

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

484

Honolulu, Hawaii

, 2023

FEB 15

RE: H.B. No. 905
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Higher Education & Technology, to which was referred H.B. No. 905, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER YIELDS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the University of Hawaii, in consultation with the Commission on Water Resource Management, to develop a scope of work and cost analysis to complete a flexible groundwater model that proposes methods for determining the needs of traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices, climate change projections, and groundwater dependent ecosystems; and
- (2) Require a joint report to be submitted to the Legislature by November 1, 2023.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, and Sierra Club of Hawai'i.

Your Committee finds that the Commission on Water Resource Management uses a mathematical model to estimate how much water

2023-1636 HB905 HD1 HSCR HMSO



can be removed from an aquifer without damaging the quantity or quality of water available, otherwise known as an aquifer's sustainable yield. The Commission regulates groundwater in the State using an aquifer's sustainable yield as the basis to manage withdrawals and protect the health and safety of the aquifer as a potable water source. Due to difficulties involved in numerical modeling and an absence of detailed site-specific data, sustainable yield determinations default to a simple analytical model. This conventional approach may fail to account for uncertainties including those related to freshwater recharge. Your Committee further finds that this measure is a first step in addressing a means to complete a flexible groundwater model and better understand future projections of sustainable yield, particularly with rainfall and aquifer recharge expected to decrease.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education & Technology that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 905, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Higher Education &
Technology,



AMY A. PERRUSO, Chair



