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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  
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MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
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 House Committee on  
WATER & LAND**

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 411**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1817  
RELATING TO PROTECTING HAWAII'S FISHERIES**

House Bill 1817 proposes to require the Board of Land and Natural Resources to adopt rules no later than June 30, 2027, establishing a statewide daily bag limit of ten 'ama'ama (striped mullet; *Mugil cephalus*) per person during the open season. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this bill and offers the following comments.**

'Ama 'ama hold extreme cultural importance in Hawai'i as a species that not only once sustained Native Hawaiians but also shaped the coastline of the State through the traditional building and use of loko i'a. The Department also recognizes that 'ama 'ama today face multiple challenges that have resulted in a greatly reduced population statewide.

The decline of 'ama 'ama in Hawai'i is perhaps best demonstrated on the island of O'ahu, where the 'anae holo, or annual migration of millions of 'ama 'ama around the island today exists only in the memories of our kūpuna. What precipitated this loss was a compounding set of factors including invasive species, increased fishing pressure, and the various negative impacts of a growing human population. Among these, degradation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems caused by heavy development throughout the twentieth century on O'ahu stand out as primary drivers.

The movement to reclaim ecosystem health as well as cultural resources and knowledge is growing in strength. The rebuilding of 'ama'ama populations is emblematic of this endeavor as this species brings together so well the Native Hawaiian cultural values that connect

resources in continuation from the mountains to the sea, and the importance of managing and caring for these resources in relation to one another. As work continues, including multiple community-led efforts throughout the State, the Department recognizes the importance of ensuring protection and sustainable use of remaining wild 'ama 'ama as it is their offspring that will one day fill restored loko i'a as well as the nets of lawai'a.

The Department believes that species-specific regulations, including daily bag limits, are most effectively implemented at the island or place-based scales as they can be tailored to the specific resource conditions and community needs of each region. Through the Holomua Marine Initiative (Holomua) the Department is currently developing island-based rules through a unique distinctly community-led process. As Holomua moves across the State, the Department also remains open to working with individual communities to address their own management goals. This can include assisting in the establishment of Community Based Subsistence Fishing Areas (CBSFAs) and Fishery Management Areas (FMAs) as well as providing technical and logistical assistance for community-led monitoring efforts. Though more time-intensive, island or place-based actions provide a more precise and effective means of simultaneously addressing the dual objective of ensuring both resource protection and continued harvest for subsistence and cultural practice.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Name: Crystal Empalmado  
Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committees. My name is Crystal Empalmado, and I am the 6th grade teacher at Waiahole Elementary. I am here along with my students to testify in support of HB1817 related to creating a bag limit for the 'ama'ama fish.

My students have been working hard researching the decline of 'ama'ama (striped mullet) in Hawai'i.

They analyzed historical catch data, discussed sustainability, and even helped to draft this bill along with Representative Lisa Kitagawa that supports restoring these native fish populations and strengthening local food systems.

As a class, we were able to taste 'ama'ama together, and the students LOVED it. Seeing them enjoy this traditional food made the issue real. They began asking,  
"Will future generations still have this opportunity?"  
"What happens if we don't protect it now?"

Now, my students are ready to use their voices by testifying in support of bill HB1817. I am excited for you to hear those voices today so that you might understand why this bill is so important to the future generations of Hawaii.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 6:00:01 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Godfrey Akaka	The Native Hawaiian Gathering Rights Association	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

The NHGRA is in strong opposition to HB1817. Especially native Hawaiians rely on harvest of the species for subsistence as well as use for traditional and customary luau. There is zero scientific evidence that proves this resource is nor sustainable nor is there any scientific evidence proving heavy handed fishing regulations will change the weather. The continuous attack on fisher gatherers by globalists are not intended to improve the viability of our resources. If their intent was to help improve our fisheries, they would work with fisher gatherers and not promote false information that the need to stop fishing is to save our dying reefs. And continue their efforts in demonizing fisher gatherers. In fact, where is the data showing how much our coral reefs are growing exponentially? Instead of targeting a micro site that fits their narrative.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 9:03:26 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Philip Fernandez	Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HFACT opposes this bill.

While we appreciate the intent to protect our fisheries, this bill is misguided.

The threat to striped mullet is not over-fishing but loss of habitat and competition with the invasive kanda mullet.

Please read the Division of Aquatic Resources mullet fact sheet publishing in 2014 which notes that the kanda mullet has out-competed the striped mullet and is rapidly displacing the striped mullet.

