



January 25, 2018

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair  
COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Hearing Date: Friday, January 26, 2018  
Hearing Time: 2:45PM  
Regarding: SB 2003 RELATING TO AQUATIC LIFE

**STRONGLY OPPOSE** SB2003, Relating to Aquatic Life

HFACT is a not-for-profit, IRS 501c(5) organization, that advocates for small boat commercial, non-commercial, and recreational fishermen throughout Hawaii. HFACT board members sit on a number of international, regional, and federal fisheries management and endangered species advisory committees as well as state marine and coastal zone advisory committees; and, HFACT is thoroughly familiar with and participates in ocean and marine resource management in Hawaii and the western and central Pacific.

HFACT **OPPOSES** the intent of SB2003, Relating to Aquatic Life. The state has shown commitment to sustainable fisheries and this bill is counter to the state's efforts to support sustainable use of marine resources. The aquarium fish collection fishery in Hawaii has been shown, via peer-reviewed scientific studies, as being sustainable.

HFACT believes SB2003 as written is simply another attack by animal rights organizations on fishing in Hawaii. While the bill mentions the aquarium fishing industry, in reality it is directed at all fishing in Hawaii, including commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing. Animal rights groups will not be satisfied until all people in Hawaii, be they a commercial fisherman, a non-commercial fisherman, a native Hawaiian, or a recreational angler, are prohibited from catching fish for food or for any other purpose.

HFACT believes that fisheries management decisions should be based on peer-reviewed science, stakeholder involvement, and guidance from the Department of Land and Natural Resources and its field biologists. If peer-reviewed science shows that strict management protocols need to be implemented, the Department of Land and Natural Resources has many statutory mandates to implement such management rules, simply put SB2003 is unnecessary. Passing SB2003 would set a bad precedent of managing fisheries resources on the basis of political opinion rather than on the bases of scientific monitoring of the fish stocks in the ocean.

***Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition, Inc.***  
***75-796 Hiona Street, Holualoa HI 96725***

HFACT objects to bills such as this that purport to be based on science, but are in fact based on political and personal agendas. There is absolutely no credible science to support SB2003. This is simply another attempt by special interest groups to take management of natural resources away from Hawaii, the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and the citizens that depend on these resources for cultural, subsistence, and economic reasons.

HFACT recommends that the Legislature support the Department of Land and Natural Resources adopt *more* science-based management of its fisheries rather than *less*, as implied in this bill. With the exception of the management of the aquarium fish collection and bottomfish stock management, Hawaii is behind the state-of-the-art in fisheries science compared to the rest of the nation, and also compared to many island nations. Adopting a science-based approach, as has been done with the aquarium fish collection fishery, is foundational to the proper management of irreplaceable natural resources.

The construction of Hawaii's fisheries statutes, rules, regulations and policies should be made solely on the basis of the best peer-reviewed scientific and commercial data available. The careful evaluation of scientific evidence is fundamental to the management of all natural resources. The State should strive to make every effort to utilize scientific advances that improve our ability to understand nature and its processes. SB2003 flies in the face of fisheries management best practices.

HFACT thanks the chair, vice-chair, and committee members for this opportunity to provide comment and to assist in the conservation of Hawaii's natural resources.

Sincerely and Aloha,



Phil Fernandez  
President