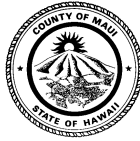


Council Chair  
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair  
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Councilmembers  
Kauanoë Batangan  
Tom Cook  
Gabe Johnson  
Tamara Paltin  
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez  
Shane M. Sinenci  
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins




Director of Council Services  
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services  
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

March 23, 2026

TO: The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair  
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
  
The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair  
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

FROM: Alice L. Lee  
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 24, 2026; TESTIMONY COMMENTING ON  
HB 2101, HD1, RELATING TO COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM COLLECTION**

I submit comments on this measure to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life for commercial aquarium purposes.

The Maui County Council supports legislation to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life from State marine waters for commercial aquarium purposes. Therefore, I offer this testimony on behalf of the Council.

The Maui County Council provides these comments:

1. The Council adopted Resolution 26-53, "Urging the Hawai'i State Legislature to Prohibit the Harvest of Aquatic Life from State Marine Waters for Commercial Aquarium Purposes" on March 6, 2026. A copy of the resolution is attached.
2. For the reasons stated in the resolution, the Council urges the Legislature to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life from State marine waters for commercial aquarium purposes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Attachment

ocs:proj:legis:26legis:26testimony:hb2101hd1\_paf25-331(17)\_ebm

# Resolution

No. 26-53

## URGING THE HAWAI'I STATE LEGISLATURE TO PROHIBIT THE HARVEST OF AQUATIC LIFE FROM STATE MARINE WATERS FOR COMMERCIAL AQUARIUM PURPOSES

WHEREAS, under the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i, Article XI, Section 1, "For the benefit of present and future generations, the State and its political subdivisions must conserve and protect Hawai'i's natural resources," which are held in trust by the State for the benefit of the people;"

WHEREAS, the State has "the power to manage and control the marine, seabed and other resources located within the boundaries of the State" under the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i, Article XI, Section 6; and

WHEREAS, as part of the County of Maui General Plan, the Countywide Policy Plan includes the following policies:

- "Protect and restore nearshore reef environments and water quality."
- "Protect marine resources and valued wildlife."

WHEREAS, Hawai'i's coral reef ecosystems are of vital importance to the State's people, culture, and economy; and

WHEREAS, the reef systems are being pushed to their limits by rising ocean temperatures, acidification, repeated bleaching events, and human pressures; and

WHEREAS, healthy reefs allow for the exercise of subsistence fishing and other traditional and cultural Native Hawaiian practices; and

WHEREAS, Hawai'i's reef ecosystem is sometimes referred to as the "rainforest" of the sea, supporting biodiversity including more than 7,000 known species of marine plants and animals, many of which are endemic to Hawai'i; and

**Resolution No. 26-53**

WHEREAS, the reef ecosystem feeds, shelters, and provides essential habitat for fish as it simultaneously protects the shoreline from waves, storms, floods, and beach erosion; and

WHEREAS, the herbivorous reef fish targeted for commercial aquarium collection—including yellow tang and orangespine unicornfish,—are critical for controlling the algal growth that can smother coral; and

WHEREAS, evidence suggests that most fish captured for home aquariums die within the first year of captivity, and some species, such as yellow tang, can live for more than 40 years in the ocean; and

WHEREAS, allowing commercial aquarium aquatic life extraction allows private enterprise to profit from natural resources that should be held in trust for the benefit of present and future generations; and

WHEREAS, many residents and organizations believe fish and other aquatic life in Hawai'i marine waters should be protected from commercial aquarium collecting; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs has included in its 2026 Legislative Package legislation to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life from State marine waters for commercial aquarium purposes; and

WHEREAS, the OHA legislation and related bills have been supported this year by the Hawai'i County Council, the Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition, the Kihei Community Association, and many Maui County residents; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it urges the Hawai'i State Legislature is to prohibit the harvest of aquatic life from State marine waters for commercial aquarium purposes;
2. That it authorizes the Council Chair to testify on the Council's behalf in support of legislation consistent with this Resolution's purpose; and
3. That copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Maui County's delegation to the Hawai'i State Legislature; the Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura, Speaker of the House, State of Hawai'i;

**Resolution No. 26-53**

the Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, Senate President, State of Hawai'i; the Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Governor, State of Hawai'i; the Honorable C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D., Mayor, County of Hawai'i; the Honorable Rick Blangiardi, Mayor, City and County of Honolulu; the Honorable Derek Kawakami, Mayor, County of Kaua'i; the Honorable Dr. Holeka Goro Inaba, Council Chair, County of Hawai'i; the Honorable Mel Rapozo, Council Chair, County of Kaua'i; the Honorable Tommy Waters, Council Chair, City and County of Honolulu; Ryan K.P. Kanaka'ole, Acting Chairperson, Board of Land and Natural Resources, State of Hawai'i; Summer Sylva, Ka Pouhana Kūikawā, and Leina'ala Ley, Ka Pou Kihi Kū, Office of Hawaiian Affairs; and the Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor, County of Maui.

paf:ebm:26-057a

INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shane M. Sinenci". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

---

SHANE M. SINENCI

**COUNCIL OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI**

**WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793**

**CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION**

**It is HEREBY CERTIFIED that RESOLUTION NO. 26-53 was adopted by the Council of the County of Maui, State of Hawaii, on the 6th day of March, 2026, by the following vote:**

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>Alice L LEE Chair</b>	<b>Yuki Lei K. SUGIMURA Vice-Chair</b>	<b>K. Kauanoē BATANGAN</b>	<b>Tom COOK</b>	<b>Gabriel L. JOHNSON</b>	<b>Tamara A. M. PALTIN</b>	<b>Keani N. W. RAWLINS- FERNANDEZ</b>	<b>Shane M. SINENCI</b>	<b>Nohelani U'U- HODGINS</b>
<b>ROLL CALL</b>	<b>Aye 'Ae</b>	<b>Aye 'Ae</b>	<b>Aye 'Ae</b>	<b>Aye 'Ae</b>	<b>Aye 'Ae</b>	<b>Aye 'Ae</b>	<b>Aye 'Ae</b>	<b>Aye 'Ae</b>	<b>Excused Ho'oku'u 'ia</b>

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
COUNTY CLERK