Kanda mullet are small and cannot be caught by legal throw nets. The fish can easily escape the legal 2-inch mesh. Thus the kanda are uncontrolled and decimating the striped mullet.

Habitat loss is due to less fresh water entering our bays and protected areas that are the striped mullet's main habitat. For example, Maunalua Bay lost its fresh water sources and mullet has since disappeared and displaced by o'io (bonefish). The habitat loss and loss of limu in the bay are to blame.

Please oppose this bill and allow DLNR to manage the mullet by fixing habitat and getting rid of the kanda mullet.

Mahalo,

Phil Fernandez, Past-president

Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition

February 15, 2026

To: Chair Mark Hashem, Vice Chair Dee Morikawa, and the House committee on Water and Land

Subject: HB1817, Relating to Protecting Hawai'i's Fisheries

Aloha,

We are writing **in support of HB1817**. This bill would require a daily bag limit of 10 'ama'ama per person during open season. This bag limit has already been in effect in Hilo Bay, an area historically rich in this species. Hawai'i's native 'ama'ama are experiencing major population declines across the state. Hawai'i's coastal & reef species are under pressure due to our societal impacts. 'Ama'ama were very prevalent across the state and prized by royalty. Protecting native species is our kuleana to our kupuna and keiki. Having a bag limit will ensure more fish are able to reach maturity and spawn. 'Ama'ama need to reach a size of 28 cm, whereas the invasive Kanda only needs to reach a size of 140mm. It will also encourage people to catch more kanda, since there is no bag limit or season closures. There are numerous success stories of bag limit requirements helping improve wild fish stocks. Let's protect our 'ama'ama so many more generations will continue to have relationships with them like us and our kupuna.

I urge the committee to **support HB1817**. Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

Sydney Haas & the Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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Friedlander, A. (2017). Human-induced gradients of reef fish declines in the Hawaiian ...  
<https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/holomua/files/2023/01/Friedlander-et-al.-2017-Human-induced-gradients-of-reef-fish-declines-in-the-Hawaiian-archipelago-viewed-through-the-lens-of-traditional-managment-boundaries.pdf>

Nishimoto, R., Shimoda, T., & Nishiura, L. (2007). Mugilids in the muliwai: A tale of two mullets.  
<https://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/pubs-online/strm/12-nishimotor.pdf>

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 12:36:48 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

1817 HB RELATING TO PROTECTING HAWAII'S FISHERIES.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 8:54:58 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Hines	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is **Mark Hines** and I am an educator from city and county of Honolulu. I submit testimony in strong support of **HB1817**.

HB1817 takes a straightforward, preventative step: it requires the Board of Land and Natural Resources to adopt rules by **June 30, 2027** establishing a **statewide daily bag limit of ten ‘ama‘ama (striped mullet) per person during the open season**.

The bill’s findings reflect what many communities are already noticing: ‘ama‘ama are a prized local resource and the population has been in decline, with multiple contributing factors including the invasive **Kanda mullet** and the species’ lifecycle needs (they must reach about three to four years of age before spawning, and spawning occurs in winter).

A statewide bag limit is a reasonable conservation measure that still allows access while reducing the risk of overharvest. It also aligns with what the bill notes has already worked in **Hilo Bay**, where a bag limit has been implemented.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **PASS HB1817**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Dr. Mark Hines

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 4:35:17 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kameleonalani richardson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Full support of HB 1817, as a proud parent of an Waiāhole School student whom came up with this bill we support our Keiki decision to protect our natural food source. mahalo Nui

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 10:08:18 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brandon Koskie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Brandon Koskie, and I am in support of HB1817. I am a diver and have personally seen the overfishing of the near-shore fishery here on Oahu. I have taken plenty of lines, hooks, and plastic out of the water from fishers. Putting this bill in place will reduce the fishing pressure and thus reduce plastics. I am aware that the Ama'ama grounds on the island still exist, and locals still get them. That is why we need to protect the species by setting a bag limit before the tragedy-of-the-commons effect takes hold. Just like it once happened with our reef herbivores and our lobster. We don't get kole or lobsters like we used to in the past. We must enforce this law and arrest anyone who violates it. The recreational fishery here is about taking what we need for today and leaving the rest for tomorrow. Let the fish spawn and grow rather than sit in a freezer for the upcoming party.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 10:44:37 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel Bishop	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha All

My name is Daniel Bishop and I am in support of bill HB 1817.

I was, as a younger man, a very active fisherperson. During the 1970 s my friends and I would set up to 2000 feet of gill net from shore in a small boat.Later we would use power boats to surround whole schools of fish.

