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SB 2422

RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS

Senate Committee on Health and Environment

Public Hearing - February 10, 1998
1:30P.M., Room 225 State Capitol

By

John T. Harrison, Environmental Center
Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center

SB 2422 would amend Section 343-5(c) to allow applicants to extend comment periods for public review of draft environmental assessments and draft environmental impact statements.

Our statement is compiled from voluntarily submitted opinions of the listed academic reviewers and does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

This bill is an excellent amendment. There have been a number of occasions in the past where the applicant would have liked to have had extra time to garner responses from the public which would contribute additional information to an assessment or a statement but was unable to because of the present limitation in the law. Since this permits only the applicant to request such an extension, it would not result in delays in the project by an agency. It has the potential to reduce delays in acceptance of documents and subsequent approvals of projects since there would be the opportunity to extend the review time for a few days to respond to potentially delaying concerns that may have arisen late in the review process. In an era when the prevailing tendency is in the opposite direction, it is refreshing to see an amendment which augments, rather than compromises public participation in decisionmaking.