



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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Office of the Director

RL:0390A

## HB 2842, HD 1 RELATING TO FISH AND GAME

Statement for  
Senate Committee on  
Ecology, Environment and Recreation  
Public Hearing - 19 March 1980

By  
Andrew Berger, Zoology  
Hampton Carson, Genetics  
Doak C. Cox, Environmental Center  
Ruth Gay, Botany  
Alison Kay, General Science  
Kenneth Kaneshiro, Entomology

HB 2842, HD 1 would amend the provisions of Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 187 that deals with the Animal Species Advisory Commission and the kind of advice that it has provided to the Division of Fish and Game. It would, however, not abolish the Commission as was proposed in the original version of HB 2842. This statement on HD 1 does not reflect an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

As amended, the bill provides that the Animal Species Advisory Commission will serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Land Natural Resources rather than to the Division of Fish and Game. This change is appropriate in the light of the proposed reorganization of the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

However, through substitution of the word "may" for the word "shall" (page 3, line 14), the bill would make permissive, rather than mandatory, the advice of the Commission on the introduction of new species of animals as well as other matters affecting hunting, fishing, etc. This change is quite undesirable in the light of the original reason for establishing the Commission, which was to provide for the protection of indigenous fish, bird, animal and vegetable life through determination, in advance, of the probable effects of new animal introductions and other actions.

It is extremely important that the advice of the Commission be available informally, at least, at the staff level as well as formally at the Board level. The bill retains the present membership of the Commission, which includes the chief of the Division of Fish and Game. To assure communication at the staff level it is very desirable that a responsible staff member of that Division should remain an ex-officio but non-voting member of the Commission, and it would be desirable also that staff members of other Divisions should similarly be ex-officio non-voting members.



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## HB 2842 RELATING TO FISH AND GAME

Statement for  
House Committee on  
Water, Land Use, Development and Hawaiian Affairs  
Public Hearing - 28 February 1980

By  
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HB 2842 would delete Section 187-1.1 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes, a section under which the Animal Species Advisory Commission was established, and amend subsection (b) of Section 1.2, a subsection that now requires that the Fish and Game Division of the Department of Land and Natural Resources consult with the Animal Species Advisory Commission in making its findings concerning any proposed introduction of a species of animal. The amendment proposed would substitute a requirement that the Division merely consult with scientists in various fields.

The history of importation of animals in Hawaii is replete with instances of harmful effects that imported species have had on the flora and fauna of the Islands, particularly the endemic flora and fauna. It was in recognition of the potential for further harm that the Animal Species Advisory Commission was established. It would be quite unwise to abolish the Commission or to allow the Division of Fish and Game to fail to consult with it concerning proposed importation. The substitution proposed in HB 2842 of consultation with scientists selected by the Division of Fish and Game would be quite unsatisfactory, because the Division might well select scientists whose opinion it knew in advance to be favorable to a particular proposed importation and hence bias its findings in disregard of the weight of opposed scientific opinion.

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There can be no assurance that the Commission, whose members are appointed by the Governor, will represent a balanced scientific opinion on any particular proposed importation, but Section 187-1.2, as it now exists, makes such balanced representation much more probable than the amended version proposed in HB 2842. Through the deliberations of the Commission of proposed introductions, there is an exchange of views that is very unlikely to occur among individual consultants to the Fish and Game Division.