



University of Hawaii at Manoa

Environmental Center
A Unit of Water Resources Research Center
Crawford 317 • 2550 Campus Road • Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Telephone: (808) 956-7361

1065
RL: 1066

HB 3062 HD 1 RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

House Committee on
Finance

Public Hearing - February 27, 1992
1:30 PM, Room 908 SOT

By
John T. Harrison, Environmental Center
Clifford Smith, Botany
Charles Lamoureux, Lyon Arboretum

HB 3062 HD 1 would convert the special natural area reserve fund to a revolving fund, and provide for an annual transfer of income from the public land trust into that fund of not more than \$4 million. Annual infusion of up to the same amount into the forest stewardship fund also shall be made from the proceeds and income of the public land trust.

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

This administration-sponsored measure addresses the need for dedicated funding for the natural area and forest stewardship partnerships. Because of prior uncertainties over the long term sustainability of funding for these programs, private landowners have expressed some hesitancy in committing their properties. This measure should provide the funding security necessary to allay the concerns of prospective private partners in these worthwhile conservation programs.

Assurance of secure funding for natural area and forest stewardship programs is crucial in management contexts as well. Some specific ecological impacts of a funding lapse previously were noted in testimony of the Nature Conservancy. More generally, long-term management needs of baseline and monitoring research to establish trends in species diversity, recruitment and growth, and restoration efficacy are particularly dependent on secure support. In times of prosperity, funding may be obtained through public and private grants, although procurement will entail a substantial

HB 3062 HD 1

overhead in personnel and administrative costs. But when economic strength falters, the defense of our natural resources inevitably is overshadowed by human self-interest. Ironically, basic survival needs of the human community, such as drinking water, fishery resources, and medicinal products, are best safeguarded by preserving the very areas that are most rapidly jettisoned from political priority lists when times get tough.