



University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Environmental Center

A Unit of Water Resources Research Center
Crawford 317 • 2550 Campus Road • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822
Telephone: (808) 956-7361 • Facsimile: (808) 956-3980

RL:01296

HCR 114/HR 122 REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS CONCERNS RELATED TO SEWAGE POLLUTION OF WAIKIKI AREA BEACH WATERS

House Committee on Finance

Public Hearing - April 11, 1995
10:00 A.M., Room 908 SOT

by

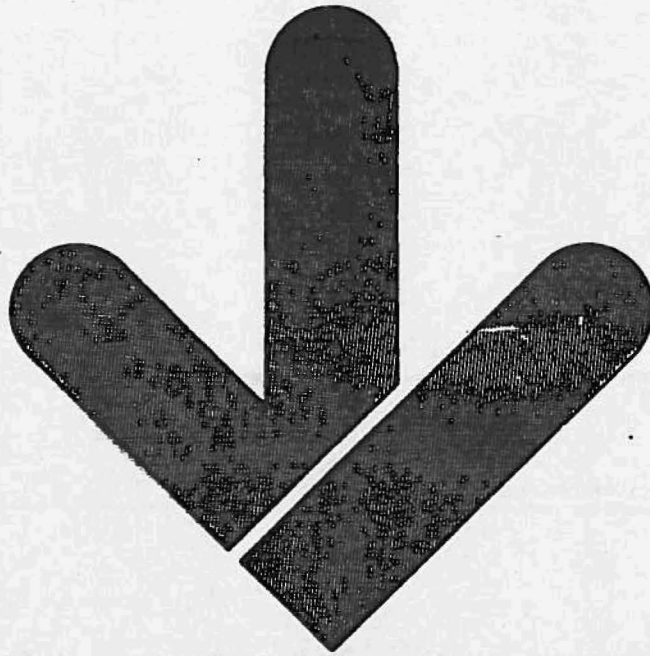
John T. Harrison, Environmental Center
Roger Fujioka, Water Resources Research Center

HCR 114/HR 122 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 University of Hawaii at Manoa is willing to serve on the task force to study the concerns related to suspected sewage pollution of Waikiki area beach waters. However, our reviewers suggest that 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.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TESTIMONY

**H. C. R. 114, H. D. 1
Requesting the Establishment of a Task Force to Address
Concerns Related to Sewage Pollution of Waikiki Area Beach Waters**

**Testimony Presented Before the Joint Senate Committees on
Ecology and Environmental Protection,
Ways and Means
and
Planning, Land & Water Use Management**

**April 21, 1995
by**

**Dr. John Harrison, Environmental Coordinator
Environmental Center**

