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SB 2024 RELATING TO OCEAN RESOURCES

Statement for
Senate Committee on
Agriculture, Energy and Ocean Resources
Public Hearing - February 10, 1988

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SB 2024 proposes to establish an Ocean Resources Management program. Our statement on this bill does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Given the importance of ocean resources to the State of Hawaii, the establishment of a Chapter in the Hawaii Revised Statutes specifically setting forth ocean and resource management policy, a coordinating agency, and the personnel and direction for developing an ocean resources management plan is highly appropriate. The magnitude of the plan is such that we question whether the time schedule for the interim plan and final plan are sufficient, but the process and contents as provided in SB 2024 seem reasonable.

We note with approval the expression of State policy to "exercise an overall conservation ethic in the use of Hawaii's ocean resources." However, we are concerned that the heavy emphasis placed on ocean resources development will supercede sound environmental and resource management principles. Short-term economic benefits from exploitative resource development strategies may be substantial, but they must be judiciously weighed against their deleterious consequences over the longer term. Our children and grandchildren have no less right to sustainable and, at best, enhanced ocean resources than do members of the present population. Their opportunity to enjoy these resources will require establishing a critical balance between short-term gains and long-term sustainability. The effectiveness of the plan in achieving this critical balance will depend on the individuals chosen to serve on the task force advisory committee. In