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HB 1247 RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS

Statement for
House Committee on
Ecology, Environment and Recreation
Public Hearing, 2 March 1979

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HB 1247 proposes a minor amendment to the State Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) law, HRS Chapter 343. This statement on the bill does not reflect an institutional position of the University.

The amendment proposed consists of the addition of a new subsection to HRS section 343-4. Subsection c of that section deals with the environmental assessment and EIS requirements for an action if it falls within any of six categories defined in subsection (a)(2). The proposed new subsection (d) would allow the applicant for approval of such an action to submit an environmental assessment to the approving agency, but leave to the agency the power to determine whether or not an EIS is required. An agency may already make its determination on the basis of what is essentially an assessment by the applicant, and the proposed amendment would merely reflect practice that is now common, cannot be avoided, and is appropriate. The practice is not forbidden by the present law. Hence, the amendment would have little effect. If its passage is to be considered, however, the agency should be responsible not merely for the determination but for assurance that the assessment is valid and adequately comprehensive.