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HB 2104 HD 1
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR A STUDY TO DETERMINE
THE FEASIBILITY OF CLEANING THE ALA WAI CANAL

Statement for Senate Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
March 21, 1990

By
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HB 2104 HD 1 directs the Department of Land and Natural Resources to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of cleaning the Ala Wai Canal so as to improve its water quality to standards acceptable for water-based recreational activities.

Our statement on this bill does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

As has been mentioned in previous testimony on this bill and a similar bill, HB 2245, the need for action to improve the water quality and therefore appearance of the Ala Wai canal is long overdue. In this regard, I would like to offer some background as to the Environmental Center's particular interest and reasons for our strong support for the intent of this bill.

First, as a researcher with the Oceanography Department and later with the Environmental Center of the University of Hawaii, I spent several years carrying out baseline ecological studies on the Ala Wai Canal beginning in 1969. Subsequently, in the early 1970's, the Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC), in response to a specific request from Governor Ariyoshi, contracted with the Environmental Center to examine the feasibility of improving the water quality of the Ala Wai Canal. We assembled a team of researchers and carried out a very thorough examination of various alternatives. The final report on that study was provided to OEQC in December 1976, however, no further action was taken by the state to implement the recommendations of the study.

We are pleased to see a resurgence of interest and recognition of the importance of improving the water quality and appearance of the Canal as is addressed by HB 2104 HD 1. As was pointed out in our statement on the original draft of this bill and HB 2245, we have recommended that \$800,000 be appropriated to accomplish the specified tasks. This figure will permit the most efficient coordination of planning, ~~environmental and engineering analyses.~~ We urge that page 2, line 14 be amended to reflect the need for the \$800,000 figure.