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RB 3499
RELATING TO SHORELINES

House Committees on
Ocean and Marine Resources
Judiciary
Intergovernmental Relations and International Affairs

Public Hearing - February 7, 1992
8:30 A.M., Rm 1310 SOT

By
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Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center

HB 3499 would amend the definition of "shoreline" to provide for use of videotape evidence for shoreline determination.

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

At face value, we see no apparent justification for this measure. In contrast to the prior definition which relies on debris or vegetation lines, videotape records constitute a single point in time which fails to integrate seasonal or long-term variation in shoreline conditions. The need for a shoreline definition procedure, and its repetitive application is the intrinsically unstable nature of shorelines. Given that variation is expected, it seems preferable to use criteria which constitute a more time-averaged index of position than is offered by videotape evidence.

That being said, we suspect that the problem that this proposed amendment is intended to address relates to long term cyclical processes of accretion and erosion and efforts by both government and private landowners to document historic trends in justification of property designation. However, without a more specific rationale for the need for this amendment, we are not inclined to further modify the present definition.