ph.D.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 10:25:01 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Nakata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support HB2101 and pass this bill to ban aquarium collection and make amendments to remove the human population stipulation and reinstate the statewide ban from the original bill.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 10:51:55 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jotis Russell-Christian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Jotis Russell-Christian

Kapahulu, O'ahu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:01:54 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne Lorenzo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Anne M. Lorenzo, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Anne M. Lorenzo

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:05:03 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and I am writing in stron support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

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A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai‘i’s marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai‘i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which

essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Member

Hawai‘i Workers Center Board Member

Clean Elections Hawai‘i Member

Honolulu Tenants Union Member

350 Hawai‘i Member

Carbon Cashback Hawai‘i Member

Hawai‘i Tax Fairness Coalition Member

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:18:44 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
arleen velasco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB2101. As an ocean swimmer, I have witnessed a drastic reduction in the beautiful and colorful fish in the waters surrounding Oahu over the past 20 years. Our marine life and coral reefs urgently need protection.

Please safeguard this precious resource—it not only sustains our ecosystems, but also helps protect our shoreline, property, and the livelihoods of all people living in Hawaii.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:29:11 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elena Bryant	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, and Committee Members,

I am in strong support of HB2101, HD1, SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. I am a lifelong resident born and raised in Ko'olaupoko. I come from a long line of Kānaka Maoli commercial and subsistence food fishers. Our livelihood depends on the health of our reef ecosystems and on a healthy and thriving fish population.

While the bill in its current form bans collection in some communities, I strongly urge your committees to amend HB2101, HD1, SD1 to include a ban on commercial aquarium collection statewide.

This bill, in its current form, temporarily bans commercial aquarium collection on the Island of O'ahu pending completion of the Holomua process. The scientific data suggests, and DAR does not dispute, that O'ahu's herbivore populations are in peril. Commercial aquarium collection threatens to remove hundreds of thousands of herbivores from O'ahu's coral reef ecosystems and DAR has failed to put forward any data on how it plans to measure the impacts of commercial aquarium collection on O'ahu. Moreover, O'ahu has minimal protected areas that would be closed to commercial aquarium collection.

When collection rates in Kāne'ōhe Bay skyrocketed in 2019 and 2020, numerous organizations in our community have had robust discussions about this destructive trade and have decided that commercial aquarium collection is not consistent with our community values and priorities. Some of the Ko'olaupoko organizations that have passed resolutions seeking a legislative ban on commercial aquarium collection include the Kāne'ōhe Bay Regional Council, Kāne'ōhe Neighborhood Board, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, Ko'olau Foundation, Kahalu'u Neighborhood Board, Kailua Neighborhood Board, Waimānalo Neighborhood Board, as well as the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, which represent the voices of nearly 4,000 members.

While this bill is a step in the right direction, I strongly urge this committee to amend HB 2101, HD1, SD1 to include a ban on commercial aquarium collection statewide. Closing commercial aquarium collection in one community will just direct collection pressure to other communities. Moreover, DAR leadership has already acknowledged that it does not have the resources to staff on-the-ground enforcement officers. Instead, its enforcement plan relies entirely on reviewing the self-reported catch reports from collectors. This is not pono management.

I strongly urge your committees to stand with the thousands of residents in our community seeking a legislative ban on commercial aquarium collection and pass HB 2101, HD1, SD1 with amendments to include a permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection statewide.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Elena Bryant

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:32:13 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am testifying in support of HB2101 with amendments. I believe that there should be a STATEWIDE ban on the aquarium trade. I agree with the Legislature that in this time of climate change West Hawaii's waters (in fact the entire state's waters) should not be open to the aquarium trade. I believe it will cause irreparable harm to our marine ecosystem. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:40:53 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members:

I write to you in support of HB 2101. Please amend it back to a STATEWIDE BAN and pass this.

Our reefs on outer islands desperately need this ban. Not including outer islands sends a resounding exclusion note to all of us who live on them.

The reefs and reef fishes really need to be protected. Please help. Hawaii Island and our County Council have asked for this help.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:46:24 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Bryant, Sr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokalole, Chair Rhoads, and Committee Members,

My name is Charlie Bryant. I am a Kanaka Maoli subsistence and commercial food fisherman from Hau'ula, O'ahu. I have fished to support my family and my community my entire life.

I'm writing in strong support of HB2101 and urge your committees to amend this bill to extend the ban on commercial aquairum collection statewide.

Allowing a small handful of collectors to harvest hundreds of thousands of our reef animals is hewa--it is a direct affront to our cultural and community values. Growing up, we were taught by our kupuna to be lawai'a pono--to only take what you needed to feed your families. Taking fish off of the reef to display in an aquarium on the continent is the opposite of lawai'a pono. These native reef animals are our 'aumakua and taking them to put on display perpetuates serious cultural harms. Our 'aumakua are not specimens to be displayed as pets for wealthy mainland collectors.

Removing hundreds of thousands of animals from our coral reef ecosystems also causes serious environmental harms. Most of the fish targeted by commercial aquairum collectors are herbivores. Removing them from the reef adversely affects our coral reef ecology. On O'ahu, DAR supports a ban on spearfishing uhu and kala (SB 2972)--both staple species for subsistence fishers--because of "concerns regarding the increased stress on coral reef ecosystems caused by depleted heribore populations on the Island of O'ahu," and yet, DAR opposes a ban on commercial aquairum which would ensure hundreds of thousands of herbivores remaon on O'ahu reefs. This suggests DAR's policy goals are influenced more by pressure from the pet industry than the actual science.

We cannot allow a small handful of collectors to take fish out of our community icebox for their own personal profit. I urge your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Committee on Judiciary to pass this bill with amendments to expand the ban on commercial aquairum collection statewide.

Mahalo,

Charlie

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 11:50:08 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doris Segal Matsunaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please **amend** HB 2101 HD1 SD1 which now bans commercial aquarium fishing on Oahu to **include the full State of Hawaii**. The Hawaii County Council has clearly stated its opposition to reinstating commercial aquarium fishing on our island. We are astounded that the Legislature should ignore the will of residents to enrich a small special interest group.

Doris Segal Matsunaga

Waimea, Hawaii Island

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 12:11:25 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keri Zacher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Keri Zacher, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Keri Zacher

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 12:30:39 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georjean Adams	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I don't support commercial aquarium fishing in Hawaii anywhere. I regret that I ever had saltwater aquariums (in Minnesota, no less). I hope most of the animals we had were farmed, but I doubt it.

At most, we could allow limited takings for use in education-based public aquariums and scientific research, but only if no captive-raised fish are available. With the marvels of AI and media we have now, even public aquariums could get away from having live fish.

Of course, there will always be black markets for the super rich to indulge their ownership vices, but we shouldn't legitimize them. As to the economic benefit to the handful of local aquarium fishers - too bad. Find another way to make a living. Give snorkel tours. The public and environmental benefits from protecting our reef fish far outweigh the risks by continuing an unnecessary commercial enterprise.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 12:51:14 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators and Hawai'i Administrators,

I strongly support HB 2101 for the entire state and for OHA and all the Hawaiian communities fighting to end this wasteful practice that disregards Native Hawaiian rights and customs.

My name is Diane Ware and I have been fighting for reef fishes to remain on the reef since 2008. I'd also like to acknowledge that the nearshore reefs are stolen lands taken from the Hawaiian sovereign nation and native Hawaiians and have been used for extraction for the international pet trade profits and a handful of residents by permit from the occupied territorial government since 1953 with no community involvement.

The AQ pet trade in Hawai'i is neither sustainable, pono nor linked to traditional Hawaiian subsistence based practices as evidenced by the documented incident below of 500 or so yellow tang found at Honokohau harbor in trash cans. This trashing of dead fishes is not uncommon as numerous fishers have reported the trashing of reef fishes in bags. The perpetrators of this WASTE were never identified nor likely were these lau'ipala ever reported to DAR as such. Years later fighting to keep the fishes on the reef per Article XII Section 7 of the constitution and the wishes of a majority of your constituents. Perhaps those dead fishes were not properly "vented" before surfacing. There is a reason the Humane Society of the USA was an original plaintiff in the lawsuit

"Once scooped up, the fish are placed in baskets weighted to the bottom of the ocean, and later brought up slowly by the guys on the boat. Rule of thumb is one pull (3 feet) every 15 minutes for proper decompression. Otherwise the fish need to be needled or "vented" to release air pressure in their swim bladders....it was common and necessary. Boats were set up with fish tanks that had running water in them, so the fish could be held safely."

As reported by a former collector now opposed to collection "A typical "push" or collection run when collecting yellow tangs, you could average 25-50 yellow tangs per run. Like anything else, there's experienced collectors and the learners...so the yield varies with every effort. Maybe 2 tries per dive tank and a typical day was 3 dives...so 6 efforts to collect as many fish as you could get. A successful day was 250 or more yellow tangs in a day for 2 guys, and a really good day was 500 yellow tangs in one day. But those 500 days were special."

Please refer to Hawai'i County Council final vote on their bill video of reformed collector Tim Stewart about normal destruction of corals to collect aquatic life.

I urge you to do the right thing by passing this measure for the entire state and securing the future of our reef fishes where they belong for the people of these islands not pet hobbyists.

Malama pono, Diane Ware Volcano 96785

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 1:03:09 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
janice palma-glenie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

ii've supported a ban on aquarium fishing since the 1980s. meanwhile, the situatoin has grown worse as fish species grow more scarce.

it's clear that the public isn't going to stop testifying and pushing for a ban until our legilsatiure does the right thing.

Support aquarium fishing. Vote "yes" for HB2101.

mahalo and best,

janice palma-glennie

kailua-kona

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 1:33:16 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elna Nagasako	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members:

I strongly support HB2101. Hawai'i's reefs and reef fish should not be harvested for commercial aquarium purposes. Please support the aquarium collection ban.

Sincerely,

Elna Nagasako

Makiki

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 2:27:10 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe Carvalho	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose all taking of fish in the state for aquariums. We need the fish for our subsistence.

Aloha,

Joe Carvalho, Halaula, North Kohala.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 3:43:02 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JOANNE PARKER	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support this bill.

I know of people who have salt water aquariums and they are constantly buying fish because they fish they have don't survive long and it's so sad to see the sea life die quickly! It's such a sad waste of wildlife!!

Please pass this bill.

Mahalo

Committee Members,

I do not believe a ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Mahalo,

Wagner Alfaro

Aloha,

I support opening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Katya David

Aloha Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Kayla Gillespie

Committee Members-

I oppose a ban and encourage you to support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery with careful management backed by science.

Will Wakefield

Committee Members,

As the aquarium fishery has successfully been through the environmental review process, I strongly support issuing permits and re-opening West Hawaii for aquarium fishing. This is a well managed, robust fishery that is sustainable and should not be banned.

Mahalo,
Kory Giron

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR. It's been through the HEPA process and is proven sustainable.

Mahalo,
Ken Kauhane

Aloha Committee Members,

I respectfully encourage you to vote against the ban and allow permits to be issued for West Hawaii. I support the fishery because it has been through HEPA and has good management behind it.

Mahalo,
Katherina Blair

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and opening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery. All requirements have been met and the fishery has good management to help protect the future fish population.

Mahalo,
Kim Gunning

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Kip Olson

Committee Members-

I support opening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and not banning it. Please issue permits, it is a sustainable fishery that Hawaii should be proud of.

Mahalo,
Keola Reis

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Krysta Thorne

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Thank you,
Linda Burroughs

Committee Members,

I strongly support opening the aquarium fishery and I support managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Thank you,
Lionel Macaraeg

Committee Members,

I do not believe a ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Thank you,
Somchai Anong

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. I oppose a ban.

Mahalo,
Summer Bentley

Aloha Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Chuck Purdham

Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Cora Ramos

Committee Members,

I do not believe a full ban is warranted for a fishery that can be sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Charline Smith

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for west Hawaii aquarium fishing. The fishery has been sustainable over the years and with continued good management by DAR based on science, the fishery will remain healthy and sustainable. There is no reason to ban this fishery.

