



# University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

## Environmental Center

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### HB 3728

#### RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

House Committees on  
Energy and Environmental Protection and  
Water and Land Use Planning

Joint Public Hearing - February 7, 1996  
8:30 A.M., Room 312, State Capitol

By

John Harrison, Environmental Center  
Roger Fujioka, Water Resources Research Center

HB 3728 would amend the definition of "State waters" in §342D-1, HRS to exclude Wahiawa Reservoir (Lake Wilson) from the definition, thereby exempting it from state water quality regulations.

Our comments on this measure are compiled from voluntarily submitted opinions of the listed academic sources, and as such, do not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

If the underlying purpose of this measure is to exempt the City and County of Honolulu from State water quality regulations in relation to wastewater discharges into Wahiawa Reservoir, we suggest that it is inappropriate. In view of ongoing recreational use of this reservoir, the current discharge amounts to an ongoing public health concern, and an alternate disposal system is warranted.

It is our understanding that the City has attempted to alleviate this situation through planned development of an extensive artificial wetland system, but that difficulties in procurement of land adjacent to the treatment facility have interfered with these plans. We suggest that a more appropriate approach for the legislature to adopt might be to seek an agreement between the parties involved in this situation that provides for each represented interest. Wastewater disposal in this area is a concern, not just of the City, but of federal agencies as well, in that Schofield Barracks and Wheeler Air Force Base have treated effluent currently flowing through an irrigation ditch system. Perhaps the State might broker an agreement in which federal lands could be exchanged with Del Monte for rights to utilize the City's planned artificial wetland to be created on Del Monte land adjacent to the treatment plant. Under this agreement, the City would get the land it needs for the wetland, Del Monte would procure equivalent land to that given to the City, and the federal government would be allowed to discharge its treated effluent into the City's water pollution control system.