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SR 127 and SR 133
RELATING TO BARBER'S POINT DEEP DRAFT HARBOR

Statement for
Senate Committee on Transportation
Public Hearing 1 March 1977

by
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SR 127 requests the support of Hawaii's Congressional delegation to expedite development of the Barber's Point Deep Draft Harbor. SR 133 requests the release of funds, by the Governor, for the construction of the same harbor. This statement on the two resolutions has been submitted for review to the legislative subcommittee of the Environmental Center of the University of Hawaii. It does not represent an institutional position of the University.

In our function as the coordinator of University environmental services to the State and Federal governments, we have been involved in the Barber's Point Harbor project for the past eleven months through reviews of the associated environmental impact studies.

The creation of this major new deep water port will have profound effects on the economic developments of the State and particularly on the direction of development on the island of Oahu. The project has great implications not only as to transpacific and interisland freight transport, but needs for and use of land transport, industrial development, commercial development, residential distribution, support systems such as water and sewerage, and also as to the future of agriculture in the Ewa district. However, these major secondary environmental impacts have as yet been described only in the sketchiest fashion.

Although the National Environmental Policy Act and Federal Department of Defense regulations require full analysis and disclosure of such secondary impacts in an Environmental Impact Statement, the Federal EIS produced by the Corps of Engineers treats them very lightly. The Corps rightly takes the attitude that the primary responsibility for analyzing these secondary impacts should rest with the State. As yet, however, there is no State EIS on the project.

It may be appropriate for the legislature to request the support of Hawaii's delegation to expedite the further development of the Barber's Point Harbor as is proposed in SR 127. A final commitment to the construction of the Harbor is not appropriate, however, until the environmental impacts are fully analyzed and disclosed, and what seems most to need expediting at present is the completion and release of the results of the environmental impact studies.

SR 133 presents a special problem. It would request the Governor to release State lands for the project. The release of funds for further development of plans and for environmental impact studies is appropriate, but by Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 343, the Governor may not release funds for construction until an environmental impact statement that meets State requirements has been prepared, reviewed and accepted.

The Environmental Center has, and will have, no judgment on the overall merits of the proposed Barber's Point Harbor. The Center urges, however, that the environmental impacts of the project, both detrimental and beneficial, be thoroughly considered, as is required by both Federal and State law, before the final decision is reached to proceed with its construction.