Mahalo,
Connor Sui

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that is sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Thank you,
Derek Adams

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and not banning. The aquarium fishery has fulfilled the court ordered HEPA review and has catch limits in place to ensure fish abundance on the reefs. I support opening West Hawaii for aquarium fishing.

Thank you,
Dom Chaichana

Committee Members,

I do not believe a ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Thank you,
Diane Fanning

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Doug Kane

Committee Members,

I strongly support sustainable fisheries and as the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery is such, I support issuing permits and re-opening. The fishery has also been through the HEPA process and no other fishery in Hawaii has done so. It's a great documentation of how well managed the fishery has been and it should be allowed to operate.

Mahalo for your time,

Dana Littlefield

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and opening west Hawaii for aquarium fishing. DAR has done a great job of implementing effective, targeted management of the fishery over the years and the scientific data supports that it's a healthy fishery.

Mahalo,
Dawn Porter

Committee Members,

I oppose banning tis fishery. I support issuing permits for West Hawaii. The aquarium fishery has cleared the HEPA process and is sustainable.

Drew Santos Jr.

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing, not a ban. The fishery is backed by years of research and data supporting it's sustainable.

Mahalo,

Dane Washington

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Thank you,
Doug Witt

Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Thank you,
Gloria Wakefield

Aloha Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Erica Daffron

Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Ethan Gray

Committee Members,

I support re-opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Elijah Hamaguchi

Aloha Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Thank you,
Eva Kaizer

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and re-opening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery. It's proven sustainable and has years of data showing increasing aquarium fish populations which demonstrate how well proper management works.

Ed Nease

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. The fishery has been through the HEPA process and ample precautions are in place to keep fish stocks healthy on the reefs and ensure the fishery is sustainable.

Thank you,
Dennis Leonard

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Thank you,
Dustin Nacion

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Mahalo,
Sven Green

COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I SUPPORT REOPENING THE WEST HAWAII AQUARIUM FISHERY. THERE ARE LIMITED PERMITS AND LIMITED ALLOWABLE FISH TO CATCH, THE FISHERY HAS BEEN WELL MANAGED AND IS SUSTAINABLE ACCORDING TO THE SCIENTIFIC STUDIES THAT HAVE BEEN DONE. THIS FISHERY SHOULD NOT BE BANNED FOR REASONS NOT SUBSTANTIATED BY SCIENCE.

**MAHALO,
SKYLAR HUAN**

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Thank you,
Sheila Berry

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Sebastian Poe

Committee Members,

The aquarium fishery is the best managed near shore fishery in the state and it has been through the HEPA review, therefore I support issuing permits to reopen the fishery in West Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Sabrina Vick

Committee Members:

I do not believe a full ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Tae Biel

Aloha Committee Members,

I urge you to vote against a ban...I support re-opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Tracey Dublin

Aloha Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishery in Hawaii and encourage you to issue permits for West Hawaii aquarium fishing again. HEPA requirements have been met and it's time to reopen this fishery.

Mahalo,
Tyler Fujita

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that is sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Thank you for your time.

Andrea Duran

Committee Members,

I'm supporting the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery and feel strongly that it should be reopened. It has been and will be well managed so fish populations will continue to grow. It's the only fishery to complete HEPA and should be an open and active fishery in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Angelina Louis

Aloha Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

**Thanks,
Aaron Nyquist**

Aloha Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Thank you,
Will Palmer

Dear Committee Members,

I'm testifying in support of issuing permits and reopening the Aquarium Fishery in West Hawaii. It's proven to be sustainable and is the most studied and managed fishery in Hawaii. I do not support banning it.

Thank you,
Zane Seale

Aloha Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Allen Steiner

Committee Members:

I support the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. The fishery has completed the required HEPA review and DAR studies have shown increasing fish populations. The fishery is sustainable.

Mahalo,

Ashley Vass

Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Thank you,
Bret Harris

Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and encourage you to issue permits and re-open it, not ban it.

Mahalo,
Thom Ludwig

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Thank you,
Tammy Latham

Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Thank you,
Tandy Galanis

Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Thank you,
Tony Schram

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and re-opening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery. There is no reason for a ban. It's been through HEPA and is sustainable.

Valerie Rosales

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and re-opening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery. DAR has managed it well and it remains a sustainable fishery.

Thank you,
Zeny Saquing

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Thank you,
Muriel Walsh

Aloha Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Thank you,
Neal Neldi

Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods..

Mahalo,
Priya McIntyre

Aloha Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Mahalo,
Pam Short

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits to reopen the West Hawaii Aquarium fishery and I oppose a ban.

Thank you,
Philip Whedon

Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Mahalo,
Rubilyn Gurat

Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Mahalo,
Rowan Kenerly

Aloha Committee Members,

I oppose the ban. The aquarium fishery is the only fishery in Hawaii to complete the HEPA process and it should be re-opened and given permits for West Hawaii.

Thank you,

Augustine Dore

Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Rita Lawrence

Aloha Committee Members,

I am supporting the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery because it has been through HEPA as it was required to and because it has been proven through years of research and studies to be a viable and sustainable fishery.

Thank you very much,

Beverly Howard

Aloha Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Bryant Hogan

Aloha,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Bill Mangkhut

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Bobby Pearl

Aloha Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for West Hawaii aquarium fishing. The aquarium fishery has been Hawaii's most heavily managed and the data supports that there are healthy fish stocks.

Mahalo,
Brian Teixeira

Aloha Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishery and believe it is time to reopen the fishery in West Hawaii. It's a model fishery in Hawaii and serves as a great example of how a sustainable fishery should be managed.

Mahalo,
Cal Chui

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Claire Shi

Committee Members,

I do not believe a full ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Thank you very much,
Christina Esteves

Aloha Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Mahalo,
Carmen Ewalt

Committee Members:

I support the reopening of the west Hawai'i aquarium fishery and issuing permits because it completed the HEPA review and has been determined to be sustainable. Please vote against a ban.

Thank you.

Anna Adare

Committee Members,

I support re-opening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery. It's the best managed near shore fishery in the State and has more scientific data backing it than any other. I believe the right thing to do is issue permits and not ban it.

**Mahalo,
Chet Narak**

Committee Members,

I do not believe a full ban is warranted for a fishery that can be sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Thank you very much.

Miller Anderson

Committee Members,

I do not believe a full ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Mahalo,
Marlen Beese

Dear Committee Members,

I do not believe a full ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Mercy Battung

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Thank you,
Jose Terrah

Aloha Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. This fishery has been the best managed in the state and remains sustainable thanks to those efforts. There's no need for a ban.

Mahalo,
Manuel Dolan

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mark Fryer

Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Malcolm Hauata

Committee Members,

I support opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR. This fishery should not be banned.

Mahalo,
Marni Hughes

Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Micah Jurgansen

Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishery and oppose banning it. It's successfully been through HEPA and proven a sustainable fishery. I support permitting and opening West Hawaii for fishing.

Mahalo,
Kaori Coloma

Committee Members,

I support reopening the Aquarium Fishery. The fishery deserves to have permits issued and resume operation because it has cleared the HEPA process and is a sustainable fishery.

Thank you,
Mariann Kopilec

Committee Members,

I oppose a ban and support issuing permits to reopen aquarium fishing in West Hawaii.

Lyle Colasse

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access..

Mahalo,
Maya Limbu

I'm in support of opening the aquarium fishery since it has passed the HEPA process. It's a sustainable fishery and should not be banned.

Francis Te Rito

Committee Members,

I support opening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery because it passed HEPA and has been proven to be environmentally sound.

Gordon Makens

Committee Members,

I oppose banning a sustainable fishery and I support reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Kristin Scofield

Committee Members,

The aquarium fishery on the Big Island has successfully been through the HEPA process and I wholeheartedly support issuing permits to reopen this fishery now. I urge you to vote against a ban.

Thank you,
Grant Owens

Aloha Committee Members,

I'm in support of the aquarium fishery and encourage you to vote against a ban. This fishery is proven sustainable with effective management ensuring it will remain that way.

Mahalo,
Jack Enkamp

Aloha Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Hilda Acosta

Aloha Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Joel Gibson

Committee Members,

I do not believe a ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Mahalo,
Josie Hilaw

Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Thank you,
Jacob Ballen

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

June Franko

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and opening the West Hawaii Aquarium fishery. It has successfully been through HEPA and is the most heavily regulated fishery in the State.

Jason Getty

Aloha Committee Members,

I support re-opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Julie Bushido

Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Thank you,
Jerry Miura

Aloha Committee Members,

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Mahalo,
Andrew Alleje

Rather than prohibit a fishery that operates sustainably, I encourage a management approach grounded in science. Reopening it with controlled permits would support both resource protection and practical use.

Mahalo,
JACKSON SCHNELL

Aloha Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery that can be responsibly managed using science-based regulations. Instead, I urge you to reopen the fishery and implement a regulated permit system that ensures long-term ecological balance while supporting local livelihoods.

Mahalo,
Janine Thibodeaux

Aloha Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii. Fish stocks have been very well looked after and management has done a good job of protecting resources. There is no reason based in science to consider bans or keep the fishery closed.

Thank you,
Kiley Aurora

Aloha Committee Members,

I oppose closing a fishery that can be sustainably managed through science-based oversight. Please consider reopening it with a structured permit system that protects marine resources while allowing responsible use.

Thanks very much,
Karen Clowers

Aloha Committee Members,

I do not believe a ban is warranted for a fishery that is sustainably managed. Reopening it with clear regulations and a permit system would better balance conservation goals with responsible access.

Thank you,
Martin Labrador

Aloha Committee Members,

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Thank you,
Mike Pires

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery as it is well managed and has successfully been through the HEPA review process, unlike any other fishery in the state.

Mahalo,
Michaela Rasa

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery and I don't support banning a sustainable fishery.

Roger Stuart

Committee Members:

Banning a sustainable fishery is unnecessary when effective management tools already exist. I support reopening the fishery with regulated permits to ensure both environmental protection and continued access.

Bruce Stanford

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and opening the aquarium fishery again. The new management plan creates a clear, science backed framework for well-regulated activity with defined rules, catch limits, monitoring and oversight. This ensures protection of reef resources as well as local livelihoods.

Thank you,
Andrew Melis

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

I support issuing aquarium fishing permits. Reopening the West Hawai'i aquarium fishery would restore a well-managed, low impact fishery grounded in decades of scientific study. Long term monitoring has shown that fish populations within the West Hawai'i Fishery Management Areas remain stable or have grown under regulated fishing. Aquarium fishing is selective and does not remove biomass, making it one of the most sustainable forms of marine resource use. The fishery also supports local families and fosters a culture of stewardship, as fishers have a vested interest in maintaining healthy reef ecosystems.

*Mahalo,
Mae Mitchel*

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in west Hawaii. A well-regulated fishery supports local livelihoods while providing incentives for stewardship, compliance, and continuous improvement in sustainable practices.

Thank you,
Michael Mkroyan

Committee Members,

I do not support banning a sustainable fishery and I support reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Elliana Reeves

Committee Members,

I fully support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems. Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Mahalo,
Dominik Nino

Aloha Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. I believe that doing so would restore one of the most sustainable, well-studied and scientifically managed fisheries in the state. Decades of rigorous monitoring have shown that aquarium fish populations in the West Hawaii Fishery Management Areas remain healthy or have even increased under regulated collection. This fishery also provides valuable local livelihoods and encourages stewardship by connecting fishers directly to the health of the reefs they depend on.

Casey Lessard

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in Hawaii because it is a well-managed, highly regulated fishery that has repeatedly demonstrated minimal environmental impact through decades of scientific monitoring. It also has a positive impact on the local economy as well as promotes responsible stewardship of Hawaii's reef resources.

Mahalo,
Matthew Nishioka

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in Hawaii because it is a well-managed, highly regulated industry that has repeatedly demonstrated minimal environmental impact through decades of scientific monitoring. It also has a positive impact on the local economy as well as promotes responsible stewardship of Hawaii's reef resources.

