

Honolulu, Hawaii

February 28, 2013

RE: H.B. No. 734
H.D. 1

Honorable Joseph M. Souki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature
Regular Session of 2013
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Agriculture and Water & Land, to which was referred H.B. No. 734 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF TARO LANDS,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to improve protections for taro lands and ancient agricultural structures by creating a unique class of public lands for intensive agricultural use to be classified as "taro lands" and require retention of supporting structures for taro fields. This measure also adds growth and perpetuation of taro and crops native to Hawaii to agricultural planning objectives of the Hawaii State Planning Act.

Hui O Malama Aina, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, Respiratory & Environmental Disabilities Association of Hawaii, and numerous individuals testified in support of this measure. The Taro Security and Purity Task Force supported this measure with amendments. The Department of Agriculture submitted comments.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Defining "taro lands";
- (2) Changing the designation of taro lands as (T) the Fourth Class of public lands classified for intensive agricultural use as recognition of the value of



preserving traditional taro lands for wetland cultivation;

- (3) Providing that supporting structures for lo'i taro fields are permitted uses for taro lands (T) and class A or B agricultural lands;
- (4) Prohibiting the reclassification of and restricting the subdivision of taro lands (T);
- (5) Expanding the agricultural planning objectives to include the growth and perpetuation of all traditional Hawaiian crops, not just taro; and
- (6) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture and Water & Land that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 734, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 734, H.D. 1, and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Agriculture and
Water & Land,

Cindy Evans, for
CINDY EVANS, Chair

Jessica Wooley
JESSICA WOOLEY, Chair



