
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FISHING.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's marine life
2 is fundamental to the cultural identity of the State and the
3 health of its ocean environment. Marine species hold deep
4 spiritual meaning for many communities, and the well-being of
5 those communities reflects the balance and resilience of
6 Hawaii's marine ecosystems. Protecting ocean life is critical
7 to maintaining ocean ecosystems for the future.

8 The legislature further finds that jug line fishing and jug
9 rig variant fishing methods are non-selective fishing practices
10 that pose significant threats to marine life. These methods
11 frequently result in the hooking, entanglement, or injury of
12 non-target species, including sharks and protected green sea
13 turtles, and present a severe risk to endangered species, such
14 as the Hawaiian monk seal and hawksbill sea turtle.

15 The legislature further finds that jug lines often become
16 marine debris when they are lost, cut, or otherwise left in the
17 ocean. Once in the water, this gear can persist for years,



1 continuing to pollute coastal and offshore areas, damage
2 delicate coral reefs, and pose a serious threat to marine life
3 through entanglement and injury long after it is no longer in
4 use.

5 The legislature notes that, in September of 2025, the
6 department of land and natural resources reported the death of
7 RS34, a two-year old female Hawaiian monk seal known as Moana,
8 which was caused by a jug rig variant fishing method. Wildlife
9 officials determined that the use of heavy pound-test line and
10 buoyant jugs significantly increased the risk of gear loss and
11 entanglement, resulting in fatal consequences for the Hawaiian
12 monk seal. This incident shows the unsustainable nature of jug
13 line fishing and its impact on non-target marine life.

14 The legislature determines that the continued use of jug
15 lines and jug rig variant fishing methods is incompatible with
16 responsible resource management and the State's obligation to
17 protect marine wildlife for present and future generations.

18 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to prohibit jug
19 line fishing and jug rig variant fishing methods in the State's
20 waters in order to reduce marine debris and strengthen



1 protections for endangered species and the marine ecosystems
2 upon which the State depends.

3 SECTION 2. Chapter 188, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately
5 designated and to read as follows:

6 "§188- Jug line fishing; prohibited. (a) Except as
7 provided in subsection (c), it is unlawful to possess or use on,
8 in, or near state waters any fishing device or rig that makes
9 use of buoyant jugs, bottles, or other flotation devices with
10 the primary purpose of suspending a fishing line, hook, and
11 weight.

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

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

19 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

20 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



S.B. NO. 2973
S.D. 1

Report Title:

Jug Line Fishing; Jug Rig Variant Fishing Methods; Nonselective Fishing; Prohibition

Description:

Prohibits the use of jug line fishing and other jug rig variant fishing methods in state waters. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

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