HB 1068
RELATING TO FISHING

House Committee on Ocean Recreation
and Marine Resources

Public Hearing - February 9, 1995
8:30 A.M., Room 1310 SOT

By
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HB 1068 would amend Chapter 188, HRS, to prohibit gill net fishing in Kaneohe Bay.

Our statement on this measure does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

As with the prior bill, it is crucial to recognize that gill net fishing is a subsistence activity which people depend on. Thus, as written, we feel this measure is overly restrictive, and without the support of the fishing community, it will be unenforceable. We note that the definition of a gill net is included, presumable in response to comments offered on HB 51 in 1993. However, our reviewers point out that trammel nets are able to gill a fish, even though technically they are not gill nets. Also, it would be useful to precisely define the limits of Kaneohe Bay for regulatory purposes, and some allowance for scientific or research use should be provided.

Taking a wider view, we wonder if we are not losing an opportunity, should this measure be adopted, in that we have not studied the relationship between gill netting and sustainable yield sufficiently to know whether this prohibition will restore the fishery. An effort should be made, combining data collected during the MHIMRI investigations with a concurrent study on the effects of this proposed ban, to answer this question reliably.