Thank you very much.
Marilyn Ozaki

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery because it's the only fishery in Hawaii to complete the HEPA process. Science based management of the fishery includes catch limits, permit limits, and restrictions on the types of fish that can be caught. This a model fishery that the State should be proud of.

Mahalo,
Monica Romero

Committee Members,

I'm testifying in support of issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery on the Big Island. Scientific data gathered from DAR studies done over the years do support that this is a sustainable fishery.

Mahalo,
Maile Steele

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery, and issuing permits.

Albert Barnette

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific studies demonstrate that well-regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Margot Tigas

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawai'i's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well regulated fishery would restore a model of science based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

*Mahalo,
Niko Abraham*

Committee Members,

I support re-opening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Alison Black

Aloha Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishers and believe the fishery has been proven sustainable and should be re-opened in West Hawaii. This fishery has been very well managed and now has an accepted environmental impact statement. The West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery should be allowed to resume activity now.

Mahalo,
Aki Tolentino

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for opening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and I support managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Andy Tieger

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Thank you,
Sera Malone

I support opening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. Resources should be managed by the science that backs it and this will help make sure that proper strategies are in place to keep the ecosystem healthy into the future.

Ted Valcin

Aloha Committee Members,

I support re-opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Russel Tan

Committee Members-

I fully support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems. Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Thank you,
Al Lednisky

Committee Members:

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. I believe that doing so would restore one of the most sustainable, well studied and scientifically managed fisheries in the state. Decades of rigorous monitoring have shown that aquarium fish populations in the West Hawaii Fishery Management Areas remain healthy or have even increased under regulated collection. This fishery also provides local livelihoods and encourages stewardship by connecting fishers directly to the health of the reefs they depend on.

Kaleb Royston

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Mike Maneco

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well-regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Beth Sato

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Mahalo,
Tray Banks

Committee Members-

I support opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR. The environmental review it went through upholds that this is a sustainable fishery.

Eddie Fernando

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mindy Beringer

TO: Members of the Committee

Aloha,

I fully support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems.

Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Mahalo,

Joel Sandager

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Angel Lucas

Committee Members,

I support opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Thank you,
Maricel Pineda

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawai'i's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well regulated fishery would restore a model of science based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Penn Kelsey

To - Committee Members:

I fully support issuing permits and opening the aquarium fishery in west Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Leo Blair

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Thank you,
Jordan Sloane

Committee Members:

I support reopening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Thank you,
Brendan Casnoff

Committee Members,

I support re-opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Thank you,
Natalie Melker

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Katie Chewning

Aloha Committee Members,

I support opening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Thank you,
Sean Bradshaw

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawai'i's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Wrenn Bosworth

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in west Hawaii. A well regulated fishery supports local livelihoods while providing incentives for stewardship, compliance, and continuous improvement in sustainable practices.

Thank you,
Natalie James

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Steve Larue

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits. The Aquarium fishery has been through the HEPA review and is Hawaii's most heavily managed near shore fishery. Scientific studies show fish stocks trending up. It's a sustainable fishery and should be re-opened.

Thank you,
Niklas Meier

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits to reopen the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii.
This fishery completed the HEPA review.

This fishery is sustainable, as identified in the HEPA review. This fishery is well managed with multitudes of studies by DAR showing an increase in aquarium fish populations. Management does work and this fishery should be open.

Mahalo,
Ollie Byron

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery. A well regulated fishery supports local livelihoods while providing incentives for stewardship, compliance, and continuous improvement in sustainable practices.

Ben Idato-
Hilo

Committee Members,

Please don't support this ban. Permits should be issued to reopen the aquarium fishery in west Hawaii. A well regulated fishery supports local livelihoods while providing incentives for stewardship, compliance, and continuous improvement in sustainable practices.

Sarah Halpin

Hello,

I support opening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Austin Walton

Committee Members:

I support reopening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Jacquelyn Dominguez

Committee Members,

I support re-opening the west Hawaii aquarium fishery and I support science based management provided by DAR.

Gale Bensi

Aloha Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Resources should be managed by science and this fishery has been a model of good management based on many years of studies and scientific data.

Thank you,
Mitzi Bue

I support re-opening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Dianna Aguada

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Doing so would restore one of the most sustainable, well-studied and scientifically managed fisheries in the state. Decades of rigorous monitoring have shown that aquarium fish populations in the West Hawaii Fishery Management Areas remain healthy or have even increased under regulated collection. This fishery also provides valuable local livelihoods and encourages stewardship by connecting fishers directly to the health of the reefs they depend on.

Thank you,
Preston Aasen

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits. This is the only fishery in Hawaii to have gone through and completed the HEPA review.

Thank you,
Paul J. Abad

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Teresa Balangue

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawai'i's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Mahalo,
Dani Chambers

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Kaena Adlawan

Committee Members-

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. The fishery has strong science-based management and reopening it would help support local livelihoods and reef stewardship. When properly regulated, the fishery has been shown to operate sustainably while providing economic opportunity for local families and incentives to protect healthy reef ecosystems.

Dina Kaplan

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii.

Hazel Ignacio

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawai'i's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Thank you,
Drew Tassi

I support reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Seth Cowan

Committee Members,
I support re-opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by
science provided by DAR.

Regina Lim

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. The fishery has strong science-based management and reopening it would help support local livelihoods and reef stewardship. When properly regulated, the fishery has been shown to operate sustainably while providing economic opportunity for local families and incentives to protect healthy reef ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Celia Dasilva

Committee Members,

I support opening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Thank you very much,
Chloe Herredia

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Emilabeth Watts

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in Hawaii because it is a well-managed, highly regulated fishery that has repeatedly demonstrated minimal environmental impact through decades of scientific monitoring. It also has a positive impact on the local economy as well as promotes responsible stewardship of Hawaii's reef resources.

Bobby Parisi

Committee Members,

Please don't support a ban. Support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in west Hawaii. A well regulated fishery supports local livelihoods while providing incentives for stewardship, compliance, and continuous improvement in sustainable practices.

Mahalo,
Bonita Stepeck

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Toby Demski

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well-regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Thank you,
Catherina Dastrup

Committee Members:

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well-regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Tammy Hernandez

Committee Members-

I strongly support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Aquarium fishing is recognized as a low-impact fishery because it targets small, abundant reef species using selective, non-destructive methods without damaging habitat. Scientific studies over decades have shown minimal ecosystem effects, with populations of most collected species remaining stable or increasing. Compared to other commercial fisheries, the aquarium fishery is one of the most sustainable and carefully regulated fisheries in Hawaii. Mahalo.

Scott Brewer

Dear Committee Members,

I fully support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems. Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Thank you,
Erik Bench

I support opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mickey Flanks

Committee Members,

I'm in support of reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Aquarium fishing is recognized as a low-impact fishery because it targets small, abundant reef species using selective, non-destructive methods without damaging habitat. Scientific studies over decades have shown minimal ecosystem effects, with populations of most collected species remaining stable or increasing. Compared to other commercial fisheries, the aquarium fishery is one of the most sustainable and carefully regulated fisheries in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Jestine Nez

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery because it has been through the environmental review and proven to be sustainable. Sustainable fisheries should be supported and used as examples of how to better those fisheries that are less studied and with less intensive management. DAR has done a great job with the aquarium fishery.

Mahalo,
Phoebe Noi

Committee Members,

I am in support of reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii.

Bea Ireland

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. The fishery has strong science-based management and reopening it would help support local livelihoods and reef stewardship. When properly regulated, the fishery has been shown to operate sustainably while providing economic opportunity for local families and incentives to protect healthy reef ecosystems.

Thanks,
Mitch Richmond

Aloha Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and opening the aquarium fishery again. The new management plan creates a clear, science backed framework for well-regulated activity with defined rules, catch limits, monitoring and oversight. This ensures protection of reef resources as well as local livelihoods.

Thank you,
Pietra Waters

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and encourage you to vote in favor of issuing permits. The aquarium fishery is the only fishery in Hawaii to have completed the HEPA process and West Hawaii should be open for fishing again.

Thank you,
Adrien Madison

Committee Members,

Please issue permits and reopen the aquarium fishery in west Hawaii. A well regulated fishery supports local livelihoods while providing incentives for stewardship, compliance, and continuous improvement in sustainable practices.

*Mahalo,
Angela Rotondi*

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific studies demonstrate that well-regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Thank you very much.

Adrian Saunders

Committee Members,

I am in support of issuing permits and reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery.

Gary Ferguson

Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. The fishery has completed the required HEPA review and DAR studies have shown increasing fish populations. The fishery is sustainable.

Mahalo,
Ashley Vass

Committee Members,

I strongly support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Aquarium fishing is recognized as a low-impact fishery because it targets small, abundant reef species using selective, non-destructive methods without damaging habitat. Scientific studies over decades have shown minimal ecosystem effects, with populations of most collected species remaining stable or increasing. Compared to other commercial fisheries, the aquarium fishery is one of the most sustainable and carefully regulated fisheries in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Abee Brewer

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. HEPA has been cleared, a strong management plan is in place, and catch limits are in place. Not many fisheries can say this. It's time to reopen.

Thank you.

Alana Bishop

Committee Members,

I'm supporting the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery and feel strongly that it should be reopened. It has been and will be well managed so fish populations will continue to grow. It's the only fishery to complete HEPA and should be an open and active fishery in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Angelina Louis

Committee Members,

I am in support of issuing permits and reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery.

Justin Rockmael

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawai'i's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Thank you,
Amy London

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well-regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Stef Kohler

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in Hawaii because it is a well-managed, highly regulated fishery that has repeatedly demonstrated minimal environmental impact through decades of scientific monitoring. It also has a positive impact on the local economy as well as promotes responsible stewardship of Hawaii's reef resources.

Mahalo,
Bryant Bacalso

Committee Members,

I'm in support of re-opening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. Please consider the science that backs this fishery and proves it is sustainable.

Mahalo,
Brian Lee

Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. I support fisheries managed by science and DAR has done a good job of this with the aquarium fishery.

Mahalo,
Bria Samson

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for fishing in west Hawaii. This is a model sustainable fishery.

Thank you,
Clive Shelton

Committee Members,

I am in strong support of reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing fishing permits as soon as possible.

Thank you,
Viv Mills

Committee Members,

I support opening the aquarium fishery. Please vote in favor of issuing permits. The scientific data proves this is a sustainable fishery with effective management ensuring proper protection and growth of fish stocks.

Thank you,
Candace Han

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. This fishery has been through HEPA and has decades of studies and scientific data that support the sustainability of the fishery. It's well managed by DAR based on science.

Mahalo,
Joan Sydney

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Chey Hayashi

I oppose a ban and I support opening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Denise Waller

Committee Members,

I support re-opening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery. It's the best managed near shore fishery in the State and has more scientific data backing it than any other. I believe the right thing to do is issue permits so fishing can resume.

**Mahalo,
Chet Narak**

Committee Members,

I support re-opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Thank you,
George Tapu

Committee Members,

As this fishery has been through the HEPA review process, I absolutely support reopening the aquarium fishery. The fishery has been well managed by the science that backs it.

Cathy Strong

I support opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR. Please do not support a ban.

Thank you
Owen Hammond

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits for west Hawaii aquarium fishing. The fishery has been sustainable over the years and with continued good management by DAR based on science, the fishery will remain healthy and sustainable.

Mahalo,
Connor Sui

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits to allow aquarium fishing in West Hawaii and managing resources by science provided by DAR. I oppose a ban.

Penny Pudiquet

Committee Members:

I support issuing aquarium fishing permits. Reopening the West Hawai'i aquarium fishery would restore a well managed, low-impact fishery grounded in decades of scientific study. Long term monitoring has shown that fish populations within the West Hawai'i Fishery Management Areas remain stable or have grown under regulated fishing. Aquarium fishing is selective and does not remove biomass, making it one of the most sustainable forms of marine resource use. The fishery also supports local families and fosters a culture of stewardship, as fishers have a vested interest in maintaining healthy reef ecosystems.

