SB 2301
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION
TO IMPROVE ALA MOANA BEACH AND AUTHORIZE DREDGING

Statement for
Senate Committee on
Tourism, Recreation and Planning
Public Hearing - February 2, 1990

SB 2301 is a companion bill to HB 2132 on which the Environmental Center earlier submitted testimony. Our previous statement remains applicable to SB 2301 and is enclosed for your consideration.

Enclosure
The purpose of HB 2132 and its companion bill, SB 2301, is to provide funds for the replenishment of sand at Ala Moana Beach Park including all necessary environmental and engineering studies.

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

As active participants in the long standing environmental and technical studies involving beach replenishment in Hawaii, we strongly concur with the intent of HB 2132. Replenishment of sand beaches from offshore deposits is a means of recovering and recycling a valuable resource and we support this responsible management practice. As provided by HB 2132, funds are to be used for the necessary environmental and engineering studies. These studies will need to address, among other things, the suitability of the eroded sediment in the lagoon or channel for beach replenishment. It is likely that the channel sediment is very fine grained and rich in organic matter. For these reasons it may not be a suitable material for beach use. Care must also be taken not to take sand too close to the beach and thereby increase the beach slope and erosion potential. We note that Section 1 of the bill provides that an alternate source of sand can be used if it proves unfeasible or undesirable to reclaim sand from the lagoon. We consider this alternative source provision in the bill to be essential.

Section 2 of HB 2132 states that HRS 171-58.5 permits the department of transportation to dredge sand from the waters adjacent to Ala Moana Beach for the purpose of replenishing the beach above and below mean lower low water. While it is true that HRS 171-58.5 permits the "mining or taking of sand...seaward from the shoreline...for beach replenishment purposes, it says nothing about "dredging". We bring this up only to emphasize that there are alternative methods for sand recovery other than "dredging" that may be both environmentally more benign and less costly.
In particular we are referring to sand pumping systems that have been developed by researchers at the University of Hawaii Look Laboratory and in cooperation with the private ocean engineering sector. These sand pumping systems operate much like a vacuum cleaner with maximum efficiency and minimum turbidity. One of the many advantages of these systems is that they can be operated from a small boat with minimal need for heavy equipment on the beach. We suggest that consideration be given to amending the bill to require an evaluation of the feasibility of the use of sand pumping equipment as part of the engineering studies to be undertaken for this project.