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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

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

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

Before the House Committee on  
WATER & LAND

Tuesday, March 24, 2026  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 411

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 2973, SENATE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO FISHING

Senate Bill 2973, Senate Draft 1 proposes to prohibit in, on, or near State waters the possession or use of buoyant jugs, bottles, or other flotation devices with the primary purpose of suspending a fishing line, hook, and weight, except for store-bought or home-made fishing floats or bobbers that are cast with rod and reel or used while hand-pole fishing. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this bill and offers the following comments.**

The Department recognizes the growing concern regarding the use of so-called "jug rig" variants and their threats to marine life and ocean users. Because there remain some public misconceptions about what this type of fishing entails, the Department notes that it is specifically the use of such fishing gears while paddling out, swimming out, or (now illegally) droning out fishing lines from shore that is especially problematic in nearshore waters and likely the cause of death for the Hawaiian monk seal Moana in September 2025. By itself, the use of a buoyant device, typically an empty jug, to keep a baited hook above the ocean floor presents certain unwanted risks. However, it is the great distances from shore that these rigs are deployed and the excessively heavy pound test braided lines used that perhaps present the greatest risks of environmental harm and ocean user conflict. In short, while removing the buoyant device element from the rig may deter use and alleviate some risks, it would not address all of them.

The Department recommends clearly defining not only the targeted gear, but also the specific method in which it is used. There are multiple legal gears and methods that employ the use

of “flotation devices with the primary purpose of suspending a fishing line, hook, and weight” that are different from the jug fishing rigs that this measure seeks to address. Narrowing the definition would remove unintended impacts on gears and methods that may not be the object of this bill’s focus, such as longline fishing gear, which is authorized by federal permit for use well beyond state waters, but which is possessed aboard Hawai‘i-based vessels in state waters during transit and while at berth.

Accordingly, the Department recommends that the bill language be amended to read as follows (revised language highlighted):

**"§188- Jug line fishing; prohibited.** (a) Except as provided in subsection (c), it is unlawful to ~~possess or use on, in, or near~~ deploy from shore or lands of the state into state marine waters any fishing device or rig that makes use of buoyant jugs, bottles, or other flotation devices with the primary purpose of suspending a fishing line, hook, and weight.

(b) The possession or use of any of these devices on, in, or near the water where aquatic life can be taken~~, or aboard any fishing vessel or boat~~ is prima facie evidence of a violation of this section.

(c) This section shall not apply to the use of store-bought or home-made fishing floats or bobbers that are cast with rod and reel or used while hand-pole fishing."

Lastly, given the challenges associated with clearly defining jug fishing gear and practices in statute, the Department recommends that this bill include a sunset provision once administrative rules are adopted. This approach would provide flexibility to refine the regulatory framework and address any unintended impacts to other lawful fishing methods.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

‘Ōlelo Hō‘ike ‘Aha Kau Kānāwai

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL SB2973 SD1**

RELATING TO FISHING

Ke Kōmike Hale o ka Wai a me ka ‘Āina

(House Committee on Water & Land)

Ke Kapitala ‘o Hawai‘i

(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

Malaki 24, 2026

9:00 AM

Lumi 411

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Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and Members of the House Committee on Water & Land:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS SB2973 SD1** which would prohibit jug line fishing and jug rig variant fishing methods in state waters. This measure bans a high-risk gear method associated with wildlife entanglement, ghost fishing, marine debris, reef damage, and documented harm to endangered wildlife.

OHA was established pursuant to section 5(f) of the Admissions Act and Article XII of the Hawai‘i Constitution to serve as a trust entity for the betterment of Native Hawaiians. Hawai‘i Revised Statutes section 10-3(4) directs OHA to assess and advocate regarding policies affecting Native Hawaiian rights and resources. Hawai‘i’s Constitution further provides that the State shall conserve and protect natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations. Nearshore marine ecosystems, coral reefs, and protected marine species are public trust resources, and the State bears an affirmative obligation to prevent their impairment. The proposed ban is consistent with OHA’s existing duties to advance Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights under Article XII, section 7 of the Hawai‘i State Constitution and longstanding OHA policy to protect natural resources that are important to the culture and lifestyle of Native Hawaiians. **SB2973 SD1** does not restrict customary or traditional fishing practices but addresses a specific high-risk gear method.

