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SB 1258

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE ALA WAI CANAL WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Senate Committee on Economic Development

Public Hearing, February 12, 1999

1:30 p.m., Room 225, State Capitol

By Jacquelin N. Miller, Environmental Center

John Harrison, Environmental Center

SB 1258 would authorize the director of finance to issue general obligation bonds to improve the Ala Wai Canal Watershed.

Our comments on this bill have been developed with the assistance of the above cited members of the University and do not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The need to improve the appearance and environmental characteristics of the Ala Wai Canal has been recognized at all levels of state government for more than 25 years. Efforts have been expended to evaluate various methods of improving water quality in the canal and most recently, attention has been directed to carrying out the necessary environmental studies prior to initiating the dredging of the canal. All of these maintenance actions would be reduced in size and cost if better management of the watershed were implemented. The focus of SB 1428 is just that...to improve management of the watershed of the Ala Wai Canal.

The actions proposed for funding by SB 1428 reflect implementation of the management measures and recommendations submitted last year by the Ala Wai Canal Water Quality Improvement Project in their Management and Implementation Plan, dated April 1998. The water quality improvement project was a joint effort between the state of Hawaii and the City and county of Honolulu. This Management and Implementation Plan was adopted by passage of Senate Concurrent Resolution 140 Senate Draft 1 of the 1998 legislature. Thus SB 1428 reflects implementation of this resolution.

We strongly concur with the intent of SB 1428 to provide funding for improvements to the Ala Wai Canal watershed.