Drake Goeden

Committee Members,

I oppose a ban and I support reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Amber Hopkins

Finance Committee,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. The fishery has been through the HEPA process and ample precautions are in place to keep fish stocks healthy on the reefs and ensure the fishery is sustainable.

Thank you,
Dennis Leonard

I support opening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Nikki Vermillion

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. This has been a well managed fishery and it will be only a handful of permits with catch limits so there's no danger of over fishing.

Mahalo,
Geo Tiongco

Aloha,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. The fishery has strong science-based management and reopening it would help support local livelihoods and reef stewardship. When properly regulated, the fishery has been shown to operate sustainably while providing economic opportunity for local families and incentives to protect healthy reef ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Ianuali Anderson

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii.

Penny Smith

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Aquarium fishing is recognized as a low-impact fishery because it targets small, abundant reef species using selective, non-destructive methods without damaging habitat. Scientific studies over decades have shown minimal ecosystem effects, with populations of most collected species remaining stable or increasing.

Compared to other commercial fisheries, the aquarium fishery is one of the most sustainable and carefully regulated fisheries in Hawaii.

Thank you.

Joshua Benally

Committee Members,

I believe the HEPA review that the aquarium fishery has successfully gone through supports the fact that it's a sustainable fishery and should be allowed to be reopened. I support the aquarium fishery and I urge you to issue permits for West Hawaii. Mahalo!

Jenny Dresser

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery on the Big Island. This fishery is the most heavily managed near shore fishery in the State. Catch limits are in place. This fishery is proven sustainable by years of scientific studies.

Thank you,
Jess Hong

Committee Members,

The aquarium fishery should be reopened because it has been through the HEPA process and is proven to be sustainable and well managed, which is what we all want to see in all fisheries. This fishery should not be excluded or banned from operating any longer and I support issuing permits as soon as possible.

Jake Pene

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Mahalo,
Jessica Mitsuo

Committee Members-

I support opening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii fishing. I believe that resources should be managed by science and DAR has done a good job of this for this fishery. It is still the most heavily regulated fishery in Hawaii.

Thank you,
Jamie Murack

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. This fishery has been through HEPA and has decades of studies and scientific data that support the sustainability of the fishery. It's well managed by DAR based on science.

Mahalo,
Joan Sydney

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits. All fisheries need good management and DAR's scientific studies clearly show that management of this fishery has been highly effective. It's sustainable and the data showing increasing aquarium fish populations demonstrate how well proper management works.

Thank you,
Jaye Tiongco

Aloha Committee Members,

I stand in support of the west Hawaii aquarium fishery and hope permits will be issued and the fishery finally reopened.

Mahalo,
Simon Grandi

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Aquarium fishing is recognized as a low-impact fishery because it targets small, abundant reef species using selective, non-destructive methods without damaging habitat. Scientific studies over decades have shown minimal ecosystem effects, with populations of most collected species remaining stable or increasing. Compared to other commercial fisheries, the aquarium fishery is one of the most sustainable and carefully regulated fisheries in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Javier Ward

Committee Members,

The aquarium fishery has been heavily managed over the years ensuring sustainability. I support issuing permits and reopening the fishery.

Kimo Aikawa

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii. Fish stocks have been very well looked after and management has done a good job of protecting resources. There is no reason based in science to consider bans or keep the fishery closed.

Thank you,
Kiley Aurora

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. The fishery has strong science-based management and reopening it would help support local livelihoods and reef stewardship. When properly regulated, the fishery has been shown to operate sustainably while providing economic opportunity for local families and incentives to protect healthy reef ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Deann Levine

Committee Members,

I support managing fisheries based on science. The aquarium fishery should have permits reissued and West Hawaii reopened as long as the scientific data continues to support that this is a sound and sustainable fishery.

Mahalo,
Dana Myers

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in Hawaii because it is a well-managed, highly regulated fishery that has repeatedly demonstrated minimal environmental impact through decades of scientific monitoring. And it successfully completed the HEPA review. It also has a positive impact on the local economy as well as promotes responsible stewardship of Hawaii's reef resources.

Mahalo,
Drake Yoshimura

Committee Members,

I strongly support issuing permits for West Hawaii aquarium fishing. The fishery has gone through the court ordered HEPA review process in order to determine if it was sustainable and environmentally safe to continue. The HEPA process was completed and accepted and the fishery still has the best management plan of all fisheries in the state.

Mahalo,
Edna Anderson

Committee Members,

I'm writing in support of issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii. I support sustainable fisheries and wish all fisheries were as stringently managed as this one to ensure future sustainability. The aquarium fishery should serve as a model for other fisheries in the state.

Evelin French

Committee Members,

I fully support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems. Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Thank you,
Eleni Laskaris

TO: Committee Members

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Ulani Wach

Committee Members -

I support reopening the aquarium fishery. A well regulated fishery supports local livelihoods while providing incentives for stewardship, compliance, and continuous improvement in sustainable practices.

Thanks,
Aaron Cormack

Committee Members,

I support issuing aquarium fishing permits. Reopening the West Hawai'i aquarium fishery would restore a well managed, low-impact fishery grounded in decades of scientific study. Long term monitoring has shown that fish populations within the West Hawai'i Fishery Management Areas remain stable or have grown under regulated fishing. Aquarium fishing is selective and does not remove biomass, making it one of the most sustainable forms of marine resource use. The fishery also supports local families and fosters a culture of stewardship, as fishers have a vested interest in maintaining healthy reef ecosystems.

Thank you,
Elina Mathis

Committee Members–

I support issuing permits and re-opening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery. It's proven sustainable and has years of data showing increasing aquarium fish populations which demonstrate how well proper management works.

Ed Nease

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing and fully believe this is a sustainable fishery with little impact on Hawaii's reefs. It is well managed and with the new rules in place, the future populations of the targeted species will be greatly protected.

Mahalo,
Ford Antoni

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and opening the aquarium fishery as it has years of scientific data that demonstrate the health and vitality of the fishery, which goes to show how effectively the state has managed it.

Thank you,
Flora Reyme

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. The fishery has strong science-based management and reopening it would help support local livelihoods and reef stewardship. When properly regulated, the fishery has been shown to operate sustainably while providing economic opportunity for local families and incentives to protect healthy reef ecosystems.

Thank you very much,
Finn Wetterling

Committee Members:

The aquarium fishery is the most heavily managed nearshore fishery in the State of Hawaii. Because of this, I SUPPORT issuing permits and reopening this fishery.

Thank you,
Gabriel Norris

Committee Members,

The aquarium fishery on the Big Island has successfully been through the HEPA process and I wholeheartedly support issuing permits to reopen this fishery now.

Thank you very much,
Grant Owens

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. The aquarium fishery has successfully completed the HEPA process and should be allowed to resume operation. I support reopening this fishery and managing it using science.

Mahalo,
Paula Whines

Committee Members,

I'm in support of reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii fishing. This fishery has been proven sustainable and with good management and far fewer permits being issued then it certainly will remain sustainable.

Mahalo,
Rob Alvare

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. I support science based management as it has always been. I'm behind this fishery completely.

Mahalo,
Ryan Carroll

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Robyn Kohler

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits. The aquarium fishery in West Hawaii is the best managed and most studied fishery in the State. Populations of aquarium fish species have risen over the years, showing how powerful good management can be. In addition, this fishery has completed the HEPA review process and is proven sustainable.

Mahalo,
Raine Moralez

Committee Members,

I support re-opening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. A carefully managed aquarium fishery in West Hawaii, grounded in science and sustainability, can help support local residents and small businesses while protecting the health of reef ecosystems.

**Mahalo,
Ryan Novais**

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well-regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Thank you,
Shara Rash

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Lito Cayetano

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science-based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Mahalo,
Scott Brewer

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery and issuing permits. I urge you not to support banning sustainable fisheries.

Mahalo,
Geoff Manousakis

Committee Members,

I support issuing aquarium fishing permits to allow fishing in west Hawaii waters. All cumulative scientific data supports that this is a sustainable fishery that should be open and not banned.

Thank you,
Steven Balik

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. After completing the HEPA review, and being the only fishery to have done so, it's been proven to be sustainable and deserves to be in operation again.

Mahalo,
Sammy Byron

COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

I SUPPORT REOPENING THE WEST HAWAII AQUARIUM FISHERY. THERE ARE LIMITED PERMITS AND LIMITED ALLOWABLE FISH TO CATCH. THE FISHERY HAS BEEN WELL MANAGED AND IS SUSTAINABLE ACCORDING TO THE SCIENTIFIC STUDIES THAT HAVE BEEN DONE. THIS FISHERY SHOULD NOT BE BANNED FOR REASONS NOT SUBSTANTIATED BY SCIENCE.

**MAHALO,
SKYLAR HUAN**

Committee Members,

I strongly support the reopening of the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. There is so much scientific data produced by studies done by the State that show steadily increasing fish population trends, due to excellent management that could be applied to other fisheries across the State of Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Stacey Jenson

Committee Members,

I fully support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems. Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Sage Winterton

Committee Members-

I strongly support issuing permits and reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. The environmental review proved it's sustainable with no detrimental impacts to aquarium fish populations.

Thomas Akari

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well regulated fishery would restore a model of science based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Trenton James

Dear Committee Members,

I urge you to re-open the aquarium fishery and reissue permits for west Hawaii aquarium fishing.

Liz Fletcher

Committee Members,

I support opening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. Resources should be managed by the science that backs it and this will help make sure that proper strategies are in place to keep the ecosystem healthy into the future.

Ted Valcin

Committee Members,

I'm testifying in support of reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. I believe all the data and the entire process that this fishery has gone through upholds that it is a sustainable fishery.

Thank you,
Vilma Diaz

Committee Members,

I'm in support of issuing permits and reopening the Aquarium Fishery in West Hawaii. It's proven to be sustainable and is the most studied and best managed fishery in Hawaii.

Thank you,
Kris Burgard

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits and feel the aquarium fishery should be reopened since it has completed the HEPA review and has been shown to be a sustainable fishery.

Thank you,
Kay Blust

Committee Members,

I support issuing aquarium fishing permits and believe this fishery has been proven sustainable. It should be allowed to operate like any other fishery in Hawaii.

Leanna Gonzalves

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in Hawaii because it is a well-managed, highly regulated fishery that has repeatedly demonstrated minimal environmental impact through decades of scientific monitoring. It also has a positive impact on the local economy as well as promotes responsible stewardship of Hawaii's reef resources.

Thank you,
Leann Jamison

Committee Members:

I support sustainable fisheries and encourage thorough review of all fisheries to ensure they are properly managed to safeguard future fish stocks. The aquarium fishery has been well-established as sustainable through good management and years of scientific studies that back it up. The fishery has been through the HEPA review and should be reopened without further delay. This is a great example for other fisheries in the state and I support issuing permits for the few who will be able to fish West Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Lindsey Keil

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing. I support reopening West Hawaii because there are very few permits to be issued and the fish populations will be protected and sustained by the limited catch allowed.

Thanks,
Lea Laudencia

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. It has passed HEPA and it's always been well managed by science with growing fish populations as proof.

Thank you!
Leslie Fermin

Committee Members:

I'm in support of reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Aquarium fishing is recognized as a low-impact fishery because it targets small, abundant reef species using selective, non-destructive methods without damaging habitat. Scientific studies over decades have shown minimal ecosystem effects, with populations of most collected species remaining stable or increasing. Compared to other commercial fisheries, the aquarium fishery is one of the most sustainable and carefully regulated fisheries in Hawaii.

Lynette Norwitz

Committee Members,

I strongly support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii. The aquarium fishery is now the only fishery to have completed the HEPA review and has the scientific data to prove its sustainability. It remains the most studied and well managed fishery in Hawaii, with two decades of scientific data showing increasing population trends for aquarium species. We need to support sustainable fisheries.

Thank you,
Luci Price

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawaii's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well-regulated fishery would restore a model of science based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Mahalo,
M. Aika

Committee Members,

I am in support of issuing permits and reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery.

