



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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SB 176  
RELATING TO A COMMISSION ON ENDANGERED PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Statement for  
Senate Committee on  
Agriculture and Environment  
Public Hearing - February 7, 1989

By  
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SB 176 proposes the creation of a governor's commission on endangered plants and animals which will, in turn, develop a plan of action to protect and preserve Hawaii's endangered plants and animals. Our comments on this bill do not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

We strongly support the intent of SB 176 to safeguard more adequately, Hawaii's endangered flora and fauna. It has become increasingly evident that federal action with regard to the protection of endangered species is too slow and weak to serve Hawaii's particular needs. As an illustration, no federal funding for any protective or restorative measures has been provided for declared endangered species in Hawaii. Hence, we concur with the need to develop a state plan of action to protect and preserve Hawaii's endangered plants and animals.

We suggest that the following three amendments be considered:

1. As presently drafted, members of the Commission are to be appointed by the Governor with at least one member from each county. No other qualification for membership is indicated. We see this as a major flaw in the proposed legislation and strongly urge that members of the commission be selected for their respective technical expertise, rather than on the basis of

county representation. A more viable commission might include representatives from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, since they administer the federal law; the National Park Service, who have the best programs for conservation in the state; the Department of Land and Natural Resources, as the state agency responsible for protection of endangered species; the Department of Agriculture, which is a major proponent of programs that adversely impact endangered species; the Department of Business and Economic Development, since the commission will need good planning and economic impact analysis; the Nature Conservancy of Hawaii, Hawaii Audubon Society, Hawaiian Botanical Society, as interested conservation groups; and someone with expertise in real estate or development, so that the concerns of developers are represented.

2. On page 1, line 5, we suggest changing the wording, "...introduction of foreign plants and animals" to "...introduction of alien plants and animals."
3. As drafted the Commission would disband 90 days after the submission of its plan of action. We suggest that this time frame may be too short if further consultation on the plan is needed.