The direct harms of jug rig variant fishing to marine species by entanglement are not speculative but documented. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) acknowledges heavy pound-test line and buoyant jugs increase the risk of gear loss and wildlife entanglement, leading to fatal consequences. Furthermore, jug-line fishing variant method is already documented to have caused the death of the Hawaiian monk seal (*‘Ilio*

*holo i ka uaua*), RS34/Moana.<sup>1</sup> Monk Seals are federally listed as endangered, with an estimated population of approximately 1,600 individuals.<sup>2</sup> Each mortality event materially affects species recovery. The RS34/Moana incident demonstrates the risk inherent in buoyed, unattended hook-and-line systems that can drift, become lost, or remain in the water column where marine mammals and turtles (*honu*) forage. Jug line gear can also cause direct physical damage to coral reefs. Lines and weights can abrade live coral tissue, reduce structural complexity, and impair reef resilience. Coral reefs are not only ecological systems but critical natural infrastructure. Peer-reviewed research demonstrates that coral reefs dissipate up to 97 percent of incoming wave energy, providing significant coastal hazard risk reduction and adaptation benefits.<sup>3</sup> Degrading reef systems increases vulnerability to shoreline erosion and flooding, elevating public costs and threatening coastal communities. Preventing avoidable reef damage is therefore a climate resilience and public safety imperative, not solely a fisheries management issue.

National authorities have long recognized the dangers posed by lost and abandoned fishing gear. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)'s Marine Debris Program identifies derelict fishing gear as a significant source of wildlife entanglement and "ghost fishing," where gear continues to capture and kill marine animals long after it is no longer actively used.<sup>4</sup> NOAA Fisheries likewise identifies fishing gear entanglement as a serious threat to marine mammals and sea turtles nationwide, requiring coordinated prevention and response efforts.<sup>5</sup> Jug line systems—buoyant, semi-mobile, and frequently unattended—fall squarely within the category of gear types known to create these persistent hazards.

Hawai'i's action eliminating fishing by this risky gear furthers the State's Constitutional duty to protect our public trust resources and aligns with best practices. OHA respectfully urges the committee to **PASS SB2973 SD1**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

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<sup>1</sup> Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, News Release, Death of Monk Seal Underscores Importance of Responsible Fishing Practices, September 19, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA Fisheries, *Hawaiian Monk Seal Population Status Report* (2024).

<sup>3</sup> Filippo Ferrario et al., The Effectiveness of Coral Reefs for Coastal Hazard Risk Reduction and Adaptation, *Nature Communications* 5 (2014)

<sup>4</sup> NOAA Marine Debris Program, "Wildlife Entanglement and Ghost Fishing," updated March 14, 2023. <https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/why-marine-debris-problem/wildlife-entanglement-and-ghost-fishing>, (last accessed February 14, 2026).

<sup>5</sup> NOAA Fisheries, Entanglement of Marine Life: Risks and Response. <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/insight/entanglement-marine-life-risks-and-response>, (last accessed February 14, 2026.)

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 6:31:06 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kayleigh Grant	Kaimana Ocean Safari	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kayleigh Grant. I am an ocean educator and co-owner of an ocean tourism business in Kona called Kaimana Ocean Safari. Through my daily work in the ocean, I regularly witness the impacts of fishing gear on marine wildlife.

I am writing in support of restrictions on jug fishing in Hawai‘i.

Jug lines can create serious entanglement risks for animals such as sharks, sea turtles, dolphins and endangered monk seals. I have personally seen sharks negatively affected by jug gear, including situations where fishermen have attached jugs directly to sharks as a way to keep them away from targeted fish. My team and I have removed multiple jug lines from both live and dead sharks in offshore waters.

These preventable impacts threaten not only marine ecosystems but also Hawai‘i’s sustainable ocean tourism economy and cultural connection to the sea.

I respectfully urge decision-makers to take action to reduce unnecessary harm to marine wildlife.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 9:22:54 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sarah Milisen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing on behalf of Ocean Defenders Alliance, a 501c3 non profit that coordinates widescale underwater cleanups in Hawaiian waters, and I am in support of the ban of jugging. It is purposely harmful for protected species, purposely litters marine debris, and kills endangered animals. It is not humane and jugging should be illegal.

mahalo

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 7:01:13 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dana Jones	Hawaiian Monk Seal Preservation Ohana	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please accept this as my most recent testimony supporting the bill to pass the ban on jug fishing. I have worked with NOAA fisheries and the Hawaiian Monk Seals for 20 years. This is a horrible way to die and is completely an unsustainable method of fishing. It kills all marine life at some point or other and does not belong in Hawaiian waters. It is destroying Pono.

Mahalo for your Consideration and support.

Hawaiian Monk Seal Preservation Ohana

Dana Jones, Executive Director, 808-393-5043

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 1:07:49 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
savetheseaturtlesinternational	Save The Sea Turtles International	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB2973

Submitted by: Save the Sea Turtles International

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

Save the Sea Turtles International respectfully submits testimony in strong support of SB2973 to prohibit jug line fishing in Hawai‘i.

As an organization dedicated to the protection and conservation of sea turtles and marine ecosystems worldwide, we are deeply concerned about the impacts of unattended and non-selective fishing methods such as jug lines. These systems, which consist of multiple baited hooks left drifting or anchored without direct supervision, present a serious entanglement and ingestion risk to sea turtles—species that are already threatened and protected under state and federal law.

