SR 137 AND SCR 116
REQUESTING A STUDY OF THE
WORLDWIDE GREENHOUSE EFFECT ON HAWAII'S COASTAL DEVELOPMENTS

Statement for
Senate Committee on
Economic Development
Public Hearing - 13 April 1984

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SCR 116 would request study of the "worldwide greenhouse effect on Hawaii's coastal development. This statement on the resolution does not reflect an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

As recognized in the resolution, the implication of the world-wide buildup of CO$_2$ concentration in the atmosphere, resulting from combustion of fossil fuels, has long been of concern to scientists. The current, more general concern results primarily from a report issued by the Environmental Protection Agency that is the basis of the estimates of global warming and sea-level rise cited in the resolution. We have not had time to obtain and review the pertinent reports. We understand that the EPA report suggests that a substantial rise in sea level would result even if the rate of fossil fuel were drastically reduced in the near future. We do not understand the rationale for such a suggestion. We also understand that a report issued by the National Academy of Sciences casts some doubt in the estimates cited. A particular source of uncertainty is the effectiveness of the world oceans as a sink for the CO$_2$ limiting the increase in atmospheric concentration.

The rise in sea level predicted by the EPA would have a very great effect on coastal developments. Hence even though there may be some reason that the rise will be as great as predicted, there is considerable merit to the study called for in the resolution.