SB 119
RELATING TO CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Senate Committee on
Higher Education, Culture, Arts and Historic Preservation

February 5, 1993
3:00 P.M., Room 405

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SB 119 would establish within the office of state planning, for administrative purposes, a temporary task force to develop specific land use categories, criteria, activities, uses and administrative procedures for cultural landscapes based on criteria presently being used by the National Park Service to define sites for the National Register of Historic Places.

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

We concur with the intent of this bill to set aside areas with historical significance, and that these kinds of areas may include buildings, archaeological sites, or relatively unaltered landscapes. The scope of this bill would include areas not currently covered by state historic preservation statutes, and thus it would establish a means for comprehensive, long term planning for cultural landscapes. Recognition of the importance and need for procedures to protect cultural landscapes is seriously needed in the state. The piece by piece development which has occurred over the past decade, and which has nibbled away at the integrity of landscapes of historical and cultural value, reflects classic examples of the need for greater cultural landscape protection.

We do, however, question the way in which this bill proposes to address the problem of preserving cultural landscapes. The bill calls for the establishment of a task force within the Office of State Planning. Given the temporary nature of the task force, the Office of State Planning may be the more expeditious lead. However, if continuance of the task force beyond 1994 is contemplated, and if preservation is the issue here, then this task force should be placed in the Department of Land and Natural Resources.
As presently structured, the members of the task force will represent state and county departments exclusively. There are no members representing the public at large or public organizations on this task force. We recommend a more diverse representation of the interests of the state than simply agencies of the state and county governments.

With some modification this bill could improve the planning process in the state, so that the integrity of cultural districts is maintained and these areas are provided protection from inappropriate development or alteration. This can happen, however, only when the interests of the people of the state are represented on the task force charged with establishing rules and criteria for preservation.