**Mahalo,
Erin James**

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits and opening the aquarium fishery again. The new management plan creates a clear, science backed framework for well-regulated activity with defined rules, catch limits, monitoring and oversight. This ensures protection of reef resources as well as local livelihoods.

Melvin Bustamante

Committee Members-

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Resources should be managed by science and this fishery has been a model of good management based on many years of studies and scientific data.

Thank you,
Mitzi Bue

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for the West Hawaii aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Jason Khai

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing. The fishery completed the environmental impact review and is the only fishery in Hawaii to have done so. It is studied and well managed, and I support reopening the aquarium fishery.

**Mahalo,
Megan Choi**

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Genevive Vitalis

Aloha Committee Members,

I support re-opening the aquarium fishery in west Hawaii. It's the only fishery to successfully complete the environmental review and it's the only fishery to be so heavily managed which will help keep plentiful fish stocks.

Thank you,
Kathy Marnell

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery because long-term scientific surveys demonstrate that well-regulated fishing has minimal impact on reef fish abundance and can coexist with healthy, resilient ecosystems.

Mahalo,
Kanu Nieto

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and opening the aquarium fishery. Please don't support the ban.

Peter DeMaio

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems. Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Davis Passigila

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Jia Gavanis

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. The fishery has strong science-based management and reopening it would help support local livelihoods and reef stewardship. When properly regulated, the fishery has been shown to operate sustainably while providing economic opportunity for local families and incentives to protect healthy reef ecosystems.

Shay Diallo

Committee Members,

I support reopening Hawaii's aquarium fishery. The fishery has strong science-based management and reopening it would help support local livelihoods and reef stewardship. When properly regulated, the fishery has been shown to operate sustainably while providing economic opportunity for local families and incentives to protect healthy reef ecosystems.

Thank You,
BJ Moen

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits...the aquarium fishery has completed the HEPA process and I support reopening the fishery. Studies have shown increasing fish populations, it has been well managed by the state and is proven sustainable.

Thank you,
Mitchell Freye

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. I believe that doing so would restore one of the most sustainable, well studied and scientifically managed fisheries in the state. Decades of rigorous monitoring have shown that aquarium fish populations in the West Hawaii Fishery Management Areas remain healthy or have even increased under regulated collection. This fishery also provides valuable local livelihoods and encourages stewardship by connecting fishers directly to the health of the reefs they depend on.

Richard Wolfe

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for reopening the aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Jonjon de Vera

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Thank you,

Carl Loftin

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. Scientific assessments over decades have shown that Hawai'i's aquarium fishery operates sustainably, with stable or increasing populations of targeted species. Reopening this well regulated fishery would restore a model of science based management that supports reef health and responsible stewardship of marine resources.

Mason Howell

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits. A well regulated fishery supports local livelihoods while providing incentives for stewardship, compliance, and continuous improvement in sustainable practices.

Thank you,
Diana Lazzara

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery. Aquarium fishing is recognized as a low-impact fishery because it targets small, abundant reef species using selective, non-destructive methods without damaging habitat. Scientific studies over decades have shown minimal ecosystem effects, with populations of most collected species remaining stable or increasing. Compared to other commercial fisheries, the aquarium fishery is one of the most sustainable and carefully regulated fisheries in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Marisa Kincaid

Committee Members,

I support opening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii fishing. I believe that resources should be managed by science and DAR has done a good job of this for this fishery. It is still the most heavily regulated fishery in Hawaii.

Thank you,
Jamie Murack

Committee Members-

I support opening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. The scientific data proves this is a sustainable fishery with good management ensuring proper protection and growth of fish stocks.

Mahalo,
Marcey Levy

Committee Members:

I support issuing permits for the aquarium fishery and I support continued management by DAR using a science based approach.

Thank you,
Kristen Duenez

Committee Members,

As the aquarium fishery has successfully been through the environmental review process, I strongly support issuing permits and re-opening West Hawaii for aquarium fishing. This is a well managed, robust fishery that is sustainable.

Mahalo,
Kory Giron

Committee Members,

I respectfully encourage you to support the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery so permits can be issued once again. I support the fishery because it has been through HEPA and has good management behind it.

Mahalo,
Katherina Blair

Committee Members,

I support re-opening the aquarium fishery in west Hawaii. It's the only fishery to successfully complete the environmental review and it's the only fishery to be so heavily managed which will help keep plentiful fish stocks.

Thank you,
Kathy Marnell

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems. Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Thank you,
Karlynn Vogt

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR. With so few permits allowed and catch limits in place for the only eight species that can be caught will really help ensure that fish populations will not be depleted.

Thank you,
Katalina Velasco

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits and opening the aquarium fishery again. The new management plan creates a clear, science backed framework for well-regulated activity with defined rules, catch limits, monitoring and oversight. This ensures protection of reef resources as well as local livelihoods.

Kelly Woods

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR. This is the only fishery in the state to go through the HEPA process.

Thank you,
Kenzi White

Committee Members,

I support reopening the aquarium fishery in West Hawaii. I support issuing permits. Numerous studies and numerous experts have demonstrated with clear scientific data that this is a sustainable fishery.

Thank you,
Lee Ashford

Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishery and issuing permits on the Big Island. The fishery has completed the required HEPA review. As shown in studies done by DAR/DLNR, fish populations are increasing and this fishery is sustainable.

Mahalo,
Ben Chun

Committee Members-

I support issuing permits and opening the aquarium fishery again. The new management plan creates a clear, science backed framework for well-regulated activity with defined rules, catch limits, monitoring and oversight. This ensures protection of reef resources as well as local livelihoods.

Thank you,
Voni McNabb

Committee Members,

I support the aquarium fishery and reissuing permits to allow fishing in West Hawaii again. Good management backed by science is key to ensuring it remains sustainable.

Mahalo,
Will Alvarado

Committee Members-

I fully support issuing permits and reopening the aquarium fishery. It completed the HEPA review. It's sustainable and good management based in science, as set forth by DAR, will see to it that it stays that way.

Thank you very much.

Walter Johnson

Committee Members-

I support reopening the aquarium fishery and issuing permits for West Hawaii. I believe there has been ample scientific data that confirms proper management of this fishery has worked to ensure it is sustainable.

Mahalo,
Yuen Fung

Committee Members,

I oppose this ban and I support opening the West Hawaii aquarium fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR.

Mahalo,
Stephen Poulos

Committee Members,

I'm submitting testimony in support of the aquarium fishery and reopening West Hawaii by issuing permits. There is sound science that backs this fishery and it is the only fishery in the State to have completed the HEPA review process. The aquarium fishery should be recognized as an important example of how a sustainable fishery should be managed.

Thank you,
Zach Nyburg

Committee Members,

I support reopening the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery and managing resources by science provided by DAR. I oppose a ban. This is the only fishery in the state to go through the HEPA process.

Thank you,
Kenzi White

Committee Members,

I support issuing permits for aquarium fishing in West Hawaii. Decades of research show Hawaii's aquarium fishery is sustainable and carefully managed, supporting healthy reef ecosystems. Reopening it would restore livelihoods of locals and community businesses that have been impacted by the ongoing closure of the fishery.

Mahalo,
Brian Fitzpatrick

Committee Members,

I am supporting the West Hawaii Aquarium Fishery because it has been through HEPA as it was required to and because it has been proven through years of research and studies to be a viable and sustainable fishery.

Thank you very much,
Beverly Howard

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 4:21:03 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vanessa Lee Miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which (an estimated 90%) die within a year after collection. In the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai‘i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West

Hawai'i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law.

Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Ultimately, the legislature as our elected branch of government has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

Hawai'i's reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Additionally, on-reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and healthy ecosystems and generate approximately \$1.2 billion annually in economic benefits – about a thousand times more than commercial aquarium collection which generates only \$1-2 million per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continent.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai'i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai'i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Vanessa Lee Miller

Hilo, Hawaii

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 4:21:11 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeanne Cooper	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I am writing you in several capacities: as a longtime travel writer and Hawai'i guidebook author; as president of the board of Hawaii Island Humane Society, the oldest and largest animal welfare organization on Hawai'i Island; and as a resident of Moku O Keawe with concerns about the noticeable depletion of reef fish in the 25 years since I first came as a visitor.

Not only do I support this bill's limits on commercial aquarium collecting—which contributes far less to our state economically than the visitors who come to snorkel and dive—I also urge you to expand its protections to islands with less than 500,000 in population, including Hawai'i Island. There are no humane ways to collect, transport and display reef fish outside of our islands, and the continued decline of our reef fish population will harm our reputation among visitors. I believe allowing commercial aquarium collection is also in conflict with the traditional stewardship of reef resources in these islands.

Thank you in advance for extending protections of our amazing aquatic life.

Jeanne Cooper

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 4:51:52 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Jose DVM	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

I support the ban on aquarium collection as a veterinarian and as a life long resident of the Big Island. The aquarium trade is not only detrimental to our already struggling reef ecosystems, but also extremely inhumane to the animals that are extracted. There is no positive outcome from this industry for anyone except for the few individuals who profit from this activity. Please pass Bill HB2101.

Maria Jose DVM

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O’ahu. **I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:**

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai’i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne’ohe, and Kahalu’u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than **\$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue** and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai’i’s marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai’i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to **pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban *statewide and permanently*, as originally drafted.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Elsa Kalanikauleleiaiwi Dedman
P.O. Box 230
Naalehu, Hawaii 96772
Phone:832-230-7673

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O’ahu. **I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.**

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai’i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which (an estimated 90%) die within a year after collection. In the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai’i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawai’i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law.

Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Ultimately, the legislature as our elected branch of government has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

Hawai’i’s reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Additionally, on-reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and healthy ecosystems and generate approximately **\$1.2 billion** annually in economic benefits – *about a thousand times more* than commercial aquarium collection which generates only **\$1-2 million** per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continent.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai’i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai’i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to **pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply *statewide and permanently*, as originally drafted.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Michael Phillip Alexander
P.O. Box 230
Naalehu, Hawaii 96772

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 6:59:00 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maile Villablanca	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai‘i’s marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai‘i is

sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 7:43:21 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James T Lovell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposed to this bill.

I can not believe that we are considering choosing one user group over another. This is a use conflict nothing else.

The introduction of this bill clearly shows that if you tell a lie often enough, you can get people to believe you.

This industry has been proven to be sustainable time and time again. The government's own scientist's fish counts over the last twenty five years show the industry has not caused a depletion. During the last twenty years the industry was open the amount of yellow tangs INCREASED by over 3 million yellow tangs.

The amount of defamatory and slanders commits that continue to be told has been overwhelming and deeply disappointing to me.

Since the very first statement in this bill is a lie and not one committee has corrected it, is really sad. If you support this bill, you are making a statement that the science does not matter and you do not care that you are destroying livelihoods based on some user groups emotions.

I have lost trust that I will ever be treated fairly. Aren't you suppose to treat all user groups fairly. We are only talking about one fisherman per day diving in over 150 miles of coastline with over half the reef permanently shut down to us. Do you really think that it is possible for me to destroy the entire coast. Please think about that and vote no one this bill.

Mahalo

Jim Lovell

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:34:58 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elexis Kalar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Elexis Kalar, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Elexis Kalar

Testimony Relating to HB 2101 HD1 Relating to Commercial Aquarium Collection

To: Chair Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III (Committee on Hawaiian Affairs)

Chair Chis Lee (Committee of Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts)

From: Jo-Ann Leong, Director Emerita, Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology
Distinguished Professor Emerita, Oregon State University

Aloha Chair Richards and Chair Lee,

I have been asked [to comment on HB 2101 HD1 by the community of the Koolaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club](#) by the community of the Koolaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club to comment on HB 2101 HD1. At issue is the community's desire to protect the resources of Kaneohe Bay.

