



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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## HB 3294 RELATING TO FISHING NETS

Statement for  
House Committee on  
Ocean and Marine Resources  
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By  
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HB 3294 would require the use of biodegradable nets for fishing after December 31, 1992.

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

We assume that the concern for ghost fishing by lost nets made of non-biodegradable monofilament has likely led to the introduction of this bill. If so, we concur with the intent of the bill. However, it is our understanding that no biodegradable nets are presently on the market and that even cotton nets can be soaked in various preservatives that significantly reduce their biodegradability. There are many monofilament nets currently in use that would be outlawed and even those used in throw nets which would seem to be the least likely to be lost or abandon, would be prohibited by this bill. Furthermore, the amendment does not distinguish between commercial users and subsistence fishermen. Certainly unless a biodegradable net is available on the market it would appear that passage of HB 3294 would present significant hardship to the fishing community. Perhaps the Department of Land and Natural Resources could be directed to look into the ghost fishing problem, to identify sources and use of biodegradable materials for nets, and to make their recommendations for needed statutory changes to the 1991 legislature.