Sea turtles are particularly vulnerable to this type of fishing gear. Attracted to bait, they can become hooked, entangled, or drown when unable to reach the surface to breathe. Because jug lines are often left unattended for extended periods, there is little opportunity for timely release or intervention, significantly increasing mortality rates. This is inconsistent with Hawai‘i’s longstanding leadership in marine conservation and its legal responsibility to protect endangered species.

In addition to direct harm to sea turtles, jug line fishing contributes to broader ecological degradation. Lost or abandoned lines can continue to “ghost fish,” capturing marine life indiscriminately and disrupting fragile reef and pelagic ecosystems. These impacts undermine the health of Hawai‘i’s oceans, which are essential to biodiversity, cultural heritage, and sustainable local economies.

SB2973 represents a practical and necessary step toward reducing preventable harm to marine wildlife. By eliminating a high-risk, low-accountability fishing method, Hawai‘i can further strengthen its commitment to responsible ocean stewardship and the protection of vulnerable species.

We urge the Committee to pass SB2973 and take decisive action to safeguard sea turtles and the marine ecosystems they depend on.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Save the Sea Turtles International

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 1:11:15 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
One Ocean	One Ocean Research	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Testimony in Strong Support of Senate Bill 2973 (SB2973)**

**(Prohibiting Jug Line Fishing and Jug Rig Variant Methods)**

To the Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Senate Committees on Water and Land (WTL) and Judiciary (JDC):

I submit this testimony **in strong support** of **SB2973** on behalf of **One Ocean Conservation**, founded by shark specialist Ocean Ramsey and underwater cinematographer Juan Oliphant. We are dedicated to shifting global perceptions of sharks, promoting marine coexistence, and protecting ocean ecosystems through education, noninvasive research, entanglement rescues, reef cleanups, and advocacy for preventive protections.

We have freed over 1,000 entangled sharks and collaborated on hundreds of sea turtle releases while removing tons of marine debris—including discarded fishing gear—from Hawaiian reefs and beaches. These efforts reveal the severe harm caused by derelict lines and hooks: deep cuts, infections, drowning, and death for sharks, sea turtles, monk seals, dolphins, and seabirds.

**SB2973 directly addresses a major source of preventable harm.** Jug line fishing and similar floating-rig methods are highly indiscriminate and prone to becoming lost or abandoned gear. When jugs detach or lines break, they become “ghost fishing” debris that drifts indefinitely, entangling and killing marine life. Banning these methods in state waters will:

- Reduce marine debris at the source
- Prevent entanglement injuries to vulnerable species
- Protect reef ecosystems and biodiversity essential to sharks and sea turtles

This straightforward prohibition aligns with our mission: eliminate threats before they cause damage, rather than manage the consequences. It complements existing protections and supports responsible stewardship of Hawaii’s waters.

**We urge prompt passage of SB2973 without amendment.** Preventing ghost fishing gear is a high-impact, low-burden step toward healthier oceans.

Mahalo for your commitment to protecting Hawaii's marine life.

Sincerely,

[oneoceanresearch.org](http://oneoceanresearch.org)

Oahu, Hawai'i

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 4:18:02 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Inga Gibson	For the Fishes	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Hashem and WAL Committee members,

For the Fishes strongly supports SB2973 to prohibit the deadly and indiscriminate practice of jug-line fishing.

Jug-line refers to the use of plastic jugs, often empty bleach bottles, that capture and entangle marine life, preventing the animal from escaping or submerging, as the jug acts as a buoy. Monk seals, sharks and turtles often fall victim, whether or not they were even the intended target.

No ethical fisher would engage in or support such a practice which has no place in Hawaii waters or elsewhere.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our strong support of this bill.

Rene Umberger

For the Fishes



March 23, 2026

Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 S Beretania St  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Committee Members,

Aloha mai, my name is Jonnetta Peters, Executive Director of Conservation Council for Hawai'i (CCH), a non-profit environmental and conservation organization who serves to protect and save native species and their habitats. CCH is the Hawai'i affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation. **CCH STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2973 SD1.**

Addressing the lethal threat to endangered species, such as the Hawaiian monk seal, green sea turtle, oceanic whitetip shark, and other important oceanic creatures. Sadly, we lost Moana, a prolific female Hawaiian Monk Seal #RS34, to a jug rig. This measure would prevent hooking and entanglement of other monk seals and endangered marine animals. Reducing marine debris will help eliminate non-selective gear that often persists in the ocean long after use and protect and safeguard coral reefs from heavy-test lines and abandoned flotation devices.

I respectfully urge this Committee to **PASS SB2973 SD1.**

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify,

Jonnetta Peters  
Executive Director

**Telephone/Fax: 224.338-6511 | email: [info@conservehi.org](mailto:info@conservehi.org)**

**web: [www.conservehawaii.org](http://www.conservehawaii.org) | P.O. Box 2923, Honolulu, HI 96802**

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

**Treasurer:** Mashuri Waite, PhD |

**Directors:** Erica Amundson, Puanani Anderson-Fung, Maka'ala Ka'auomoana, 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*

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 8:11:12 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jenny Yagodich	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea is the community-based nonprofit that cares for, educates about, and protects the Pūpūkea Marine Life Conservation District on the North Shore of O‘ahu. Although this is a protected area, pole fishing is still permitted from the shore at Waimea Bay, and we have unfortunately observed the illegal use of jug fishing there at night.

