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Media Contact:

Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council: Dustin Siggins, (202) 452-1525 x1080, Dustin@pijac.org
Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition: Phil Fernandez, (808) 937- 1040, Philferna@gmail.com

Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance and Aquarium Fishery Team Up To Save Industry, Protect Environment

Honolulu, Hawai'i—The Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition (HFACT) and the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) have signed Hawai'i's first intra-industry Memorandum of Agreement dedicated to fishing issues in Hawai'i.

HFACT strives for the responsible use of Hawai'i's marine life, using science-based methods of fishery management for future generations of fishers. HFACT represents and promotes the interests of fishers in Hawai'i through education of fishers and the public, information dissemination, lawmaker advocacy, and improved economic efficiency.

PIJAC represents the responsible pet trade throughout the United States through legislative advocacy, public and industry education, and regulatory consulting. PIJAC's members include many of Hawai'i's aquarium fishing hobbyists and professionals. PIJAC is a litigant in recent court cases affecting the fisher trade, and is working with Hawai'i's fishers and state regulators on new research about the environmental sustainability of ornamental fishing.

Under the Agreement signed on January 25, HFACT will lead efforts to protect the aquarium fishing industry in Hawai'i, to preserve future opportunities for fishing, and to provide a unified voice on fishing issues in the State, in line with best practices and environmental research. PIJAC is contributing its national and international expertise in legislative and environmental issues, as well as the numbers and expertise of its Hawaii members.

“HFACT has a long history of representing fishing interests in Hawai'i, as well as educating the public and elected officials on the importance of fishing to our local communities,” said HFACT President Phil Fernandez. “The Aquarium fish industry is of significant educational and economic importance to Hawai'i, and is environmentally safe. This memorandum will give fishers a more influential voice to protect all who engage in the practice, as well as the public which benefits from ornamental fishing, from false attacks by environmental organizations and animal rights groups.”

“PIJAC and its aquarium fishing members are proud to partner with HFACT to defend fishing opportunities in Hawai'i,” stated Robert Likins, PIJAC's Vice President for Governmental Affairs. “The Aquarium Fish industry is an important industry in Hawai'i for what it brings to locals through jobs, the state through tourism, and the world through ornamental fish. PIJAC looks forward to working with HFACT to help all who benefit from ornamental fishing work with state lawmakers and regulators to ensure the most scientifically credible way forward is

found for ornamental fishing and environmental health.”

According to Fernandez and Likins, “The state has a responsibility to ensure its natural resources are managed in a scientifically credible way for the benefit of all its citizens. We look forward to being partners in this important work.”

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The Hawaii Fishermen’s Alliance for Conservative and Tradition, Inc. (HFACT) is a state-wide organization that supports and advocates for fisheries in Hawaii. The organization strives for sustainable use of Hawaii’s marine resources for the benefit of future generations of Hawaii residents and visitors. HFACT promotes the science-based ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

Since 1970, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) has protected pets, pet owners and the pet industry – promoting responsible pet ownership and animal welfare, fostering environmental stewardship, and ensuring the availability of pets. PIJAC members include retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, wholesale distributors, manufacturers’ representatives, pet hobbyists, and other trade organizations.