



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

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RL:0468

## HB 2222, HD 1 RELATING TO ANGUILLIFORMES

Statement for  
Senate Committee on Agriculture  
Public Hearing - 29 March 1982

By  
Doak C. Cox, Environmental Center

HB 2222, HD 1 would amend HRS 150A-6, which now prohibits the importation of anguillid eels so as to allow the importation of "Anguilla rostrata" under certain conditions. This statement on the bill has been submitted to the Legislative Subcommittee of the Environmental Center but does not reflect an institutional position of the University.

Standing Committee Report 210 indicates that only one person testified against the SB 2222 before the House Committee on Agriculture. The Environmental Center was unaware of that committee's hearing on the bill, and would not have taken a formal stand either for or against its passage. However, if we had commented on the bill in that committee, we would have suggested that the bill not be passed until certain studies had been completed.

The reasons for our making this suggestion would have been the same as those for making the suggestion in the statement we provided to this committee on SB 2134, another bill that would have allowed the importation of anguillid eels. Unlike SB 2134, HB 2134 would permit the importation only of a single species and only for experimental and scientific purposes. However, the risk of escape of the eels and their establishment in Hawaiian streams would be much the same, and until both this risk and the profitability of an eel industry whose promotion is the intent of both bills have been better established, it seems best that the present prohibition against the importation of the bills should be condemned.

As we pointed out in our earlier statement for the committee (RL:0455), "the possible penalty of deferral [of a decision to allow eels importation] can at the most be no greater than the deferral of a potential economic benefit, whereas the possible penalties of a decision to allow the introduction of anguillid eels include not only permanent environmental detriments but also permanent and significant economic detriments."