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Inouye planning to include possible sale of DeRussy in defense appropriations bill

WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye will try again this year to win congressional approval for a possible early sale of a portion of Fort DeRussy in Waikiki, his office said yesterday.

Inouye's efforts to enact language that would allow the sale of a portion of the Army facility have failed twice this year.

The Hawaii Democrat wants to change a 18-year-old congressional ban on any sale or transfer of the valuable Waikiki site. Language which would have allowed the sale to local government failed to make it into a military spending authorization bill and was rejected by the House when Inouye got it into a

military spending appropriations bill.

Since DeRussy was the only matter holding up the military appropriations measure, Inouye agreed to drop the item, his office said yesterday.

But he intends to include identical language in the Department of Defense appropriations bill that will be taken up some time in December. As with the earlier efforts, that route would also be subject to conference committee with the House.

The extra time, however, may give Inouye and local authorities enough room to lobby House members on the proposal to sell.

At the behest of Hawaii Rep. Cec

Heftel, the House has steadfastly refused to agree to any quick change in the language protecting the status of DeRussy.

At issue is a proposal to negotiate a sale of the "mauka" 45 acres of DeRussy to either the state or the City and County of Honolulu.

Inouye believes the ball should begin rolling or the Army might move ahead with plans to build on the property, thus using up some of its valuable open space. Heftel says no change should be allowed until local plans for the property are clear to all concerned.

Heftel fears heavy development of the site might follow, including possible high-rise hotels.

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