Yes I was part of the problem. In my youthful ignorance I thought the fish would never go away. It was a lifestyle and a way to feed my growing Ohana.

One day, after spearfishing, one of my friends very young son looked into the cooler and said to his father and I with wide eyed sadness " ho dad, not going have any fish left when I grow up".

That caught me by suprise and I gave it some thought. Yes the fish population, in a short time (1970-1990 s), was declining.

I stoped going "holoholo". Only casting a pole from shore once in a while, more for reaxation.

With modern technology, a growing population, pollution and climate change, lack of funding for enforcement and more unemployed the situation has gotten worse.

Our Kupuna had strict Kapus that helped feed generations. Those Kapus were adjusted by the Konohiki, as needed, The Kapus that are in place now are not sufficient to allow the fisery to recover to feed the future generations. The State Government, as the modern day Konohiki, have an obligation to adjust the Kapu This bill is the adjustment that needs to happen in order to help the fish population recover.

We cannot bring back the past but we can plan for the future.

So please support HB 1817

Mahalo

Danny Bishop



**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 3:04:00 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laurel Nakanishi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Lawmakers,

I am writing to support HB1817. It is important to protect our native mullet by introducing this bag limit. Mahalo to the 6th graders at Waiāhole Elementary for introducing this bill.

Warm regards,

Laurel

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 5:25:20 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mandy Lei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**‘Ama’ama are not only ecologically important to our marine system but also culturally significant. Compared to many other states and countries, Hawaii has a very relaxed fish and game regulatory system. As someone who fish and spend most of her time in the ocean, I definitely appreciate the freedom to take what I need without having to worry about licenses and limits. However, I also see that a system without some kind of rules and regulations can create room for abuse and destruction, The declining population of our native fish ama’ama’is alarming and should incentivise our legislation to create bag limits to protect these native species.**

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 8:57:22 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
cheryl burghardt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I Strongly support HB 1817 which requires the Board of Land and Natural Resources to adopt rules no later than June 30, 2027, establishing a statewide daily bag limit of ten `ama`ama per person during the open season.

I support this bill because the `ama`ama is an important Native Hawaiian Fish and we need to protect it. I also support this bil because the keiki understand not only our need to protect the `ama`ama but also the process for bringing their concerns to fruition in a bill at the legislature. True Civics at work.

Mahalo to the keiki and all who support protecting all parts of our aina.

Cheryl Burghardt

Nuuanu Oahu

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 9:53:46 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaori-Lei Hanohano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Welina mai,

‘o Kaori-Lei Ka‘imipono Hanohano ko‘u inoa. Ke keiki a Peter Kauhola Hanohano Jr. lāua ‘o Lynn Puanani Hanohano. No Maui a me O‘ahu mai ‘au!

My name is Kaori- Lei Ka‘imipono Hanohano. The daughter of Peter Lauhola Hanohano Jr. and Lynn Punani Hanohano. I'm from Maui born and raised, also from O‘ahu where my father is from. As a descendant of these islands I have the kuleana to protect the resources of Ko Hawaii pae ‘aina. For that reason I strongly support the protection of the ‘ama‘ama! Managing resources ensures future ‘ama‘ama for the next generation. Removal of any invasive fish is needed to protect the ‘ama‘ama.

mahalo for your time and e ku like kākou no ka malama ‘ana i ka ‘ama‘ama.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 10:08:14 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Maile Enos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Welina mai,

As a descendant of these islands I have the kuleana to protect the resources of Ko Hawaii pae ‘aina. For that reason I strongly support the protection of the ‘ama‘ama! Managing resources ensures future ‘ama‘ama for the next generation. Removal of any invasive fish is needed to protect the ‘ama‘ama. [REDACTED]

mahalo for your time and e ku like kākou no ka malama ‘ana i ka ‘ama‘ama.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 10:14:37 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marvalynn Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony

Template

Welina mai,

As a descendant of these islands I have the kuleana to protect the resources of Ko Hawaii pae ‘aina. For that reason I strongly support the protection of the ‘ama‘ama! Managing resources ensures future ‘ama‘ama for the next generation. Removal of any invasive fish is needed to protect the ‘ama‘ama.

mahalo for your time and e ku like kākou no ka malama ‘ana i ka ‘ama‘ama.

M. Keama-Medeiros

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 10:19:46 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kalavi Blanchard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Malleable,

My name is kalavi Blanchard. Im from Oahu and am in debted to these lands for raising me. although I'm not Hawaiian my wife and children are.