SB2973 would prohibit jug line fishing and other jug rig variants in Hawai‘i’s waters. Although the bill was ammended to include floatation devices cast from shore, this does not necessarily solve the problem. Without a clear size limit, the prohibition could extend to items not yet utilized.

To ensure the bill targets only larger jug-style fishing devices that pose a significant risk to marine life and contribute to marine debris no matter where they are acquired or how they are deployed, we respectfully suggest the following amendments:

- Clarify that the prohibition applies only to single buoyant devices used for fishing lines that are larger than ½ gallon (1.8 liters) in volume.

Mahalo nui,

Jenny Yagodich, Director of Educational Programs & Makai Watch Coordinator, Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 10:11:30 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Katherine Buckovetz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Kailua Kona kupuna Hawaiian monk seals have been part of my life experience since childhood. They need protection due to endangered status. We have lost seals, young and old, to jug line fishing equipment. This has been brutal and unnecessary as other fishing equipment can be used. Many fisherman have made changes willingly.

Please eliminate jug line fishing and protect Hawaii's wildlife. We must do all we can to protect our endangered species for keiki and a healthy ecosystem. You can make a difference.

With Aloha, Katherine Buckovetz

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 11:23:26 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jill Asmar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Jug fishing leads to plastic waste.

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 11:45:21 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
GWEN YOUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Please pass this bill as prohibiting jug fishing gear is dangerous and thoughtless fishing. It is not necessary for subsistence and is left floating un watched. Thus has been proven to kill at least one young female monk seal, injured several honu, and possibly killed other honu. Also, could kill birds, sharks and other fishes as well as add to ocean rubbish (if not removed).

Please pass this Bill prohibiting dangerous and unnecessary fishing practice utilizing jugs.

Mahalo

## Testimony in Support of SB2973

Committee: House Committee on Water & Land

Hearing Date: March 24, 2026

Submitted by: Jared Levitt

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

I strongly support SB2973 SD1, which addresses the dangers that jug line fishing gear poses to marine life and public safety throughout Hawai'i's waters, including gear deployed from shore, nearshore waters, and offshore waters.

A publicly available DLNR DOCARE Marine Patrol video from June 17, 2025, taken on O'ahu, shows an officer addressing jug line fishing gear. The segment from 13 minutes 40 seconds to 15 minutes 40 seconds clearly demonstrates the risks this gear poses. The following screenshots from the video provide clear, firsthand evidence of the need for this bill.

Video: <https://vimeo.com/1094249345>

### 1. Boater and Public Safety Hazards





The officer warns: “You gotta be careful when you approach this cause you don't know where the, the line is.”

- Floating jugs and trailing fishing lines are difficult to see, increasing the risk of vessel collisions.
- Such gear creates significant navigational hazards, including propeller fouling and potential vessel damage.
- This evidence illustrates the safety risks posed to boaters and other ocean users.

## 2. Dangers to Wildlife





Last time I pulled one of these up it was,



it was a shark at the end of it.

The officer struggles with the line and remarks, “Last time I pulled one of these up it was, it was a shark at the end of it.”

- Animals that become hooked or entangled in this gear are often unable to free themselves.
- Threatened, endangered, and protected species are particularly at risk, including the Hawaiian monk seal, Hawaiian green sea turtle, and oceanic whitetip shark.
- Buoyant jug gear can cause prolonged exhaustion, increasing the risk of injury or death.

### 3. Marine Debris



Unable to retrieve the fishing line, the officer cuts it with a knife.

- Lines discarded in the ocean contribute to marine debris.
- Discarded fishing line damages coral, threatening its health and survival.
- Derelict fishing lines pose a persistent threat to marine animals, causing injury, entanglement, and death.

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#### **DLNR Statement**

The Office of the Governor highlighted the dangers of jug gear in a September 19, 2025 press release: *“Death of Monk Seal Underscores Importance of Responsible Fishing Practices.”*

<https://governor.hawaii.gov/newsroom/dlnr-news-release-death-of-monk-seal-underscores-importance-of-responsible-fishing-practices/>

***“Jug fishing is an extremely unsustainable and undiscerning fishing method.”***

— John Silberstein, O’ahu Branch Chief, Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE)

**Photographic Evidence**

The following eleven images from publicly accessible Facebook posts provide representative examples of jug rig activity throughout Hawai'i's waters, illustrating the dangers this gear poses and underscoring the urgent need for the Legislature to pass SB2973 SD1,





Hawaii News Now · [Join](#)

