

Honolulu, Hawaii

April 4, 2014

RE: S.B. No. 2241
S.D. 1
H.D. 2

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Finance, to which was referred S.B. No. 2241, S.D. 1, H.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 improve protections for wetland taro lands and ancient wetland agricultural structures on undeveloped state owned or acquired lands by:

- (1) Creating a classification of taro lands that have cultural, social, economic, and food self-sufficiency value within the land classification structure of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board) and specifying that lands so classified are not subject to a district boundary amendment;
- (2) Including within the permitted uses of agricultural lands classified as overall productivity rating class A or B the retention, restoration, rehabilitation, or improvement of walls, terraces, and supporting structures for taro fields;
- (3) Prohibiting the Board, in its process of designating land for residential development projects, from:



- (A) Disturbing existing taro-growing systems, ancient wetland taro lands, or structural elements of ancient wetland taro-growing systems on undeveloped lands; and
- (B) Acquiring lands and infrastructure used or to be used for wetland taro-growing;
- (4) Including the objective of growth and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian crops within the State Planning Act's goals for the State's economy with regard to agriculture; and
- (5) Authorizing the Board, in conjunction with the Taro Security and Purity Task Force, to create an inventory identifying taro lands that would be included in the Board's taro land classification.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Taro Security and Purity Task Force, Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, E Kupaku Ka Aina, Ka Lei Maile Alii Hawaiian Civic Club, Hawaiian Affairs Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, and several individuals provided testimony in support of this measure. The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii provided testimony in opposition to this measure. The Department of Land and Natural Resources and several individuals provided comments.

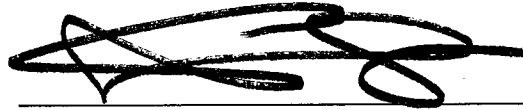
Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing its effective date to July 1, 2030, for the purpose of facilitating further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Finance that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2241, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2241, S.D. 1, H.D. 2.



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



SYLVIA LUKE, Chair



