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RL:0356

HR 393 and HCR 74 RELATING TO EARTH DAY

Statement for
House Committees on
Energy
Ecology and Environmental Protection
Public Hearing, 19 March 1979

By
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HR 393 and HCR 74 would endorse the April 1979 observation of Earth Day in Hawaii. This statement on the resolutions does not reflect an institutional position of the University.

In justifying the observance of Earth Day, the resolutions call attention to the concern with maintaining Hawaiian lifestyles, to the need for preserving our air and water resources, to our dependence on oil imports, and to the need for resource conservation and recycling.

The first Earth Day was observed on 22 April 1970 nationally, and in Hawaii specifically by proclamation of the Governor, John Burns. Resource conservation had, of course, been of concern to the earliest peoples in Hawaii. Special concerns had already been manifest in the Legislature a few years earlier, for example, concerns with water quality. Earlier in 1970 the Legislature passed the Environmental Quality Control Act that called for the establishment of our Center and the State Office of Environmental Quality Control. Still, Earth Day 1970 represents a notable date in the development of the "environmental movement."

Since 1970, Earth Day has been observed less formally. It is fitting that formal observation be instituted again.

We would suggest, indeed, that the observation be continued annually. It is quite clear that no final disposition of environmental problems can ever be expected in Hawaii, in the nation, or in the world as a whole. Earth Days serve as convenient reminders of the needs for the management of environmental quality and natural resources in the same way that Thanksgiving Days remind us to be grateful for the resources available to us and Arbor Days remind us of the needs related to a particular aspect of environmental management. We do not suggest that Earth Day be a public holiday, like Thanksgiving Day, but that institution of annual observation otherwise would be appropriate.