For this reason I strongly support the protection of the 'ama'ama! Managing resiuces ensures future 'ama'ama for the next generation. Removal of any invasive fish is needed to protect the 'ama'ama.

Mahalo for your time and e ku like kakou no ka malama 'ana I ka 'ama'ama.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 2:32:57 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joanna Maile Pokipala Resurrection	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill, HB1817, because I would like to strengthen our food system. Hawai'i lacks food production and roughly imports 90% of food. This bill will counter that and at this point we need to do everything we can to do so.

Mahalo,

Joanna Resurrection

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 3:25:50 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 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:

Oppose

Klayton Kubo

Waimea, Kaua'i

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/14/2026 9:08:49 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Malia Marquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB 1817, this is the only "responsible" way to fish with a maximum of 10 amaama per person. We need to help these fishes continue to reproduce and flourish amongst invasive species, as well as over consumption. Mahalo to the creators of HB 1817. Please support HB 1817.

**HB-1817**

Submitted on: 2/15/2026 2:43:21 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/17/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lei Fisher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai Committee Members,

I **strongly support** this effort to better conserve and protect our precious 'ama'ama, particularly for the island of O'ahu and other islands if the data & communities of those islands also support. I understand that this was an effort put together by some of the kumu and haumāna of Waiāhole School, which I strongly applaud as well for their grassroots advocacy! Amazing!!

Mahalo nui loa & please **PASS** this measure, limiting it to only O'ahu.

Me ke aloha,

Lei Fisher, Hale'iwa

Name: Kian Henriques

Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committees. My name is Kian Henriques And I am here to testify in support of HB1817 relating to creating a bag limit for the ama'ama fish.

I grew up as a fisher man and my grandpa is also a fisher man. He used to tell me that when he went fishing there were always groups of ama'ama and their groups were big. Also my grandpa told me that they always jump out of the water and once they land they lay their eggs. But nowadays you barely see small piles of the native ama'ama.

I support this bill because the ama'ama fish is competing with invasive species.

Ama'ama are facing stiff competition from the invasive kanda mullet. Kanda mullet spawn year round and grow quickly, meaning they can easily outnumber native ama'ama making it even more important to manage the harvest of the native ama'ama population. If this bill does not pass, then the ama'ama might go extinct due to overfishing and getting taken over by the invasive kanda mullet.

Again, I am in strong support of this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Have a great day, Mahalo.

Name: Kalani Kaahu

Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committees. My name is Kalani Kaahu and I'm here to testify in support of HB1817 relating to creating a bag limit for the 'ama 'ama fish.

I care about the 'ama 'ama. My Uncle told me stories about the old days when 'ama 'ama would start migrating at Pearl Harbor and go all around the island to Laie. Then they turned around and went back to Pearl Harbor. They would spawn the whole way. There were so many fish! I go fishing with my brothers and my Papa and I've never seen 'ama 'ama probably because they are almost extinct.

I believe in this bill because if not there won't be any more 'ama 'amas to feed our families.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Have a great day, Mahalo!

Name: Kaysan Mackenzie

Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committees. My name is Kaysan Mackenzie and I'm here to testify in support of the HB1817 relating to creating a bag limit for the 'ama 'ama fish.

When my grandpa was younger, he used to walk along the beach, and he liked fishing so he looked for fish. He saw huge groups of 'ama'ama. Every time he went, there always was less and less 'ama'ama. Nowadays, there are barely any groups of 'ama'ama. I think this is sad because the 'ama'ama is special and the future generations wouldn't get to see this fish. The 'ama'ama would be extinct by the time the future generations get to eat something like the 'ama'ama.

I support this bill because the 'ama'ama is outnumbered by the Kanda, and the 'ama'ama may go extinct.

The Kanda is an invasive species, which is taking over habitats, and eats the same food. Since there are more kanda than ama'ama, and they eat the same food which is limu, there would be less food for the 'ama'ama and it could die. Evidence shows that in 1990s, shoreline fishers reported that 80% of pua'ama schools were Kanda. This is very bad, and this means that the Kanda is taking over the 'ama'ama. If this bill does not pass, then the 'ama'ama could go extinct, and the future generations would be affected and wouldn't get to eat fish like the 'ama'ama.

Again, I am in strong support of this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Have a great day, mahalo!

Name: Kalawaia Purdy

Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committees. My name is Kalawaia Purdy and I'm here to testify in support of HB1817 relating to creating a bag limit for the 'ama 'ama fish.