Anonymous participant · September 25, 2025 · 🌐

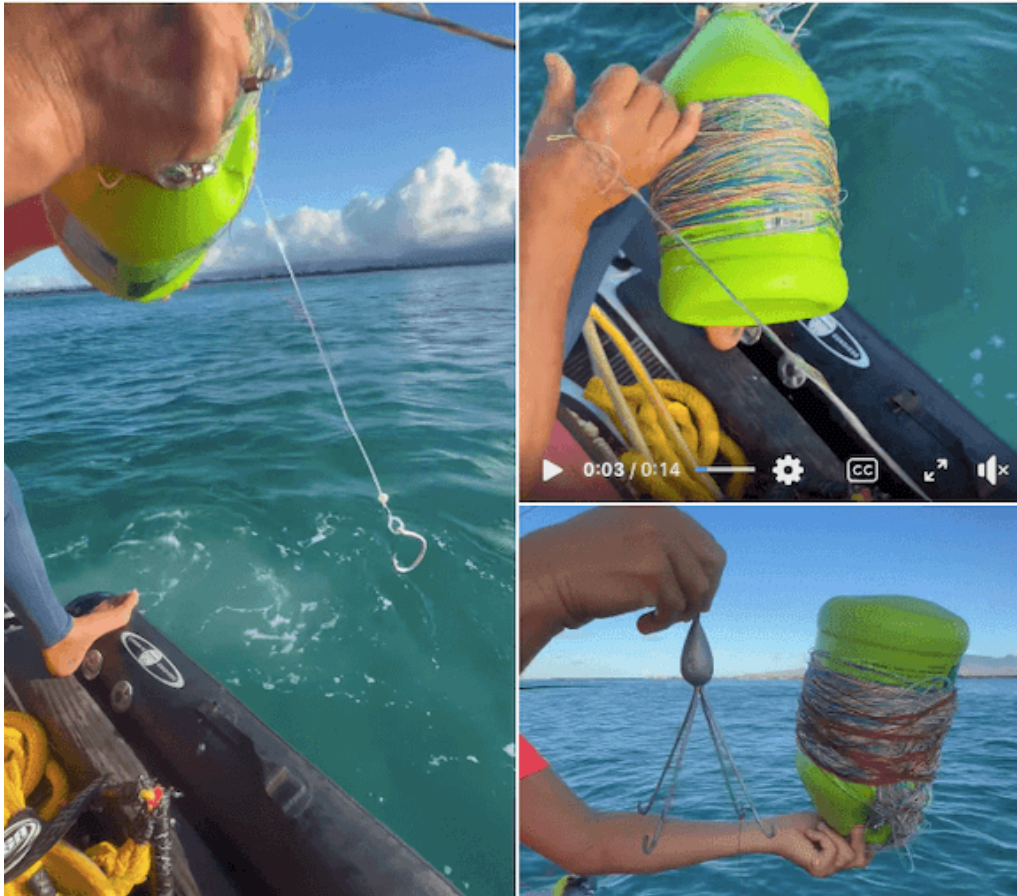


Fishermen is leaving thousands of yards of fishing lines all over out there..."jug rig" should be illegal amd banned!

It's completely wrong and irresponsible to do that.

Any propeller or jet engine that goes over it will get stuck amd stranded. Not safe!

Boaters are having this problem often all over the island.— 😡 feeling annoyed in Ewa Beach, HI.



Oahu Kayak Fishing Club

Terry Shimabukuro · July 29, 2024 · 🌐



My friend and I were kayaking off the leeward coast yesterday and she ran over a fishing line. We didn't see anyone fishing from shore at the time so we hauled in the line. After over 30 minutes of work here's the mess we recovered. Plastic jug had heavy mono and a huge circle hook attached. Luckily, no critters were found entangled in the line.

I've never done this type of shore fishing and don't know anyone who does. I hope that losing this much line is a very rare occurrence. The float was recovered about a half mile offshore.





**Fish and Dive Hawaii** · Follow

April 22, 2023 · 🌐



Awesome job!!!

Repost: @hawaii.jon On Easter 2023, I crossed paths with a turtle tangled on the braid mainline of a jug set up. I felt like I did the right thing by separating as much line as possible around the fins and neck before cutting the mainline which held the turtle in an area which I can work. After that, there was a moment of stillness where I wonder if it knew that I was trying to help it. What would you have done ? Thank you @dinewith.diana for condensing the video

[#hawaiispearfishing](#) [#spearfishing](#) [#spearfishinghawaii](#) [#hawaii](#) [#turtlerescue](#)



**Don McLeish**  
July 29, 2021 · 🌐

There was a jugged turtle up at Kapalua that had got further tangled on the rocks. It evaded capture and release unfortunately. Friends in Kona have been encountering jugged oceanic white tip sharks that have been jugged with typically fatal results. Whoever is doing this, please stop!



