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HR 176/HCR 180
REQUESTING A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE IMPACT THAT FISH FEEDING AND
ARTIFICIAL REEFS HAVE ON SHARKS

House Committee on
Ocean and Marine Resources

Public Hearing - March 17, 1993
8:30 A.M., Room 1310 SOT

By
John T. Harrison, Environmental Coordinator
Richard Brock, Sea Grant
Bruce Carlson, Waikiki Aquarium
Kim Holland, HIMB

HR 176/ HCR 180 seek to implement a study to determine impacts of fish feeding and artificial reefs on shark populations.

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

Our reviewers strongly support the intent of this resolution, although we might offer some suggestions for accuracy and clarity. We are not sure what precisely is meant by the term, "offshore", in the first whereas clause. Also, to be more accurate, since corals are a subset of marine life, it is possible for there to be few corals, but highly productive marine life occurring naturally in areas of Mamala Bay. At the time when Waikiki was a low-lying coastal wetland, we suspect that the natural input of organic nutrients into the nearshore waters probably led to few coral colonies, but abundant marine life. As one moved farther offshore, it is likely that coral colonization would have increased proportionately with increasing water clarity. Moving to other regions of Mamala Bay, such as the areas off of Ewa Beach, there is clear evidence of abundant coral reef development. Consequently, we suggest rewording the first paragraph to read,

"WHEREAS, coral and other marine life abundance in the waters off of Waikiki presently is sparse;"

Our other major concern with this resolution is that we doubt that it is practically feasible to collect more than preliminary data prior to the start of the next Legislative session, much less develop "findings and recommendations". To be worthwhile, this study should encompass several control and experimental phases conducted over sufficient time to evaluate seasonal influences. Given the deep concerns addressed by this work, there is no point in merely performing a "quick and dirty" effort. A report on progress delivered to the Legislature by twenty days prior to session would be more reasonable.