My name is kalawaia and it means the great fisher man. I spent a lot of time fishing. When I was younger I went fishing with my dad and we caught a lot of 'Ama 'ama. Now when I go fishing I do not see any 'Ama 'ama. Seeing the ama ama makes me happy because it tastes good.

I support this bill because it is important that the 'ama 'ama does not go extinct. By setting a bag limit the 'Ama 'ama has a chance to keep the population going for generations.

The 'ama 'ama is going extinct. We need to make sure its generation goes on to still last.

It was important to many communities in our Hawaiian history. In Hawaii in 2023, they had a fish count. They caught 100 mullets and they were all kanda - an invasive mullet. Not a single ama ama was found.

This is why I support HB1817. I'm available for any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Have a great day mahalo!

Name: Kupaa Cabral

Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committees. My name is Kupaa Cabral and I'm testify in support of HB1817 relating to creating a bag limit for the 'ama 'ama fish.

I support this bill because the population of ama'ama is going down,

What I know about the ama'ama fish is how to scale it, gut it, and cook it, and also I heard stories of it. One of those stories I remember hearing is that people would guard the ama'ama until it was time to be fished because it was so popular that they wanted the population to stay high and not go down.

This matters because if we don't make the bill for the ama'ama fish it will go extinct. These reasons are why I support HB 1817. I am available for any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Have a good day, Mahalo!

Name: Hi'ilani Richardson

Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committees. My name is Hi'ilani Richardson and I am here to testify in support of HB 1817 relating to creating a bag limit for the Ama'ama fish.

One of the things I have experienced with 'ama'ama was when our class had the opportunity to cook the 'ama'ama fish. After prepping and chopping the ingredients, we finally tasted the 'ama'ama, and it was incredibly fresh and flavorful. It tasted like no other fish I have ever tried. I would want everyone to try this and the only way we can is if we protect the 'ama'ama.

I support this bill because Oahu is losing more and more of the Ama'ama and Hawaiians value the Ama'ama.

The 'ama'ama is a native Hawaiian mullet that holds a place of deep respect and cultural significance in Hawaiian culture. In ancient times, the ama'ama fish were used in special ceremonies to honor the Hawaiian god, Lono. Today, 'Ama'ama are one of the most important fish in Hawaii and are cultured in large fish ponds in coastal regions. I care about this bill because if we don't preserve this fish and create this bill then future generations will not be able to try this fish and then it'll be a forgotten native Hawaiian food source fish.

This is why I support bill HB 1817. I'm available for any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Have a great day mahalo!

Name: Kyra Siliado

Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committees. My name is Kyra Siliado and I'm here to testify in support of HB1817 relating to creating a bag limit for the 'ama 'ama fish.

The 'ama 'ama, a Native Hawaiian Fish, has been decreasing rapidly. Fishermen and residents on Oahu have also seen a big decrease of the 'ama 'ama fish over the years. Based on historical data, the harvest of 'ama 'ama has declined 99.2% in just 118 years. This is over 694500 pounds difference in a 188 year deficit. Loko'ia and fishermen produced and caught over 700,000 pounds of 'ama 'ama fish in 1903. Which decreased to 70,000 pounds by 1943 then dropped to 5,500 pounds in 2021.

An experience that I had with the 'ama 'ama is being able to eat it and cook it. I'm grateful for this opportunity of getting to taste the 'ama 'ama fish and getting to cook it. I hope that everyone can get this experience that I was able to have. The only way people can get this experience is if we save the 'ama 'ama from going extinct.

I'm available for any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Have a great day mahalo.

Name: Emery Caylor  
Position of HB1817: Support

### Testimony

Good morning Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committees. My name is Emery Caylor and I'm here to testify in support of HB1817 relating to creating a bag limit for the 'ama'ama fish

One of the things that I have experienced was cooking the 'ama'ama fish because I got to see it. Although it was dead, it's still cool to actually see in person, because I've never seen one before. So this is why we should add a bill to protect them.

We already have a law for spawning season but then after that you can just catch as much as you want. Bag limits for 'ama 'ama have been implemented in Hilo Bay to promote sustainable fishing and protect marine biodiversity. They have seen their 'ama 'ama population increase dramatically. Now, Hilo Bay has a better balance between fishing and protecting the ocean, helping both people and the environment. Hilo Bay's bag limit for the 'ama'ama fish has worked, that is why I feel we need a bill for all of Hawaii.

If this bill does not pass, then the 'ama'amas population will continue to decrease and the fish will possibly go extinct. These reasons are why I support HB1817, I'm available for any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Have a great day, Mahalo!