

JAN 19 2007

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TARO.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Kalo (*colocasia esculenta*), the Hawaiian word
2 for taro, is a culturally significant plant to the kanaka maoli,
3 Hawaii's indigenous peoples. According to the kumulipo, the
4 Hawaiian creation chant, kalo grew from the first born son of
5 Wakea, the sky father, and Papa, the earth mother, through
6 Wakea's relationship with his and Papa's daughter, Hoohokulani.
7 This son, named Haloa, was stillborn and buried. From Haloa's
8 grave grew the first kalo plant. Wakea and Hoohokulani named
9 their second son Haloa, after his older brother. From the
10 second Haloa came the genesis of man. Kalo provides the kanaka
11 maoli's life-giving sustenance, poi, and is seen as the older
12 brother of mankind.

13 Over three hundred kalo varieties may have existed at the
14 time of the arrival of European explorers. Today there are
15 approximately seventy varieties of taro and of these, the
16 majority are unique to the Hawaiian islands due to the
17 horticultural skills of native Hawaiian farmers.

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1 The important cultural relationship between kalo and the
2 kanaka maoli continues today in the cultivation of kalo and
3 ohana, the Hawaiian word for family. The cut stalk of the kalo,
4 called the huli, is planted to become the next generation. Huli
5 means to turn or turn-over. When "ohana" is broken into root
6 words, "oha" is the smaller taro corms growing from the older
7 part of the taro plant that is used to feed one's family and
8 "ana" is a conjunctive word connoting regeneration or
9 procreation.

10 Therefore, kalo intrinsically ties the interdependency of
11 our past, the present, and the future, the essence of
12 procreation and regeneration, as the foundation of any
13 sustainable practice. Kalo expresses the spiritual and physical
14 well-being of not only the kanaka maoli and their heritage but
15 also symbolizes the environmental, social, and cultural values
16 important to the State. This relationship is symbolized in the
17 use of the kalo plant upon the crown of King Kalakaua and today
18 in the logo of the office of Hawaiian affairs and many
19 commercial enterprises throughout the State.

20 The purpose of this Act is to recognize the importance of
21 the kalo in the heritage of the State by adopting, establishing,
22 and designating the kalo plant as the official state plant.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
2 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
3 read as follows:

4 "§5- State plant. Kalo (colocasia esculenta), the
5 Hawaiian word for taro is adopted, established, and designated
6 as the official plant of the State, to be effective so long as
7 the legislature of the State does not otherwise provide."

8 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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Report Title:

Taro; State Plant

Description:

Establishes the taro plant as the state plant.