**Mermaidkayleigh** · Follow  
January 22 · 🌐

Jugging is a cruel practice SOME fishermen here in Hawaii use as a way to slow down & eventually kill sharks so that they don't interrupt their ability to catch fish. There is no h



**Ulua Fishing Hawaii**  
Ty Lum · July 8, 2024 · 🌐

4th of July weekend 🥳🥳. Took me 23 minutes to wind up da one on the right. Da one on the left took me half an hour cuz da braid was ALL tangled up in da coral heads.

This needs to stop!





Ellen Moshein Federoff

May 13, 2023 · 🌐



Evil fishing setup at the Cove this morning. We had to rescue a honu that got hooked and tangled in it. We reported it to DLNR. There are more of these nearby!



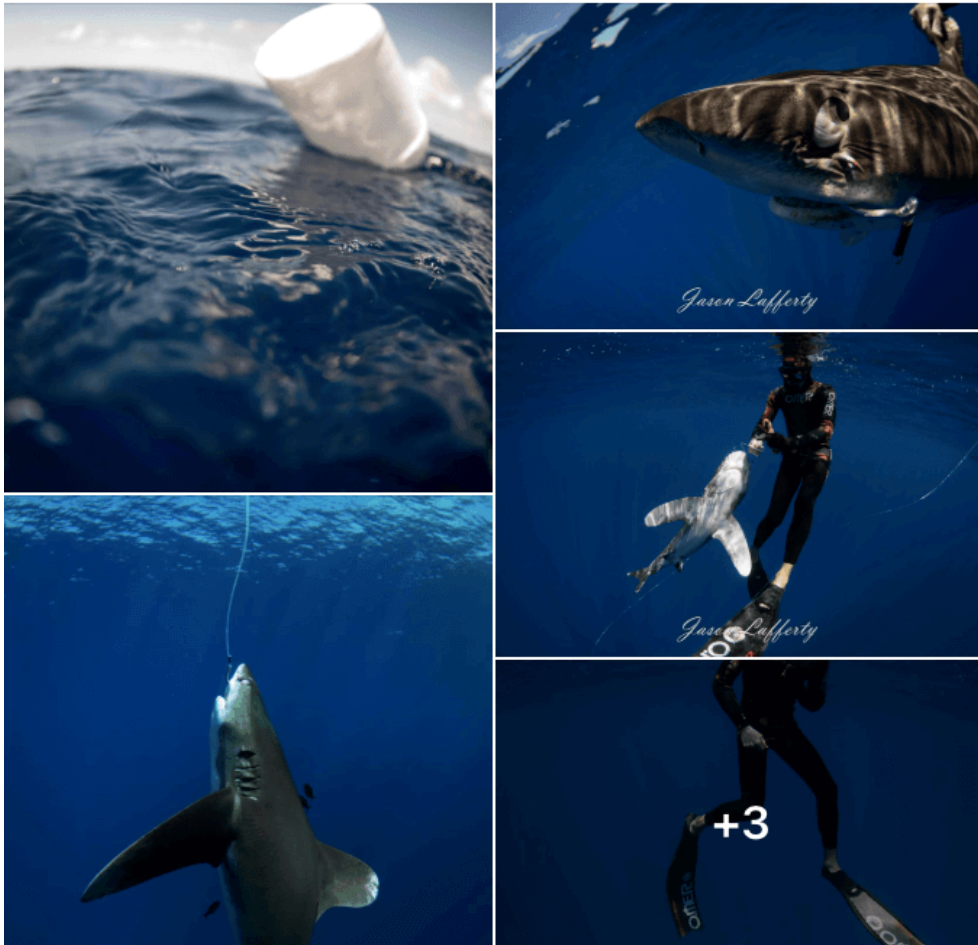
Jason Lafferty

July 19, 2021 · 🌐



"Jugged to Death"

After cutting a oceanic shark free just a couple days earlier with [Deron Verbeck](#), was out with [Seth Conae](#) and we found another jugged oceanic Shark , I had high believes were gonna cut another shark free!! This was something that was a first for me! We didnt make it in time. Shark was dead! Emotion's to the full extent \, Just another reminder to TEACH & Express Knowledge instead



**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 9:06:39 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Colleen Heyer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support prohibiting jug line fishing to protect monk seals, sharks, reefs, swimmers, and boaters. Mahalo.

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 12:57:30 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ocean Ramsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. NO. 2973, S.D. 1  
RELATING TO FISHING**

Submitted by: **Ocean Ramsey, PhD – Marine Scientist**

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

I strongly support S.B. No. 2973, S.D. 1, which proposes to prohibit jug line fishing and jug rig variant fishing methods in Hawai‘i state waters.

As a marine scientist who has spent over two decades working directly in Hawai‘i’s ocean ecosystems, I have witnessed firsthand both the beauty and fragility of these environments. Hawai‘i’s marine life is not only ecologically vital, but deeply connected to cultural identity, community well-being, and the long-term health of the State.

