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RL:0327

SB 627 RELATING TO MINIMUM SIZES OF FISH

Statement for
Senate Committee on Economic Development
Public Hearing - 15 February 1979

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SB 627 would amend HRS 188-40, a section establishing minimum sizes of fish sold, so as to restrict the minimum weight criterion for lobsters to the slipper lobster. This statement on the bill does not reflect an institutional position of the University.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) has justified the bill on the basis that a carapace length criterion is more appropriate for the spiny lobster than the present weight criterion. However, it should be noted that the effect of the bill would not be to substitute the length criterion for the weight criterion in the case of the spiny lobster, but to make HRS 188-40 inapplicable to the spiny lobster. Unless there is some other statutory authority for the DLNR regulations on the taking of spiny lobster, HRS 188-40 should be further amended to add the minimum carapace length criterion respecting spiny lobsters recommended by the DLNR.

We note that there are actually four species of slipper lobster, one of which, living in shallow water, never grows to more than about three-quarters of a pound. Although controlled, taking of this one species should not lead to problems. It cannot be taken for sale under the provisions of HRS 188-40 either at present or with the proposed amendment.