

Honolulu, Hawaii  
March 14, 2014

RE: S.B. No. 2241  
S.D. 1  
H.D. 1

Honorable Joseph M. Souki  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2014  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred S.B. No. 2241, S.D. 1, entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to protect, sustain, and perpetuate the growing of taro to preserve its cultural significance and revitalize an important food source by prohibiting the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) in its process of declaring and acquiring development areas from:

- (1) Disturbing existing taro-growing systems, ancient wetland taro lands, or structural elements of ancient taro-growing systems; or
- (2) Acquiring lands and infrastructure used or to be used for wetland taro-growing.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Aha Moku Advisory Committee, Hawaii Farmers Union United, Kona Chapter-Hawaii Farmers Union United, Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, Ho'okipa Network-Kauai, PAN, E kupaku ka aina, Waihuena Farm, and a number of concerned individuals supported this bill. The Department of Land and Natural Resources supported the intent of this measure. The Taro Security and Purity Task Force, Ka Lei Maile Alii Hawaiian

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Civic Club, and several concerned individuals supported this bill with amendments.

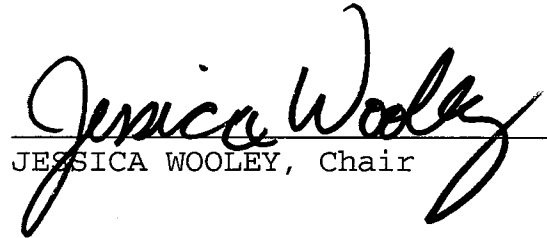
Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) With respect to taro-growing lands within BLNR's development areas, clarifying that the restriction imposed on BLNR for its development areas, apply only to wetland taro on undeveloped public lands;
- (2) Providing a definition for "taro lands", making taro lands a specified classification under the BLNR's classification of all public lands, and prohibiting district boundary amendments for such taro lands;
- (3) Adding the retention, restoration, rehabilitation, or improvement of walls, terraces, or supporting structures for lo'i taro fields as a permissible use in the land use agricultural district for lands with a soil productivity rating of class A or B;
- (4) Adding the growth and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian crops, as an objective of the State Planning Act's policies relating to the agricultural economy;
- (5) Authorizing the Board of Land and Natural Resources, in conjunction with the Taro Security and Purity Task Force, to create an inventory identifying taro lands that would be included in BLNR's taro land classification;
- (6) Adding a savings clause;
- (7) Changing its effective date to upon its approval; and
- (8) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2241, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2241, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Water & Land.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Agriculture,

  
JESSICA WOOLEY, Chair



