



# University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

## Environmental Center

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### SCR 237/SR 207 REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS CONCERNS RELATED TO SEWAGE POLLUTION OF WAIKIKI AREA BEACH WATERS

Senate Committee on Ecology and Environmental Protection

Public Hearing - April 5, 1995  
1:00 P.M., Room 305 SOT

by

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Roger Fujioka, Water Resources Research Center

SCR 237/SR 207 seeks establishment of a task force to evaluate concerns regarding bacterial contamination of coastal waters adjacent to Waikiki due to sewage contamination and to recommend a strategy to remedy those concerns.

The statement that leaks from sewage lines in Waikiki are contaminating waters in the Waikiki beach area and the Ala Wai Canal is unfounded. We are unaware of any studies which have positively identified problems of this type in Waikiki.

The City and County of Honolulu's Department of Wastewater Management considers the collectors in Waikiki to be major sources of inflow and infiltration, that is, leakage of groundwater into sewage pipes. The lining and sealing technology referred to in the resolution generally is used to prevent the flow of water from the ground into the pipes rather than the flow of sewage out of the pipes. Since gravity lines are designed to handle storm flows, they usually are less than half full even during periods of high usage. Thus, there is no hydrostatic pressure head to force fluid out of the lines into the ground, and so it's hard to envision the sewage pipes as sources of contamination of coastal waters.

Two recent studies which have assessed bacterial contamination of recreational waters in the Waikiki area have concluded that the source of contamination is not sewage, but rather storm runoff in the case of enterococci and high densities of human swimmers in the case of staphylococci. While we agree that protection of the public health and the high quality of Waikiki's recreational waters is of critical importance, the problem envisioned by this measure is unproven and unlikely, and hard evidence suggests that bacteria in these waters come from sources other than sewage. Thus, we suggest that the proposed task force is unnecessary.