



University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Environmental Center

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SB 2656

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Senate Committee on Planning, Land and Water Use Management

**Public Hearing - February 2, 1996
1:00 P.M., Room 225, State Capitol**

By

John T. Harrison, Environmental Center

Charles Lamoureux, Lyon Arboretum

Peter Rappa, Sea Grant

Cliff Smith, Botany

SB 2656 would amend §171-6, HRS, to authorize the Board of Land and Natural Resources to accept donations and contributions. It further would require that the board identify specific program areas, including but not limited to endangered species protection, which are eligible to receive direct funding assistance through donations received.

Our statement on this measure is compiled from voluntarily submitted opinions of listed academic reviewers, and as such, does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Generally, we support the intent of this measure, in that it may provide additional funding for environmental management programs. We have concerns, however, that the language proposed appears somewhat open-ended. For instance, even though it is probably understood, it would be reassuring to see language in Section 19 specifying that the money can only be used for programs within the department's authority, and, more specifically, that it can not be used in place of base operational funding. Our concern is that a future administration might require that a crucial program such as endangered species management must support their operations with extramural money. Similarly, language in Section 20 should speak to the need for balance within the overall program in order to offset the tendency for one heavily endowed area to dominate the department's focus.

There also may be problems where matching money is required. Frequently, these obligations are met with in-kind services or dedicated salary commitments. However, in those cases where a cash match is specified, we have concerns that funds from one program may be raided in order to meet cash match requirements of another.