

LTE in response to 247-acre open-ocean fish farm nears launch off Hawaii's Big Isle  
Anonymous, Big Island Resident, submitted to Honolulu Advertiser on July 29, 2009

People are concerned about the impact fish farms have on the environment, but little has been done to address these concerns. We should look at the environmental impact of these farms and the job of the government is to do just that, to balance what business needs with the needs of the people and to protect the environment and what it needs to stay healthy. Raising fish in an unnatural environment may harm the fish, the environment and the people who eat the fish. When tons of fish from one area are removed from their natural predators that survive on them, and used as feed for fish farms, what happens to that area and the predators they are taken from, or when chemicals are introduced into the environment to kill parasites that don't appear in the wild, then this is a concern that should be addressed but isn't, that's what people are concerned about. The government caves into business when it comes to the environment, that's why our streams, rivers, land, drinking water, oceans and air (smog) are polluted. All that the people concerned are asking, is to look at these farms and have complete and thorough environmental impact statement done to make sure Hawaii's fragile environment isn't harmed any more than it has been. I was a scuba instructor and tour boat captain for 12 years. Our pristine waters are a big part of Hawaii's tourist economy and treasured by beach goers, snorkelers, scuba divers, surfers, whale watchers and fisherman, so it's not just the environment we should all be concerned with, but the economy as well.