

# Report from Washington D.C. on environmental safeguards

Patricia F. Saiki Papers

U.S. House, Public relations, Box 2, Folder 12

<https://hdl.handle.net/10524/84623>

---

Items in eVols are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved, unless otherwise indicated.

*UHM Library Digital Collections Disclaimer and Copyright Information*

UNITED STATES CONGRESSWOMAN

# PAT SAIKI

REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C. — MAY 1990

## Environmental Safeguards Moving Forward. . . HAWAII AND THE PACIFIC BENEFIT

U.S. Congresswoman Patricia Saiki

Committee on  
Merchant Marine & Fisheries

Subcommittees:  
Fisheries & Wildlife  
Conservation & the Environment  
Oceanography

Aloha!

As a Member of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, I have been extremely involved in several issues concerning the condition of our oceans and all the valuable resources within them.

Together with some of my colleagues on this important environmental committee, I have sponsored bills designed to clean-up and protect our precious coastal areas.

Details on these measures are described in this report, along with information on other legislation and initiatives I am involved with which will benefit Hawaii and the Pacific.

Also, action on a national clean-air bill will likely be taken in the House following the Senate's recent passage, and details on this vital legislation are included in this report.

If you have any questions or recommendations on any of these important environmental issues now before the Congress, please write to me directly at the U.S. Capitol; 1609 Longworth House Office Building; Washington, D.C. 20515.

Sincerely,



Patricia Saiki  
Member of Congress

## CLEAN-AIR BULLETIN

In early April, the Senate passed major clean-air legislation. The House Energy and Commerce Committee also passed its clean-air measure which is expected to come to the House Floor later this Spring. Major sections of each measure address the following problems...

### SMOG

Both bills would regulate when and how cities are to meet clean-air health standards, and bring most cities with smog problems into compliance within 10 years.

The House provisions are more stringent. Among other items, it does NOT permit state waivers from smog reduction requirements, and allows states to control small (10 to 25 tons) smog-producing sources.

### MOTOR VEHICLES

Regulations would set-up new tail-pipe emission limits and alternative fuel programs.

Tail-pipe limits would begin with cars built in 1993, and provide even stricter limits for future emissions. Alternative fuel programs would focus on cars and light trucks in the nine most smog-ridden cities.

House and Senate versions are similar for those two programs.

### TOXIC AIR POLLUTANTS

Both bills would require that the best feasible technology be used to control major sources of airborne carcinogenic or toxic substances, such as chemical plants and oil refineries.

The House bill also addresses toxic pollution from smaller "area sources," such as dry cleaners and gas stations.

# THE BEACH ACT OF 1990

Congresswoman Saiki and several of her colleagues on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee recently introduced legislation to improve the environmental quality of our coastal recreation areas.

The growing pollution and health problems which have most notably plagued the beaches of the East Coast also exist in Hawaii.

The sanitation problems of areas such as Hanauma Bay, Ala Moana Beach, and Kaneohe Bay have convinced her that this problem is larger than any one state, and some federal input may be appropriate to help states address this matter.

The bill, H.R. 4333, would require that uniform criteria be determined and maintained for all the nation's beach areas. The purpose of this measure is to protect the environmental quality and safety of our coastal

recreation areas.

The *Beach Act* would create a clean Coastal Beaches Council comprised of representatives from the public and private sectors, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, the National Academy of Sciences, coastal states, and Department of Commerce.

The council would establish environmental quality guidelines for pathogens and floatables in the recreational waters of the national coastal zone.

Each coastal state would then study and devise a plan which would assure that its beaches and coastal recreational areas would comply with the environmental guidelines. Procedures for the monitoring, testing and non-compliance penalties would also be included in each state plan.

## Coastal Zone Management Passes

Major legislation to reauthorize the Coastal Zone Management Act, introduced this year by Congresswoman Saiki and several other Members of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, passed the Subcommittee on Oceanography recently. The bill reauthorizes the regulations and programs of the Act through 1995.

Hawaii is one of 35 coastal states of the U.S., and one of the 29 states with an approved Coastal Zone Management program.

