

TESTIMONY
SCR 44 / SR 26

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
LAURA H. THIELEN
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WATER, LAND, AGRICULTURE, AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**Friday, February 27, 2009
2:45 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 44/SENATE RESOLUTION 26
EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
REPORT, "THE CORAL REEF OF SOUTH MOLOKAI, HAWAII: PORTRAIT OF A
SEDIMENT THREATENED FRINGING REEF", ENCOURAGING FEDERAL, STATE,
AND COMMUNITY COOPERATION TO STEWARD THE SOUTH MOLOKAI REEF
FISHERY**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 44/ Senate Resolution 26 propose that state agencies and others recognize and support the conclusions in the United States Geological Survey report, "The Coral Reef of South Molokai, Hawaii: Portrait of a Sediment-Threatened Fringing Reef". The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) understands this report has been recently released and reserves comment on its findings pending a full review.

The Department supports research that fills the gaps in the knowledge of coral reef ecosystems. The Department is involved with the mitigation of sediment discharge from several watersheds in this area, primarily Kamalo Stream, as part of its Land-Based Sources of Pollution local action strategy under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Coral Reef Conservation Program, and has recently undertaken efforts to control the spread of invasive alien marine algae in this area, in order to protect the integrity of the coral reef ecosystem.

The Department is committed to continuing these and other management actions so as to ensure the long term integrity and ecological viability of the south Molokai reef for future generations.

LAURA H. THIELEN
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Joseph Pontanilla
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Director of Council Services
Ken Fukuoka

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov/council

February 26, 2009

TO: Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Danny A. Mateo
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 27, 2009; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR 44, RELATING TO EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT, "THE CORAL REEF OF SOUTH MOLOKAI, HAWAII: PORTRAIT OF A SEDIMENT THREATENED FRINGING REEF", ENCOURAGING FEDERAL, STATE, AND COMMUNITY COOPERATION TO STEWARD THE SOUTH MOLOKAI REEF FISHERY**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to support the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Report entitled "The Coral Reef of South Moloka'i, Hawai'i: Portrait of a Sediment-Threatened Fringing Reef", and encourage State, Federal and community cooperation in stewarding the South Molokai Reef Fishery.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. In 1999, the USGS began an in-depth study of the sedimentation crisis on the South Molokai Reef, concluding in a 2008 report, which provides details that have never been available before.
2. The USGS Report states that the South Molokai Reef is the longest, most continuous, and densest coral reef in the main Hawaiian islands, and is a national treasure that should be studied and protected.
3. The South Molokai Reef is an important cultural resource to the County and the people of Molokai for its history and enduring fishing traditions.
4. The protection of the South Molokai Reef and mitigation of land-based sedimentation impacts on the reef are first priorities of the island community.

For the foregoing reasons, I support this measure.

Council Chair
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Vice-Chair
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February 26, 2009

TO: Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Danny A. Mateo
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 27, 2009; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SR 26, RELATING TO EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT, "THE CORAL REEF OF SOUTH MOLOKAI, HAWAII: PORTRAIT OF A SEDIMENT THREATENED FRINGING REEF", ENCOURAGING FEDERAL, STATE, AND COMMUNITY COOPERATION TO STEWARD THE SOUTH MOLOKAI REEF FISHERY**

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4. The protection of the South Molokai Reef and mitigation of land-based sedimentation impacts on the reef are first priorities of the island community.

For the foregoing reasons, I support this measure.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
(Mark Fox, Director of External Affairs)
Supporting S.C.R. 44 and S.R. 26 Expressing Support for the United States
Geological Survey Report, "The Coral Reef of South Moloka'i, Hawai'i: Portrait of a
Sediment Threatened Fringing Reef", Encouraging Federal, State, and Community
Cooperation to Steward the South Moloka'i Reef Fishery
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs
February 27, 2009, 2:45PM, Room 229

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawai'i's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for native species in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 32,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on O'ahu, Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.

The Nature Conservancy supports S.C.R. 44 and S.R. 26.

We greatly appreciate the work of the U.S. Geological Survey to conduct this analysis and produce this comprehensive report on the South Moloka'i fringing reef. As the report points out, this extremely important reef resource is the longest continuous fringing reef track in the entire United States. While the outer fore reef is healthy, the inner reef is severely degraded by sedimentation.

In particular, we note that managing hoofed animals, especially goats, is critical to strategies of protecting the best remaining native forest areas on Molokai's south slope, to increasing vegetation on the highly denuded mid-elevation areas, and thus reducing the sedimentation rate that severely impacts the reef below.

The restoration and reforestation of mauka lands called for in S.C.R 44 and S.R. 26 can succeed if feral animal populations are properly managed.

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From: walter ritte [ritte@hotmai.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 1:15 PM
To: WTLTestimony
Subject: Testimony

Hearing Friday Feb. 27, 2009 2:45pm Committee on Water Land Agr. and Hawaiian Affairs

~~SB 633~~

~~My Name is Walter Ritte, and I am in strong support of this Bill. The purpose of the Molokai Irrigation System was to serve Native Hawaiian Homesteaders. The vast majority of the water is being used by non homesteaders. The advisory board is stacked against homesteaders and the last two years have seen the board go against homesteader interest and leadership, Even the department of Ag. has been at odds with homesteaders on legislative issues regarding the MIS.~~

SB1199

I am in strong support of this bill. Fishing presure, sediment run off, global warming and other factors has depleted the food resources in the ocean. Mahagement plans for the shoreline of all islands is needed to change this trend. Molokai would like to begin that process to insure food security for their future generations.

SCR44 and SR26

I am in strong support of these resolutions. This is a very good report, it is well done and accurate. It has excellent recommendations for solutions to many problems facing the reef system of Molokai. The recommendations will increase the food security for Molokai, create many green jobs and protect the land and sea.

~~SB 709, SD1~~

~~I am in strong support of this bill. Taro is not just a plant to Hawaiians, it is important to understand the sacredness and family ties Hawaiians have with the taro. To not understand this relationship will translate into major future problems in agriculture. The Hawaiians are united in their responsibility to protect Haloa the taro, and we do not want our family member genetically modified.~~

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on these important bills. Walter Ritte

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(END)