Jug line fishing and its variants are fundamentally non-selective and pose a serious threat to marine species. These methods frequently result in the unintended hooking, entanglement, and injury of non-target animals, including sharks, sea turtles, and endangered species such as the Hawaiian monk seal. Through my fieldwork over the past twenty years, I have personally removed this type of fishing gear from sharks on numerous occasions. These animals are often found trailing lines, hooks, and buoys—sometimes for extended periods—resulting in severe injury, impaired movement, and in some cases death.

These encounters are not rare or anecdotal—they reflect a broader pattern of harm caused by unattended and drifting fishing gear. The tragic death of the young Hawaiian monk seal RS34 (“Moana”) in 2025 further highlights the consequences of this method. The use of heavy lines and buoyant jugs increases the likelihood of gear loss and prolonged entanglement, making these incidents both preventable and unacceptable.

Beyond direct wildlife impacts, jug lines contribute significantly to marine debris. Once lost, this gear continues to “ghost fish,” entangling animals and damaging coral reefs for years. This creates long-term ecological damage that extends far beyond the initial use of the gear and undermines conservation and restoration efforts across the State.

This bill appropriately targets a harmful and outdated fishing practice while preserving access to more selective and responsible methods such as rod-and-reel and hand-pole fishing. It represents a balanced and science-based approach to resource management.

The proposed timeline for implementation provides an opportunity for transition and education, while still establishing a clear commitment to protecting Hawai‘i’s marine ecosystems and the species that depend on them.

Based on both scientific evidence and extensive field experience, prohibiting jug line fishing is a necessary step toward reducing marine debris, preventing unnecessary wildlife suffering, and safeguarding the integrity of Hawai‘i’s ocean environment.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass S.B. No. 2973, S.D. 1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

**Ocean Ramsey, PhD**

Marine Scientist



**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 1:02:25 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Juan Oliphant	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Here is a clear, formal testimony draft you can submit:

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**Testimony in Support of SB2973**

Submitted by: Juan Oliphant

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

I am writing in strong support of SB2973

Jug line fishing poses a significant and unnecessary threat to Hawai‘i’s fragile marine ecosystems. This method, which involves unattended lines with multiple baited hooks, often results in indiscriminate capture and prolonged suffering of marine life. It is particularly harmful because it lacks selectivity and oversight, increasing the likelihood of bycatch—including protected and culturally significant species such as sea turtles, sharks, and other native wildlife.

Hawai‘i’s ocean is not only an ecological treasure but also a vital part of cultural identity, subsistence practices, and local livelihoods. Allowing fishing methods that are unmonitored and prone to waste undermines responsible stewardship of these resources. Jug lines can drift, become lost, and continue “ghost fishing,” compounding their environmental impact long after they are deployed.

Sustainable fishing practices are essential to preserving Hawai‘i’s marine biodiversity for future generations. SB2973 represents a necessary step toward eliminating harmful and outdated fishing methods that do not align with modern conservation principles or Hawai‘i’s commitment to mālama ‘āina (caring for the land and sea).

I respectfully urge you to pass SB2973 and take meaningful action to protect Hawai‘i’s ocean ecosystems.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,  
Juan Oliphant



**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 8:44:41 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alannah B Farrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wanted to reiterate my support of this bill. Jug fishing has resulted in the cruel, horrific deaths of a number of our precious endangered marine mammals. It is not necessary and should not be allowed. There are plenty of other methods of fishing that are safer. I am especially concerned about Hawaiian monk seals and green Hawaiian sea turtles. Please ban jug fishing to protect them from drowning from the lines and abandoned gear. It is cruel and dangerous and anyone who has seen the photos of the dead young monk seal found at the Mokulua Islet entangled in a jug net should know this needs to stop.

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 8:51:38 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Klayton Kubo	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Just more rules on rules. Just another way to take away a form of gathering.

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

LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

My name is Tiffany Bruno, and I am writing in strong support of SB2973 to prohibit jug line fishing in Hawai'i.

I am a longtime freediver and reef cleaner. Over the years, I have personally recovered countless fishing lines from our reefs. I have also encountered marine animals — including fish, turtles, and other wildlife — dead, injured, or suffering after becoming entangled in discarded or unattended fishing lines.

Jug line fishing is particularly harmful because it leaves multiple baited hooks suspended in the water column without active supervision. These lines do not discriminate. They entangle protected species, reef fish, monk seals, turtles, and seabirds. Even when not actively fishing, lost or abandoned lines continue to “ghost fish,” trapping and killing marine life unnecessarily.

Hawai'i's reefs are already under stress from warming oceans, pollution, and habitat loss. We should not allow a fishing method that increases preventable harm, bycatch, and marine debris. As someone who regularly removes fishing line from coral and witnesses firsthand the damage caused, I can attest that this is not a minor issue — it is ongoing and widespread.