The reauthorizing legislation makes changes to the Act to update our coastal zone management program to deal with current issues of national and local importance.

One of the bill's most important provisions clarifies that all federal activities, including

private activities under federal leases, must be consistent with state policy to protect natural resources within the coastal zone.

Other changes include several new programs designed to address problems facing our coastal areas in the 1990s.

New programs include:

### COASTAL WATERS PROTECTION PROGRAM

This will address the problem of identifying sources of pollution in our waters when the origin of the pollution is not readily known.

### COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT DISCRETIONARY FUND

A fund for special projects and emergency assistance to the states.

### NATIONAL INTEREST IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

This will require states to improve programs in national interest areas such as wetlands protection, public access to coastal areas, and the assessment and control of the effects of coastal development.

— Also included are achievement awards for those recognized for outstanding accomplishments in the field of Coastal Zone Management.

This bill passed the full Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee last month.

## CLEAN-AIR BULLETIN

*Continued from page 1*

The Senate bill includes additional restrictions based on the health risk of residents near toxic sources.

### ACID RAIN

Both bills require reductions in sulfur dioxide emissions which cause acid rain and are designed to cap sulfur emissions at half the current levels by the year 2000. Both include incentives for utilities to use "scrubbers," which minimize polluting smokestack emissions.

# **THREE SAIKI PROPOSALS ACCEPTED BY OCEANS PANEL**

The House Subcommittee on Oceanography last month unanimously passed three proposals which would be of specific environmental and economic benefit to Hawaii and the Pacific...

## **MARINE ORNAMENTAL FISH AQUACULTURE**

Congresswoman Saiki received subcommittee approval to provide the University of Hawaii and Sea Grant researchers with federal support to conduct initial studies on the feasibility of beginning a marine, aquarium-fish, aquaculture industry in Hawaii.

She told her colleagues that the development of this idea "could be a very environmentally beneficial and commercially lucrative industry for this nation."

Nearly all the colorful, saltwater fish bought in pet shops are caught in the wild.

These fish are often caught with cyanide, arsenic and dynamite which kills approximately 90 percent of the fish and much of the coral reef in the catch area. The surviving 10 percent are sent to the U.S. aquarium market for our home and office fishtanks.

Several native, wild tropical fish populations around the world have been depleted for our rapidly growing aquarium market.

## **PACIFIC ISLAND NETWORK**

Congresswoman Saiki also received subcommittee approval for a proposal to fund the Pacific Island Network (PIN) programs.

PIN was formed to meet U.S. obligations to Pacific Islands in the areas of fisheries, coastal resources management, aquaculture, and education.

PIN's mission is to help island nations address their own needs and assist them in the wise use of their resources through marine and coastal related services and technical assistance.

This amendment authorizes new NOAA funds to be specifically used to help PIN carry out its responsibilities.

## **COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT**

Congresswoman Saiki successfully offered an amendment to authorize the drafting of a state-federal management plan for ocean resources within 12 miles of Hawaii or a Pacific Island state.

States currently have the authority to develop coastal zone management plans only for the 3-mile ocean area from its shoreline.

In pointing out to her colleagues the unique difference between island and mainland states of the nation, she reminded them that the ocean and its resources play a much greater role in the islands than in other U.S. coastal states.

She then proposed that because of the islands' extremely close relationship with the ocean, the coastal zone management planning authority of island states should not be limited to just three miles from shore.

This amendment for a demonstration planning project in the Pacific would allow Hawaii and other U.S. islands the opportunity to prove their ability to manage and protect a greater portion of the surrounding ocean.

The management plan would tell us what lies in the waters beyond our coasts, and how to protect the environment and living marine resources from harm by potential development activities.

Congresswoman Saiki's amendment to extend the management plan area out to 12 miles was adopted in committee and will be voted on by the House as part of the Coastal Zone Management Act Reauthorization measure.



Environmental Protection Agency Administrator William K. Reilly meets Congresswoman Pat Saiki at a recent event where the two shared thoughts on environmental policy.

## SEAFOOD INFORMATION PAMPHLETS

If you would like a copy of either of the special seafood pamphlets described here, please check which ones, and send your information request to Congresswoman Saiki's Washington office.