I have read the testimonies submitted by citizens and action groups in support of and opposed to HB2101 HD1, as well as the scientific papers that support the fact that DLNR enacted sustainable practices in the West Hawaii Fishery management area. However,

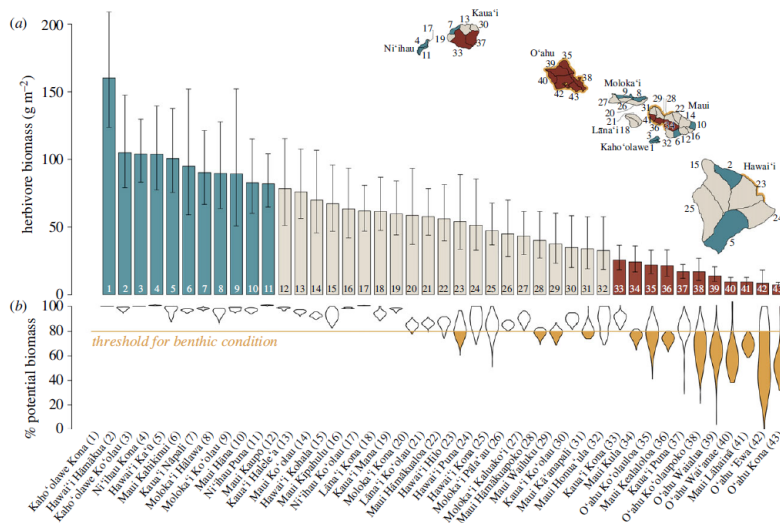


Figure 2. (a) Posterior estimates of herbivore biomass summarized across moku (land divisions). Bars are means and error bars are 50% intervals of posterior predictions for all 100 m pixels in each moku, and thus are post-stratified estimates that account for the relative distribution of habitat and variation in other predictors. Moku with mean values in the upper quartile (top fourth) are colored turquoise, and moku with mean values in the lower quartile (bottom fourth) are colored red. Numbers correspond to labels at the bottom of (b) and to numbers on map (inset) (a larger map of moku boundaries with labels is provided in electronic supplementary material, figure S6). (b) Violin plots of per cent potential biomass for all 100 m pixels in each moku estimated as the expected biomass from model in figure 1 divided by the potential biomass when fishing is minimized and all other predictors are held constant, with threshold (80%) below which benthic condition is predicted to decrease (from figure 3b). Moku with greater than 44% of area under the threshold are coloured yellow in b and the coastline is coloured yellow in the inset.

what is missing from this discussion is that Oahu's herbivore biomass is very low (Donovan et al., 2023)-. It is so low that Oahu mokus have the lowest fish biomass in the state, and every moku on Oahu has lower biomass of herbivorous fish than expected, even when controlling for differences in habitat. This very low level of fish biomass on Oahu compromises benthic condition and the health of the ecosystem.
It is so low that the benthic condition, the health of the ecosystem, is predicted to decline, and restoration of that ecosystem is needed.

This study, based on the analysis of 20,242 fish transects from 2004 to 2014, is comprehensive. Clearly, Oahu Island needs protection and should be included in the ban.

Reference: Donovan, Counsell, Donahue, Lecky, Gajdzik, Marcoux, Sparks, and Teague 2023. Evidence for managing herbivores for reef resilience. Proc. R. Soc. B 290:20232101.

I ask that the committee include Oahu in this ban.

Commented [MD1]: I might say it like this:

... Oahu's biomass is very low. It is so low that Oahu mokus have the lowest fish biomass in the state, and every moku on Oahu has lower biomass of herbivorous fish than expected, even when controlling for differences in habitat. This very low level of fish biomass on Oahu compromises benthic condition and the health of the ecosystem.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 12:36:39 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Fryer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2101 HD1 SD1 *with amendments* to reinstate the *original statewide ban* on commercial aquarium collection.

The aquarium collection industry was finally shut down by court order in 2017 after years of controversy and public opposition, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities. Hawaii residents overwhelmingly oppose aquarium collection, and have consistently called for comprehensive, long-term protections of our nearshore environment and its irreplaceable endemic species. The Board of Land and Natural Resources concurs with public opinion and supports a permanent statewide ban. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) now claims that it is statutorily forced to reopen the waters of West Hawai‘i, in a move that could lead to reopening other regions across our state.

Lifting the ban on aquarium collection would devastate our marine ecosystems, which are already adversely impacted by climate change and need our protection to ensure their survival. The damage done to these environments would also leave coastal communities vulnerable to marine natural disasters. Reef fish (particularly the herbivorous species targeted by aquarium collectors) play vital roles in the coral reefs that protect our coastlines from storm surge, tsunamis and erosion. Prior to 2017, the collection industry undermined the health and resilience of our reefs by removing of hundreds of thousands if not millions of reef fish per year. In our era of rising seas and increasingly violent storms, we urgently need the coastal buffer that healthy reefs provide. We must promote reef ecosystem recovery and prevent overfishing.

The current version of this bill will not effectively deter the aquarium trade. It proposes only a temporary ban limited to Oahu, which would leave other regions under-protected and would invite lobbying efforts to ultimately reopen Oahu as well. Stronger protections are needed for our reefs and for the communities that rely on them.

I respectfully urge you to reinstate this bill’s permanent statewide ban on commercial aquarium collection. Closing Hawai‘i to the aquarium industry would reflect the will of the public, would save West Hawai‘ian reefs from imminent exploitation, and would send a clear message that our wildlife is not for sale.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 4:54:47 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Senator Keohokalole, Vice Chair Senator Fukunaga and Members of the Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, and Chair Senator Rhoads, Vice Chair Senator Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Judiciary.

Please support HB 2101 HD 1 SD 1 which, to my understanding, would help to preserve aquatic life, and protect them, to a degree, from capture and sale for commercial aquarium purposes. Please consider extending the protections of this bill to include all counties, regardless of size.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 5:44:18 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melanie Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill as it prohibits the capture and sale of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, and sets up consideration of rules for the issuance of permits for the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes;

Please support survival of Hawaii's native marine life

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 5:51:19 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Hussenbux	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB2101, HD1, SD1 prohibits the capture and sale of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes, regardless of the method of collection in counties with a population greater than 500,000 and the consideration of rules for the issuance of permits for the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes; and repeals upon promulgation of certain rules by the Department of Land and Natural Resources for counties with a population greater than 500,000.

As the Hawai'i County Council and residents of Hawai'i Island have played a vital role in keeping this important measure alive we strongly urge the committee to include Hawai'i County in its protections.

We have written over several years to bodies in the State about this damaging commercial enterprise - damaging for the fishes, who often do not survive capture and transportation and damaging for your precious and beautiful reefs.

We beg to support the Bill.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 6:24:03 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Allen Chinn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons:

Protecting Targeted Communities

Commercial aquarium collection removes vital species from our reef ecosystems for commercial sale, export, and captivity. Historically, commercial aquarium collectors have focused their efforts on specific geographic areas, with measurable negative effects on the densities of fish and other species.

Targeted communities have repeatedly called for closure of the industry, as reflected in recent resolutions from the County of Hawai‘i and County of Maui calling on the legislature to ban the practice. Other representative bodies that have called on the legislature to ban this practice include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, and the Neighborhood Boards of Waimānalo, Kailua, Kāne‘ohe, and Kahalu‘u.

Ensuring Reef Health

Healthy and vibrant coral reefs generate more than \$1.2 billion annually in tourism revenue and provide critical ecosystem services, including shoreline protection and food security, adding further to their economic value.

A statutory ban on commercial aquarium collection protects this economic engine and foundation of resilience and preserves Hawai'i's marine resources for future generations by ensuring herbivorous species that support reef health remain on the reef.

Reducing Regulatory Costs

A clear prohibition would also simplify enforcement and reduce the cost of this industry to the state. To support its recent conclusion that commercial aquarium collection in West Hawai'i is sustainable, the Division of Aquatic Resources created a quota-based permit system which essentially closes the industry to the seven businesses who participated in the environmental review process.

A quota-based permit system closes economic pathways to industry newcomers and also requires intense policing that takes away from other vital duties of our DOCARE officers. This means that resources that could be directed elsewhere will instead be used for the benefit of a small number of industry participants.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committees to pass HB2101 HD1 SD1 with an amendment to restore the ban statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Allen Chinn

Hilo, Hawaii

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 6:31:55 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristi Woodham	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm here to support responsible aquarium fishing in Hawai'i and to oppose this bill.

I was born and raised in Hawai'i, and I've spent the past twenty years in the ocean.

The science is clear—when properly managed, aquarium fishing here is sustainable. It's a highly regulated fishery, supported by years of research, and it provides for local families. The Division of Aquatic Resources has done a great job managing this resource, and I believe it's time to let these fishermen get back to work.

If there are concerns about changes in fish populations, it's unlikely that a small number of permitted aquarium fishers are the cause. We should be looking at the bigger picture.

For example, I've personally seen dive guides damage coral while chasing marine life to show groups. I'm not trying to point fingers—just making the point that other impacts exist and should be part of the conversation.

This fishery is a model for proper regulation and there is truly no reason to not allow it to exist.

If we truly want to protect our reefs, we need balanced, science-based decisions.

Thank you for your time.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 8:18:11 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Graham-Wood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2101 HD1 SD1. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I reside at Sunset Beach, Oahu.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 9:42:03 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Stefanic-Phillip	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of Bill HB2101, HD1, SD1.

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 10:00:02 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposing

LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 11:36:53 AM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
emily gambino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Keohokālole, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committees,

My name is Emily Gambino, and I **SUPPORT HB2101 HD1 SD1 WITH AMENDMENTS** to reinstate the original *statewide* ban on commercial aquarium collection.

After years of controversy and concern, including from Native Hawaiian subsistence fishing communities, the aquarium collection industry was shut down by court order in 2017 and has remained closed for nearly a decade. However, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) is poised to reopen West Hawai‘i’s waters through proposed rules it claims are required under current law. This bill is a critical opportunity to make clear in statute that Hawai‘i’s waters should not be reopened to the ornamental aquarium trade, in West Hawai‘i or anywhere else across our island chain.

While I appreciate the intent of the current draft, limiting a commercial aquarium collection ban to O‘ahu—and only temporarily—falls short of the protections our reefs and communities need. The imminent reopening of West Hawai‘i’s waters to aquarium collection in particular calls for the legislature to expand the current prohibitions of this measure beyond O‘ahu, to apply permanently to all waters of Hawai‘i.

Reef fish, especially herbivorous species targeted by collectors, are essential to healthy coral reefs that protect our shorelines, support food systems, and sustain cultural and subsistence practices. When the industry was active, the removal of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of reef fish each year had disproportionate impacts on reef health, particularly in West Hawai‘i. This in turn undermined ecological balance, cultural practices, food systems, and myriad other public interests in our aquatic public trust resources.

With our reefs - and coral reefs worldwide - growing ever more vulnerable to irreversible collapse, we should not be inviting back an industry with such a history of harm, and that could further stress our reef ecosystems beyond the point of no return.

Communities across Hawai‘i have consistently called for stronger, lasting protections of our nearshore waters—not a return of harmful industries like the aquarium trade. It is far past time for the legislature to finally reflect the will of the majority of concerned constituents, and to put an end to the commercial aquarium collection industry in Hawai‘i, once and for all.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committees to strengthen this bill by reinstating a statewide, permanent ban on commercial aquarium collection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Emily Gambino

LATE

To The FEIS:

I am writing this letter on behalf of my Uncle Dave and Aunt Leatrice Ramos in regards to the Hawaiian Tropical fishing industry. My uncle and aunty spent most of their lives fishing for tropical fish in these Hawaiian waters. It was their main source of income and a way of life. With the recent ban on tropical fishing in Hawai'i, it has greatly impacted my uncle and aunty's livelihood and forced my uncle to find other means of work, whereas fishing was everything to him. Not only did Hawaiian tropical fishing provide sustainability of work, but also subsistence of income for my uncle and aunty as small business owners.

