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Environmental Center

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SB 1834

RELATING TO NATURAL AREA RESERVES

Senate Committee on
Planning, Land and Water Use

Public Hearing - February 25, 1993
3:00 P.M., Room 405 SOT

By

John T. Harrison, Environmental Coordinator
Charles Lamoureux, Lyon Arboretum
Clifford Smith, Cooperative Parks Unit

SB 1834 would amend Chapter 195, HRS, to provide for changes in the composition of the Natural Area Reserves Commission, specifically requiring one member of the commission to be a representative of the hunting community.

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

We fail to see a supportable reason for the proposed addition of a hunting representative to the NARS commission. The hunting community already is represented on the Animal Species Advisory Commission, and issues addressed by the NARS commission more directly concern preservation, not management for sustainable yield of game. We are particularly alarmed at the suggestion in the DLNR testimony on this measure to "direct attention towards the non-biological aspects and components of resource management and conservation". While the DLNR purports to advocate a "strong scientific foundation and rationale for the policies guiding the NARS", all of the long term goals to combine management into a single Natural Resources Advisory Commission would effectively dilute the mandated scientific contribution to management decisions.

If we cannot manage 3% of the State land area in a manner that has sound scientific as opposed to political underpinnings, then we might as well publicly state that we are unconcerned about endangered species, that we pay only lip service to Hawaii's unique heritage, and that we can't be bothered to heed the advice of highly educated professionals in consideration of our natural area legacy to Hawaii's children. If the competing interests for that 3% of Hawaii are so compelling, then we should give up our global prestige and responsibility as leaders in management of unique environments in oceanic islands.