- Fish & Seafood Made Easy*, a guide to choosing and preparing seafood.
- Lighten Up with Seafood*, information tips on how to use seafood to lighten your diet.

Mail to:  
**Congresswoman Patricia Saiki**  
1609 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

## SAIKI ON NEW OCEANS TASK FORCE

Congresswoman Saiki has become a Member of the House-Senate Oceans Task Force, a bipartisan group, interested in addressing ocean issues and informing other Members of Congress of their importance.

The Oceans Task Force has selected the difficult problem of ocean pollution from unknown origins as its first major target issue.

## EARTH DAY STUDY-GUIDE SENT TO STUDENTS

In recognition of Earth Day 1990, Congresswoman Saiki sent an informal environmental quiz to elementary and intermediate school students to help them learn to care for the environment.

Also included in the students' environmental guides were reports on ways Congress is trying to clean-up and protect the environment.

On Sunday, April 22, hundreds of thousands of people celebrated Earth Day in Washington and around the nation, and appealed for greater effort to keep our environment clean.



Two Atlantic bottlenosed dolphins, Phoenix and Akeakamai, were photographed at the University of Hawaii's Kewalo Basin Marine Mammal Laboratory. The dolphins provide valuable communications and behavioral research opportunities.



### Congresswoman Pat Saiki

**Hawaii District Office:**  
300 Ala Moana Blvd., #4104  
Prince Kuhio Federal Bldg.  
Honolulu, HI 96850  
808-541-2570 Phone

**Washington, D.C. Office:**  
1609 Longworth Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
202-225-2726 Phone  
202-225-4580 Fax

*Patricia Saiki*

M.C.  
Official Business

**ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE**

# How the Earnings Limit Works

Once an individual is eligible for retirement, and begins to collect social security

benefits, he or she is limited in the amount of income earned.

Age	Earnings Limit	Penalty
62-64	\$6,840	Lose \$1 in benefits for \$2 over the limit
65-69	\$9,360	Lose \$1 in benefits for every \$3 over the limit
70+	No limit	no penalty — can earn unlimited amount

It is important to remember that this policy only affects "earned" income. Non-earned income, such as investment in-

come, interest income, or capital gains in not counted.

Only those who work are penalized.

## BENEFIT CONSEQUENCES

When an individual works above the Earnings Limit, it has the same effect as a tax of an additional 33 percent on income.

An individual who earns just \$10,000 annually will face the equivalent of a marginal tax rate of 56 percent — twice the tax rate of millionaires!

## EFFECTS ON THE LABOR SUPPLY

The Social Security earnings limit was originally enacted when life expectancies were generally shorter. It was felt that seniors should be given an incentive to retire, so that younger workers would have jobs available to them.

That situation no longer holds true today. Now, the U.S. Labor Department has warned of shortages in the labor market, and employers in Hawaii are already experiencing severe difficulties in hiring experienced and dependable workers.

## CONGRESSIONAL RELIEF

The **Older Americans Freedom to Work Act** would abolish the earnings limitation. Retirees would be able to earn as much as they are capable of earning without any decrease in Social Security benefits.

This legislation is currently pending in the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security in the House of Representatives.

Another remedy being considered by the Congress is in the form of an amendment to the Child Care bill. This would raise the income level for seniors up to \$10,560 and decrease the benefit reduction factor for many seniors to \$1 lost for every \$4 earned. While this measure does not go far enough, it is a step in the right direction.

Members of the House and Senate Conference Committee are still working out differences between their versions of the Child Care legislation. Passage of the Child Care bill is expected later this summer.

The repeal of the earnings test would benefit our economy in several ways:

- Businesses would profit by the experience and dedication of the valuable senior workforce...
- Seniors would have greater financial security, and...
- Federal revenues could increase helping to reduce the budget deficit.



**Congresswoman Patricia Saiki**

*Committees:*

Banking, Finance & Urban Affairs  
Merchant Marine & Fisheries  
Select Committee on Aging  
Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues  
Congressional Travel & Tourism Caucus

*Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515*

Official Business



M.C.