



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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SB 39  
RELATING TO THE USE OF REFLECTIVE OR MIRROR SURFACED  
MATERIAL IN CONSTRUCTIONS

Statement for  
Senate Committee on  
Ecology, Environment and Recreation  
Public Hearing - 10 March 1981

By  
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SB 39 recognizes the negative externalities associated with the use of reflective or mirror surfaced material on certain buildings. SB 39 would amend HRS Chapter 46 to provide for county regulation of the use of this material in construction and renovation activities. The statement on SB 39 does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

While we recognize the intent of this bill, we do not feel that the proposed amendment is the most effective means of fulfilling it. There are alternative ways of reducing the adverse impacts associated with the use of reflective material in construction. These include the use of materials with various grades of reflective capability and angling the reflective surfaces of a building so as to minimize glare and reflection. Buildings could also be positioned to direct reflected heat and glare away from inhabited areas.

SB 39 is too narrow in its approach to a complicated problem and fails to recognize the site specific nature of the problem. Extensive use of reflective glass may be appropriate in certain geographic areas where no adjacent structures will be impacted. The best and most appropriate use of energy-efficient materials used in construction should be the responsibility of the architect/designer pursuant to appropriate environmental and energy conscious regulations promulgated by the counties. The county granting the building permit should determine whether or not adverse impacts have been considered and mitigated. These considerations on the county level could be directed by amending HRS Chapter 46-19.5.