STAND. COM. REP. NO.

Honolulu, Hawaii

## FEB 0 8 2021

RE: S.B. No. 777 S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi President of the Senate Thirty-First State Legislature Regular Session of 2021 State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 777 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE CRIMINAL DESTRUCTION OF TREES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish the crime of the destruction of a tree on state or county property punishable as a misdemeanor.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Trees for Honolulu's Future, and the Lani-Kailua Outdoor Circle.

Your Committee finds that trees are integral tools in tackling the climate crisis. In addition to carbon sequestration, trees reduce ambient temperatures and storm water runoff, increase wildlife habitat, and provide human health, psychological, and quality of life benefits. New seedlings can take years before they realize ecological and human health benefits; however, existing mature trees already provide significant benefits, underscoring the importance of their protection. Establishing criminal penalties to apply to destruction of trees would strengthen enforcement capabilities and allow for greater protection, preservation, and enhancement of natural resources,

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while providing an opportunity for education about the benefits of trees, which may result in impacts beyond issuing penalties.

Your Committee has amended this measure by making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 777, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 777, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

> Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

## The Senate Thirty-First Legislature State of Hawai'i

## Record of Votes Committee on Agriculture and Environment AEN

Bill / Resolution	n No.:*	Committee Referral:			Date:		
5B 7	177	AEN, JO			0210312021		2021
The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.  If so, then the previous decision was to:							
The Recommendation is:							
Pass, unamended Pass, with amendments Hold Recommit 2312 2311 2310 2313							
	Members		Aye	Aye (W	R)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)						,	
NISHIHARA, Clarence K. (VC)							
ACASIO, Laura						"	
RHOADS, Karl							
FEVELLA, Ku	rt						
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	TOTAL		5				
Recommendation:  Adopted  Not Adopted							
Chair's or Designed's Signature:  When Harthe							
Distribution: F	Coriginal ile with Committee Re	Yellow port Clerk's Office		Pink Drafting Age	Pink Goldenrod Prafting Agency Committee File Copy		

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes