



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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## Proposal 620 RELATING TO POWER OF COUNTIES

Statement for  
Con Con Committee on  
Environment, Agriculture, Conservation and Land  
Public Hearing 11 August 1978

by  
Doak C. Cox, Environmental Center

Proposal 620 would amend Article VII of the Constitution to place in the counties all powers to regulate growth and control land use save in state-owned land. This statement does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The issues of the proper balance between State and counties is not, in general, one that the Environmental Center can appropriately address. There are, however, environmental aspects of the amendment proposed on which the Center may legitimately comment. With respect to growth-management and land-use control, in a county, placement of complete power in the State would be appropriate if the residents in the county had no greater concern or very little more concern, with the growth and land-use decision than residents of other parts of the State. Placement of complete power in the county would be appropriate if the residents of other parts of the State had no concern or an insignificant level of concern with the decisions.

In actuality growth-management and land-use decisions in a county are of special concern to residents of the county but of significant and sometimes great concern to residents of other parts of the State, and the balance of intra-county vs extra county concern varies considerably with the type of decision.

Because the extent of urban and industrial development and their environmental effects varies so greatly among the counties, the environmental and economic effects of growth-management and land-use decisions in one county may be of considerable importance statewide. Hence, there is reason for the State to retain some growth and land-use control powers.