

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3031

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 21 2014

RE: H.B. No. 1902
H.D. 2
S.D. 1

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim
President of the Senate
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature
Regular Session of 2014
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Water and Land, to which was referred H.B. No. 1902, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO HUNTING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to enhance and maintain public hunting opportunities by:

- (1) Requiring the Department of Land and Natural Resources to make reasonable efforts to prevent and mitigate the loss, destruction, or degradation of public hunting areas;
- (2) Requiring the Department of Land and Natural Resources to make reasonable efforts to acquire, restore, enhance, and manage public lands to replace land unavailable for hunting with land that meets specified criteria;
- (3) Requiring the Department of Land and Natural Resources to report annually to the Legislature regarding certain information about public hunting lands;
- (4) Establishing the Hunting Advisory Commission to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Land and Natural Resources; and



- (5) Making an appropriation to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the administrative expenses of the Hunting Advisory Commission.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Mayor of the County of Hawai'i, Hawaii Rifle Association, Kaua'i Watershed Alliance, Game Management Advisory Commission, Hawaii Sportsmen Alliance, Hui Kuahiwi, National Wild Turkey Federation, National Rifle Association, Mauna Kea Recreational Users Group, and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, Hawaii Conservation Foundation, O'ahu Invasive Species Committee, Hawaii Audubon Society, Friends of Hakalau Forest National Wildlife Refuge, Big Island Invasive Species Committee, and ten individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from one individual.

Your Committee finds that the enhancement and maintenance of public hunting opportunities are of critical importance to the State. A coordinated effort involving stakeholders is needed to prevent and offset the loss, destruction, or degradation of public hunting areas on any island of the State and expeditiously find replacement land for hunting.

Section 183D-2(12), Hawaii Revised Statutes, relating to powers and duties of the Department of Land and Natural Resources in wildlife management, mandates the Department of Land and Natural Resources to preserve, protect, and promote public hunting. This measure is consistent with that statutory obligation.

Your Committee further finds that a Hawaii County referendum ballot item, relating to establishing a Game Management Advisory Commission, was adopted in the 2012 General Election. The referendum established the Game Management Advisory Commission to accomplish the following:

"advise County, State and Federal agencies on matters related to the preservation of subsistence hunting and fishing, as well as protecting traditional and cultural gathering rights. The commission may also advise County, State, and Federal agencies on any matter affecting the taking and conservation of aquatic life and wildlife, including proposed rules, and shall



communicate its findings and recommendations to these agencies. The commission shall promulgate recommendations that conserve and protect the natural and cultural resources of Hawai'i in furtherance of the self sufficiency and long-term subsistence sustainability of aquatic life and wildlife in the County."

Also, according to a *West Hawaii Today* article of July 14, 2013, a draft game management plan was prepared for the County of Hawaii to be Hawaii's first comprehensive approach to the management of its hunting resources, which could later be applied to other counties in the State. Your Committee commends the initiative of the Mayor and County Council of Hawaii for taking such bold steps and being forward-looking, ahead of the State and the other counties.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying the purpose section;
- (2) Deleting language that related to net loss of public hunting areas;
- (3) Increasing the number of members of the Hunting Advisory Commission from eleven to twelve members;
- (4) Requiring the Commission to meet not less than quarterly;
- (5) Clarifying that the two members of the Department of Land and Natural Resources to be designated by the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources shall have experience in sustainable game management principles and practices;
- (6) Adding the Executive Director of the Aha Moku Advisory Council in place of a member possessing a background in native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices;
- (7) Establishing a hunting pilot program as an undertaking of the Hunting Advisory Commission, to sunset on June 30, 2020, on the island of Hawaii to:



- (A) Recommend public lands to be designated as public hunting areas while preserving designated watershed areas that are protected in accordance with law;
 - (B) Implement a game management plan or hunting plan after consultation with the hunting community and the appropriate county agency having jurisdiction over hunting and natural resource preservation; and
 - (C) Report to the Legislature efforts to implement the pilot program and results of the pilot program; and
- (8) Inserting an appropriation amount of \$110,000 for administrative expenses of the hunting advisory commission, to be matched by the County of Hawaii.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water and Land that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1902, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1902, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Water and Land,


MALAMA SOLOMON, Chair



