

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 15 2023

RE: S.B. No. 1498

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Water and Land, to which was referred S.B. No. 1498 entitled:

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

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Prohibit the Board of Land and Natural Resources from disturbing or acquiring for development certain wetland taro-growing lands;
- (2) Establish a taro lands classification for public lands;
- (3) Permit structures for loi taro fields in the agricultural district;
- (4) Establish growth and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian crops as a goal of the Hawaii State Planning Act; and
- (5) Authorize the Land Use Commission to create an inventory of taro lands and consult with former members of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force in the creation of the inventory.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from Ku-A-Kanaka, LLC; Malama Makua; Hawai'i Farmers Union United;



Energy and Climate Action Committee of the Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i; and eight individuals.

Your Committees find that taro, or kalo, is a traditional Hawaiian vegetable root crop and food that has sustained Hawaii's people and culture for centuries and that the preservation and protection of taro and taro farming is a significant piece of the State's cultural identity and food security initiative. This measure recognizes the importance of taro by helping to protect and preserve taro-growing lands and sets out a system for creating an inventory of taro lands and consulting with former members of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force in its creation. Additionally, this measure emphasizes the growth and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian crops as a goal of the Hawaii State Planning Act, which further contributes to the preservation of taro and reaffirms its significance to Hawaiian culture.

Your Committees acknowledge the recommendations raised in testimony by a former member of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force, which include, in summary:

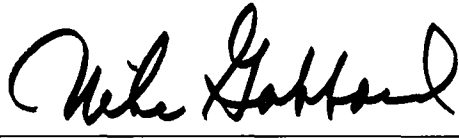
- (1) Amending the definition of "farming operation" under section 165-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to be inclusive of operations other than just commercial taro farm rehabilitation on state lands;
- (2) Removing the "high productivity" requirement from the definition of taro lands under section 171-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and the taro land classification under section 171-10(1)(D), Hawaii Revised Statutes, as proposed in this measure, to protect taro lands beyond those with only "high productivity" designations;
- (3) Amending section 205-4.5(8), Hawaii Revised Statutes, and section 206-7(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, to remove the requirement that taro sites must currently be in cultivation to be protected so that those lands both in cultivation now and those with the potential for cultivation in the future will be protected; and
- (4) Requiring, rather than authorizing, the Land Use Commission to create an inventory of taro lands to ensure that the inventory is conducted.



As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Water and Land that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1498 and recommend that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

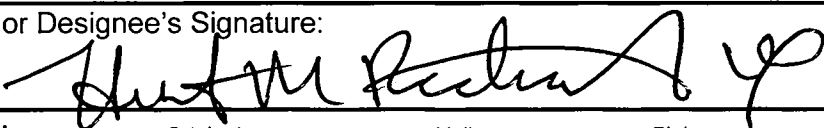
Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Water and Land,

  
LORRAINE R. INOUE, Chair

  
MIKE GABBARD, Chair

The Senate  
 Thirty-Second Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

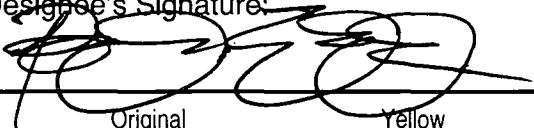
**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Agriculture and Environment**  
**AEN**

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SB 1498	AEN/WTL, WAM	02-10-23
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____		
The Recommendation is:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended <small>2312</small>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments <small>2311</small>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Hold <small>2310</small>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Recommit <small>2313</small>		
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)
Nay	Excused	
GABBARD, Mike (C)	X	
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	X	
DECOITE, Lynn	X	
RHOADS, Karl	X	
AWA, Brenton	X	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted		
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 		
<b>Distribution:</b>		
Original File with Committee Report	Yellow Clerk's Office	Pink Drafting Agency
		Goldenrod Committee File Copy

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes

The Senate  
 Thirty-Second Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Water and Land**  
**WTL**

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
SB 1498	AEN/WTL, WAM	02/10/2023		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312	<input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310		
<input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
INOUYE, Lorraine R. (C)	✓			
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C. (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley	✓			
MCKELVEY, Angus L.K.	✓			
FEVELLA, Kurt	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	5	ϕ	ϕ	ϕ
Recommendation:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
				
Distribution:				
Original	Yellow	Pink	Goldenrod	
File with Committee Report	Clerk's Office	Drafting Agency	Committee File Copy	

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