

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1661

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 04 2023

RE: S.R. No. 35

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.R. No. 35 entitled:

"SENATE RESOLUTION DESIGNATING HAWAII'S CORAL REEFS AS CRITICAL NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND STRONGLY SUPPORTING NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS SUCH AS CORAL REEF RESTORATION FOR RISK REDUCTION,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to designate Hawaii's coral reefs as Critical Natural Infrastructure and to strongly support nature-based solutions such as coral reef restoration for climate-related risk reduction.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition, Inc.; Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i; Hawai'i Wildlife Fund; The Nature Conservancy; and two individuals.

Your Committees find that healthy coral reef ecosystems can help to mitigate the effects of climate change and natural disasters by absorbing up to ninety-seven percent of wave energy brought about by storms and extreme weather events. Furthermore, one study has estimated that Hawaii's coral reefs protect and save coastal infrastructure from \$836,000,000 in costs and damages annually due to destructive flooding and similar events. Your Committees recognize that coral reefs globally are being



threatened by increasing temperatures, coral bleaching events, ocean acidification, and pollution. Therefore, this measure designates Hawaii's coral reefs as critical natural infrastructure and proclaims the Legislature's support for nature-based climate based solutions such as coral reef restoration.

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 concur with the intent and purpose of S.R. No. 35 and recommend its adoption.

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