As a Kanaka Maoli, it states in the Gathering Rights for Native Hawaiians in the State Constitution of Hawai'i states the following:

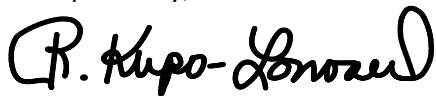
"The State reaffirms and shall protect all rights, customarily and traditionally exercised for subsistence, cultural and religious purposes and possessed by ahupua'a tenants who are descendants of native Hawaiians who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778, subject to the right of the State to regulate such rights."¹

My aunty is a partner in their family business and assisted with the daily production of labor and activities, therefore it should be allowed for her to continue to provide for her family within the scope of Native Hawaiian rights to gathering as aforementioned.

Finally, we ask humbly that you continue to allow the gathering of Hawaiian tropical fish. Both my aunty and uncle are very aware of preservation and providing opportunities to fish appropriately without the risk of eliminating our abundant fish resources.

Please put an end to the ban of tropical fishing in Hawaiian waters.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Kupo-Lonoae'a". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roberta Kupo-Lonoae'a

Opposed to HB2101 SD1 By Mary Tubbs

The higher take and higher user conflict in West Hawaii is why most fish counts were conducted there. The Oahu EIS was submitted and, due to new regulations, had to be further edited as a result of state EIS LAW CHANGES. This delay should not penalize our Oahu fishery!

Oahu, due to its much larger fishery grounds and much lower fish catch in DAR reports, had much fewer DLNR and DAR concerns. The Oahu 2015, during the [2015 Rules Package laws](#) , saw laws reviewed and passed to keep the fishery sustainable and low-impact in light of Global Warming concerns, and was deemed “Stable” by DAR scientists.

For those who do not understand fisheries science terms, this means Oahu was considered “sustainable” by DAR in 2015, before the fishery closure.

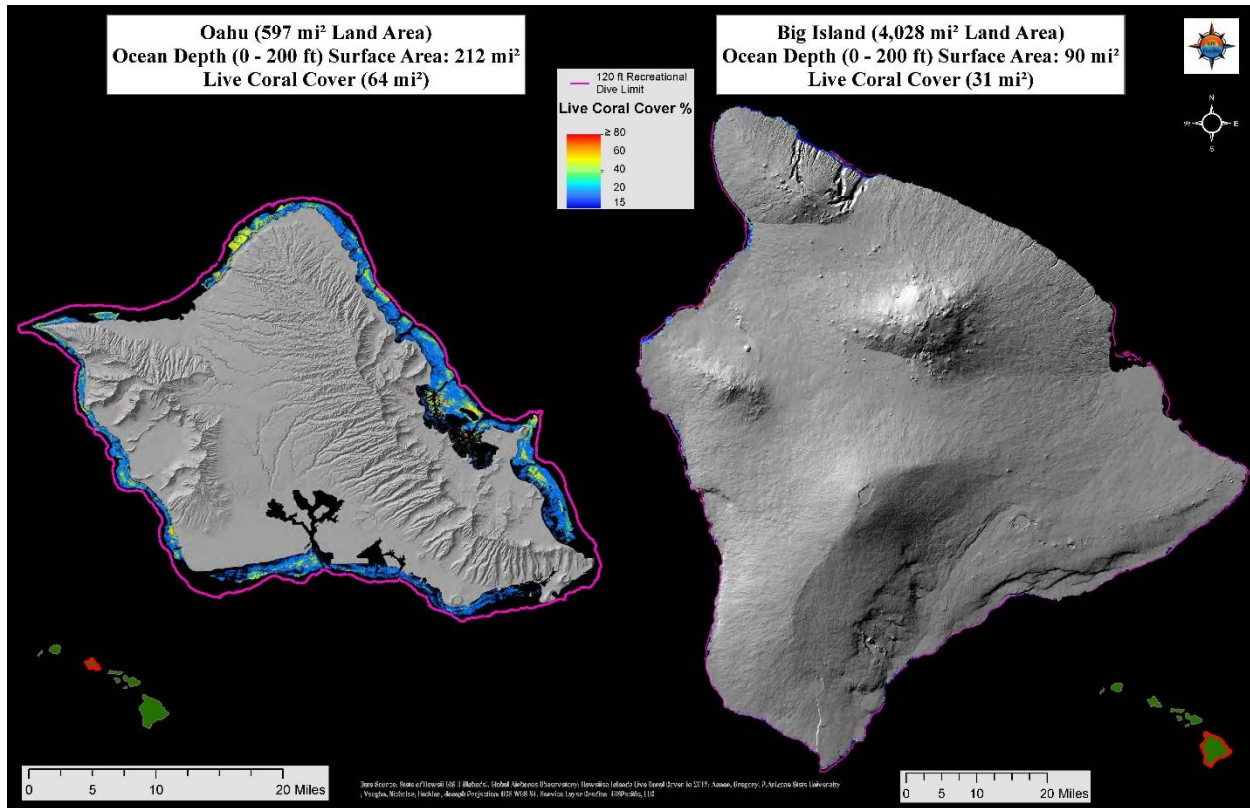
The Oahu fisheries got along with tourist groups and had no user conflict here on Oahu until the “Propaganda Train” of misinformation informational meetings made it a problem.

For example, in 2008, one of the highest catch report years for the fishery, in West Hawaii, the DAR catch report stats for Yellow Tangs were 304,184, while on Oahu, the Yellow Tang was 10,805. The same is true for Kole and others: West Hawaii took up a much larger catch over a much smaller area and thus received the higher scientific DAR review.

We know the results of West Hawaii Science: “SUSTAINABILITY WITH LOW IMPACTS.”

Oahu has 212 square miles of underwater landscape, with large mesophotic deep coral areas and high fish-population hard-bottom areas, compared with 90 square miles on the Big Island.

See USGS, GOES, NOAA data map:



Oahu Environmental Review map. 212 Square Miles of Undersea Diveable Landscape for Oahu and 64 Square Miles of Coral Cover for Oahu.

Oahu Aquarium Reef Fish Populations

AMAZING VIDEO OAHU FISH POPULATIONS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt8sRh493UI>

The current HB 2101 SD1 version is based on the misinformation that Oahu, with its *larger human population, has fewer fish, primarily stemming from Alan Friedlander's Ph.D. research in marine biology.* Link to Study Below

The HB2101 SD1 is just a further perversion of science, perpetuated by anti-fishery propaganda.

The higher human population locations showing lower fish populations, as reported by Friedlander, were based solely on larger marine reef fish used for seafood consumption, and the same studies clearly showed that reef fish used for aquarium purposes did not experience similar population declines.

Friedlander, one of Hawaii's leading scientists, spoke out in favor of the aquarium fishery.

Hawaii's top [leading](#) marine biologists [scientist speak](#) : William Walsh Ph.D., Ivor Williams Ph.D., Brian Tissot Ph.D.; Leon Hallacher Ph.D.; Bruce Carlson Ph.D.; Charles Birkeland Ph.D.; Jeremy Claisse Ph.D.; Mark Christie Ph.D.; Richard Pyle Ph.D.; Leighton Taylor Ph.D.; Randy Kosaki Ph.D.; Cynthia Hunter Ph.D.; Brian Bowen Ph.D.; Brian Zgliczynski Ph.D.; Jeff Ebel Ph.D.; **Alan Friedlander Ph.D.**; Kosta Stamoulis Ph.D.; Delisse Ortiz Ph.D.; Jan Dierking Ph.D.; Rob Toonen Ph.D.; and Jim Beets Ph.D. Thursday, June 25, 2020,

Dr. DAN A. POLHEMUS: "Currently, mortality rates from collection to wholesaler are estimated at 0 to 1 percent. In the wholesalers tanks, mortality rates range from close to 0% up to 2%. During shipment, rates range from 0.75% to 2%. This give a current total of between 1% and 5%, down from a range of 5% to 8% in the early 1980's (van Poolen and Obara, 1984; estimates of wholesalers and collectors, own study)." I haven't seen any work to support the figure of 99% mortality rate within one year for captive marinelife. So, in the grand scheme of things, the aquarium take on Maui is literally a drop in the bucket, representing less than 2% of the total mortality of reef animals" .

"This serves to point out that undue focus and hyperbole about aquarium collecting and its impact on the reefs is dangerously shortsighted and counterproductive. We need to think and act holistically".

Dr. DAN A. POLHEMUS Division of Aquatic Resources, State of Hawaii DLNR Date: December 23, 2009 8:25:16 AM HST To: Rene Umberger, she misquoted him and perverted his science, and continues to do so!

Opposed to HB 2101 SD1

The continued action is based on misinformation from a group of con men, which is the foundation of a huge disinformation campaign to discredit all the science supporting the sustainable aquarium fisheries. Continuing to listen to these pseudo-science disseminators will lead to dire consequences; it already has!

We have repeatedly provided proof of the lies and disinformation from those opposing the aquarium fishery.

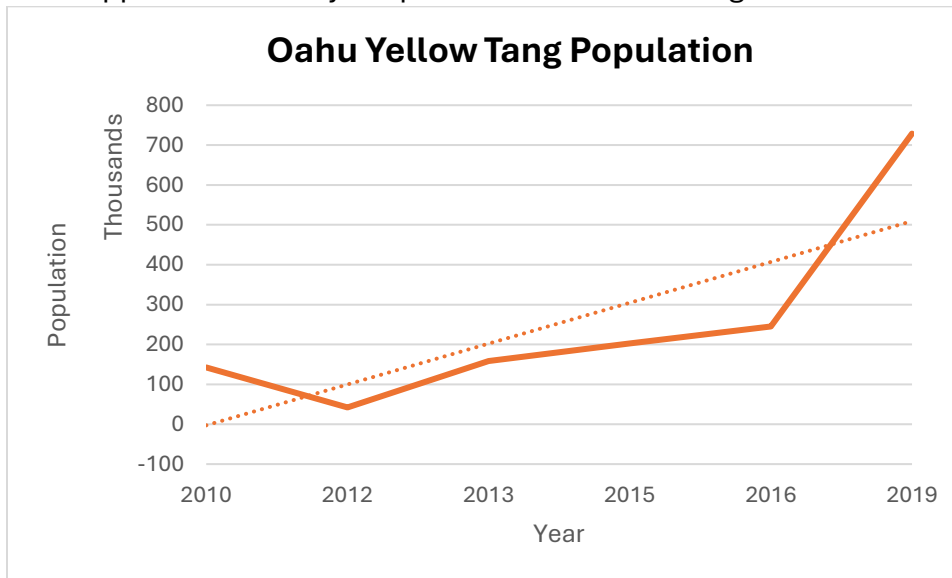
The 21 Leading Scientists listed above: **"As experienced Hawaii marine science researchers with a direct/intimate understanding of this issue, we find the disregard for the science-based management initiatives of DAR and island communities demoralizing and counterproductive. We expect better from DLNR leadership. We want to re-emphasize that the strong support we are expressing for this fishery is due entirely to the survey**

efforts and results of the DAR research team. There is a large body of data and other evidence showing that the aquarium fishery is sustainably managed and that the system works. This type of science-based management should be a model for other fisheries in Hawaii. The truth is out there; it needs to be embraced".

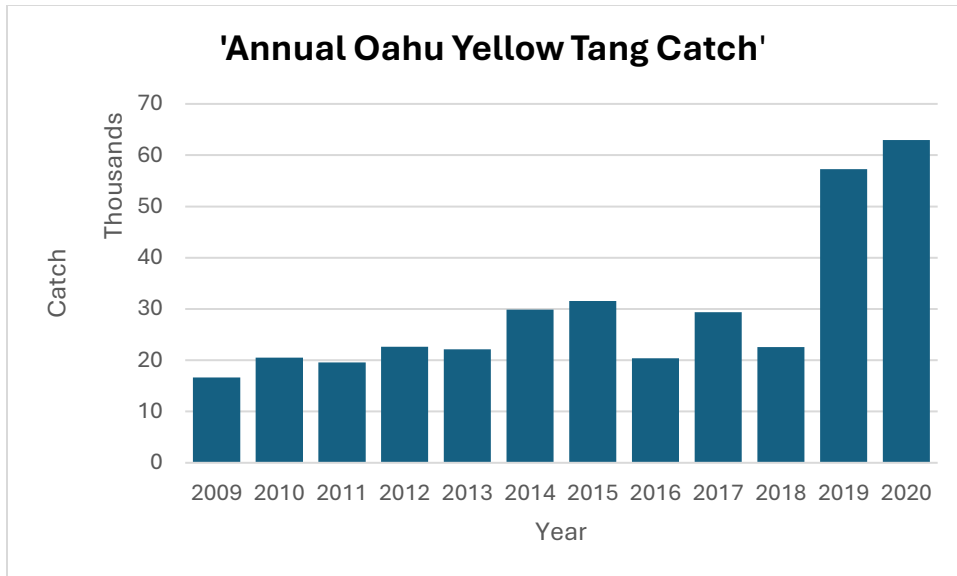
“There were no significant differences in damaged coral between control and collected sites to indicate the presence of destructive fishing practices. In addition, there were no increases in the abundance of macroalgae where the abundance of herbivores was reduced by aquarium collecting”.