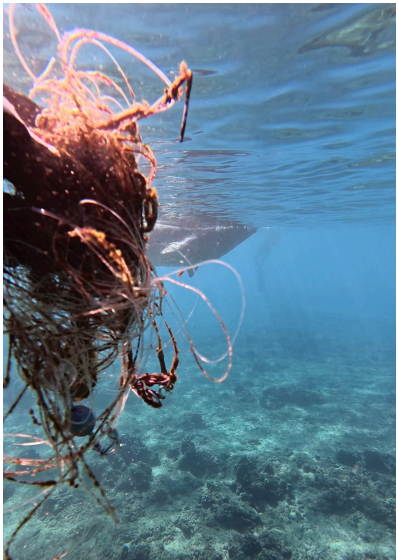
Banning jug line fishing is a reasonable and responsible step toward protecting our reefs, marine wildlife, and the cultural and ecological integrity of Hawai'i's waters.

Please pass SB2973.

Mahalo for your time and for your commitment to protecting our ocean.

Respectfully,

Tiffany Bruno





**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 11:51:49 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexander Min	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**In Consideration of S.B. 2973, S.D. 1  
Relating to Fishing**

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

My name is Alex Min, and I am a fisheries professional based in Hawai‘i, working closely with fishing communities across the Pacific Islands on issues of sustainability, fisheries management, and marine stewardship.

I appreciate the intent of this bill and strongly support the protection of Hawai‘i’s marine life, including endangered species such as the Hawaiian monk seal and honu. The incident referenced in this bill is tragic, and it is important that we take thoughtful steps to reduce interactions between fishing gear and protected species.

However, I would like to offer a perspective grounded in practical fisheries management.

This bill proposes a full prohibition on jug line and jug rig variant fishing methods. While there are legitimate concerns around gear loss, entanglement, and non-target interactions, I encourage the Legislature to carefully consider whether a complete ban is the most effective and balanced approach.

In fisheries management, the goal is not simply to eliminate risk entirely, that is rarely achievable, but to **reduce risk through well-designed, enforceable, and targeted measures**.

There are several important questions to consider:

- What is the actual scale and frequency of harmful interactions associated with jug line fishing in Hawai‘i?
- Are there specific configurations, locations, or use patterns that create higher risk?
- Can modifications such as gear requirements, line limits, marking systems, or time and area restrictions address these concerns without eliminating the practice entirely?

In many cases, targeted management measures can significantly reduce impacts while preserving access for responsible fishers.

It is also important to recognize that not all users of this gear operate in the same way. For some small-scale fishers, jug-based methods may represent a low-cost and accessible way to participate in fishing. Policies that remove methods entirely, without exploring alternatives, can disproportionately affect those with fewer resources.

Additionally, enforcement and practicality should be considered. Broad prohibitions can be difficult to enforce consistently, especially when definitions of “variant methods” may be interpreted differently on the water.

I would also encourage the State to invest in:

- Better data collection on gear interactions with protected species
- Outreach and education on responsible gear use
- Collaborative development of best practices with the fishing community

Fishers are often the first to observe problems and are critical partners in developing solutions that actually work in real-world conditions.

If the goal is to reduce marine debris and protect marine life, then the most effective path forward is likely a **targeted, adaptive management approach**, rather than a blanket prohibition.

I respectfully ask the Committee to consider refining this measure to focus on risk reduction, data-driven thresholds, and practical solutions that balance conservation with responsible access.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,  
Alex Min  
Honolulu, Hawai‘i

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 1:36:31 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Aleksandra Varlamova	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Aleksandra Varlamova, and I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB2973, which would prohibit jug line fishing in Hawaii's state waters.

Plastic That Kills:

Jug line fishing deploys unattended plastic floats that are routinely lost at sea due. These jugs drift, fragment into microplastics, tangle coral reefs, and introduce toxic chemicals into the marine ecosystem. They do not disappear — they kill.

Marine Animals Are Dying:

The toll on Hawaii's wildlife is devastating. Hawaiian monk seals, among the world's most endangered marine mammals, are regularly found entangled in lost fishing gear, leading to injury and drowning. Sea turtles ingest floating plastic, causing internal blockages and slow, painful deaths. Seabirds feed plastic debris to their chicks, resulting in starvation. Dolphins and whales become entangled in drifting lines, sometimes for months, before succumbing to exhaustion.

Because jug lines are unattended, there is no one present to free an entangled animal or release an unintended catch. By the time the gear is found, it is often too late.

A Responsibility We Cannot Ignore:

Banning jug line fishing is a concrete act of aloha 'Āina. And act of respect for the ocean and all life within it. I urge the Committee to pass SB2973 and take a meaningful stand for Hawaii's marine animals and the health of our ocean.

Mahalo nui loa.

Aleksandra Varlamova

March 24, 2026

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 2:16:34 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leah Kocher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2973 to ban jug fishing. This unnecessary and potentially harmful and lethal method of fishing should no longer be allowed. It is our responsibility to care for the creatures of our islands and to protect them from potential threats or dangers. Other safer methods of fishing can be employed and not threaten our Hawaiian monk seals and shark species.

**SB-2973-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 10:20:17 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/24/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jenna Murad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support banning bottle line fishing which indiscriminately harms sea life and potentially humans.