Yellow tangs originated in the Western Pacific and migrated to Hawaii. Many considered endemic species have their origins elsewhere than Hawaii and rode in on currents from areas like Okinawa which is 4820 miles away from Hawaii. Once reaching Hawaii they evolved into distinct Hawaii species. DNA studies show Maui was an original destination current transport hotspot for these larval Hawaii Imports, which can now be exported.

Oahu Yellow Tang, ***Zebrasoma flavescens***, DAR Catch Report Data for the Aquarium Fishery between 2009 to 2020, comparison to Fish Populations 2010 to 2019 done by **PIFSC**, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC). One would expect to see an inverse relationship in these charts if the fishery were not sustainable. The Oahu Aquarium Fishery's most targeted species, Yellow Tangs, from 2009 to 2020, has the following data that supports the fishery despite increased take being done at a sustainable level.



2010 to 2019 done by PIFSC, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) Yellow Tangs *Zebrasoma flavescens* 2010-2019 Oahu Population Hard Bottom 0-98 ft only. Currently done only every three years. Data is only available for the years of surveys listed above



DAR Catch Report Stats Yellow Tangs *Zebrasoma flavescens* 2009-2020

Due to the West Hawaii closure in 2017, the yellow tang catches for Oahu increased, but the fish populations also increased (2017-2019 above). It is important to note that the Oahu Aquarium fishery operated between 2010, the first year of the fish surveys, and 2020. The above fish population data shows an increase in fish populations during the fisheries' activities from 2010 to 2020. Notably, the greatest increase in the yellow tang population occurred during the highest catch years of the Oahu fishery. After the Courts ordered the EIS requirement, the fishery on Oahu continued under CML licenses from 2017 to the end of 2020. Data from West Hawaii also show no significant declines in fish counts related to fishery catches over the course of decades of surveys, indicating stable populations during the fisheries' open years. This stability also continues even in higher catch years.

Below is the raw data for the above charts.

2010 to 2019 done by PIFSC, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) NOAA Yellow Tangs *Zebrasoma flavescens* 2010-2019 Oahu Population Hard Bottom 0-98 ft only.

The State of Hawaii public officers' oath is to uphold the state's constitution. If decisions are made that are biased and not based in facts it violates that oath. It is unconstitutional to shut out any ocean user group, to do so violates the Hawaii State and Federal constitutions, Ocean Law, and the "Oceans are the Common Heritage of All Men" United Nations. No one group can lay claim to any part of the ocean; it is public trust.

The continued actions based on misinformation from a group of con men, which is the foundation of a huge disinformation campaign to discredit all the science supporting the sustainable aquarium fisheries. Continuing to listen to these pseudo-science disseminators will lead to dire consequences; it already has!

PIFSC Raw data:

YEAR	Common Name	SCIENTIFIC NAME	Estimated Population	Standard error	LOWER_95CI	UPPER_95CI	cv
2010	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	142507	87648.3432	0	314297.7527	0.615
2012	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	42100	21170.1405	606.52462	83593.47538	0.5028
2013	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	158506	62575.02003	35858.9607	281153.0393	0.3947
2015	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	202817	96432.57772	13809.1477	391824.8523	0.4754
2016	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	245045	128527.4331	0	496958.7689	0.5245
2019	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	728777	443025.2708	0	1597106.531	0.6079

142507
 42100
 158506
 202817
 245045
 728777
 1519752
 Divided by 6=
 253,292
 Average
 PopulationTake
 at 5%
 12664.6
 Each/yr is 5%

DAR Fish Catch Stats Yellow Tangs Zebrasoma flavescens 2009-2020

Year	Aquarium Name	Scientific Name	Sum of Number Caught	Sum of Total Value \$ Fisher
2009	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	278,624	1,190,054.78

2010	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	364,487	1,459,174.72
2011	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	304,322	1,191,356.44
2012	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	332,295	1,350,707.94
2013	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	311,524	1,268,577.87
2014	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	338,360	1,423,912.30
2015	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	337,017	1,376,098.96
2016	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	332,963	1,229,805.91
2017	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	269,553	990,102.77
2018	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	79,775	368,202.00
2019	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	124,670	699,154.00
2020	Yellow Tang	Zebrasoma flavescens	95,157	592,358.50

Eble, J. A., Toonen, R. J., Sorenson, L., Basch, L. V., Papastamatiou, Y. P., & Bowen, B. W. (2011). Escaping paradise: larval export from Hawaii in an Indo-Pacific reef fish, the yellow tang *Zebrasoma flavescens*. *Marine Ecology Progress Series*, 428, 245-258.

References

Video links aquarium fish EIS YouTube, **amazing video** of the environmental review:

Video of Fish on Oahu, Environmental Review:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt8sRh493UI>

Video of Hawaii's Most Abundant Wrasse: Flame Wrasse Oahu:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z45MzI_Nkt8

Video Of Oahu Yellow Tangs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psTHLKfsdIA&t=8s>

Website Explaining Fishery with Science Links

<https://hawaiitropicalsaltwateraquariumfish.com/>

Friedlander-et-al.-2017-Human-induced-gradients-of-reef-fish-declines-in-the-Hawaiian-Archipelago-viewed-through-the-lens-of-traditional-management-boundaries.pdf
<https://share.google/te0NH4kECoRq5a56X> (Only Larger Fish For Food Purposes are having Declines in High Population Areas)

Williams, I. D., et al. "Impacts of a Hawaiian marine protected area network on the abundance and fishery sustainability of the yellow tang, *Zebrasoma flavescens*." *Biological Conservation* 142.5 (2009): 1066-1073.

Claisse, Jeremy T., et al. "Habitat-and sex-specific life history patterns of yellow tang *Zebrasoma flavescens* in Hawaii, USA." *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 389 (2009): 245-255.

LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 3:39:52 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maya L Chong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chairs Keohokalole and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Fukunaga and Gabbard, and Members of the Senate Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Judiciary:

I strongly support with amendments HB2101 HD1 SD1 to ban commercial aquarium collection. However, I request that the proposed ban be amended to apply – as originally proposed – statewide and permanently, rather than temporarily and only on the island of O‘ahu. **I support a permanent statewide ban for the following reasons.**

Commercial aquarium fishing flies in the face of Hawai‘i’s constitutional public trust doctrine, which requires that our natural and cultural resources be used and conserved for the public good, rather than private gain.

The aquarium collection industry has extracted and exported millions of specimens of public trust marine life for commercial sale – the vast majority of which (an estimated 90%) die within a year after collection. In the wild, these species can live for 30-40 years.

At the same time, this commercial activity has diminished the ecological and cultural integrity of our reef systems, undermined the state’s food security and climate resilience, and degraded a cornerstone of our tourism-based economy. Not surprisingly, the majority of Hawai‘i residents, and Native Hawaiian subsistence communities in particular, support a ban on commercial aquarium collection.

While commercial aquarium collection has not been allowed for the better part of a decade, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has recently proposed rules that would reopen West Hawai‘i waters to commercial aquarium collection, claiming that they are mandated to do so under state law.

Yet as DAR has recognized, agency rulemaking regulates how an activity operates, not whether the activity should be allowed. Ultimately, the legislature as our elected branch of government has the authority – and responsibility – to decide whether this activity should be permitted at all.

Hawai‘i’s reef fish are an integral part of a critical ecosystem that supports food security, cultural and subsistence practices, and shoreline protection.

Additionally, on-reef tourism activities depend on vibrant and healthy ecosystems and generate approximately **\$1.2 billion** annually in economic benefits – *about a thousand times more* than commercial aquarium collection which generates only **\$1-2 million** per year – most of which is realized through sales outside of the state since 95% of the fish collected are exported to the continent.

Given the cost of commercial aquarium fishing to the State of Hawai‘i due to required environmental reviews, DAR and DOCARE enforcement, and potential litigation, the cost of the industry to Hawai‘i far outweighs its benefits.

For these reasons, along with the ever-increasing stressors placed on our marine environment due to climate change, a statutory ban is critical to protect a major economic engine and cornerstone of resilience for our present and future generations.

Therefore, I respectfully urge the Committees to **pass HB2101 HD1 SD1, with an amendment to restore the ban to apply statewide and permanently, as originally drafted.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Maya Chong
Hawai‘i Island

LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 3:53:13 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard xie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong oppose HB2101 SD1. Oahu fishermen follow court rule in 2021 to prepare the EIS. Due to the EIS requirement changes, the association can't finish the EIS on time. Kona was shut down in 2017. Kona and Oahu should be considered the same even though Kona passed the EIS report earlier. Oahu doesn't report any decline on fish. It is just emotional to ban Oahu tropical fish fishing. As long as there are good management and rules to follow, the industry is sustainable!

LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 5:10:18 PM

Testimony for CPN on 4/2/2026 9:20:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laa Poepoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

-The aquarium industry is void of cultural significance, which is why there is a clear consensus of legitimate cultural practitioners among the hawaiian community in support of prohibition.

- Lobbyists are putting a suspiciously substantial amount of effort behind defending the extraction of our shared public resource for private financial gain.

-There is no outright public benefit provided by commercial aquarium fishing that is satisfactory to both sides.

-The science is offset by even more incoming and updated science.

-An EIS must not be mistaken for a guaranteed issuance of a permit.

-2026 is the year of our coastal kuleana, guys!

Support HB2101 STATEWIDE prohibition.

LATE

My name is Rufus Kimura and I write in strong opposition to HB2101.

Born on Molokai and raised in Waianae from age 8, I grew up in a community facing poverty, violence, drugs, and homelessness. Diving and collecting tropical fish became my escape and pathway forward – it funded my education at Leeward Community College and Albertson College of Idaho. Upon returning from college, I utilized my educational experience to build a successful tropical fish import/export business that employed 8-10 local divers and packers from Waianae and Nanakuli. We operated responsibly, contributed to the local economy and promoted reef stewardship.

The aquarium ban devastated this. Without the issuance of permits, I closed operations, laid off my team, listed my home and warehouse for sale and moved to Alaska to pursue their well-managed state fisheries. There, I've seen how science-based management by the Department of Fish and Game sustainably allocates resources like King Salmon among commercial, sport, subsistence, and indigenous users through accurate data and equitable sharing. Hawaii can—and should—do the same.

The current HB2101, especially in its amended form linking Oahu to the Holomua process, preempts the Department of Aquatic Resources (DAR) and Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) authority. It halts the ongoing Chapter 91 rulemaking process, disregarding court-mandated reviews, the comprehensive HEPA environmental review, and extensive public input. This fishery is already Hawaii's most managed and has proven sustainable through data-driven limits.

This bill threatens local families and businesses, including Native Hawaiians in economically challenged Westside communities, exacerbating displacement as locals are priced out. It risks unnecessary litigation by bypassing due process and sets a dangerous precedent for legislatively banning other managed fisheries based on ideology rather than science.

I urge you to reject HB2101 and allow the established, science-based regulatory process to proceed. Waianae's hardworking locals deserve this opportunity to better their circumstances by participating in the most well-managed and scientifically proven sustainable fishery that exists in Hawaii.

Sincerely, Rufus Kimura