

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12 2015

RE: S.B. No. 774

Honorable Donna Mercado Kim  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2015  
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committees on Water and Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred S.B. No. 774 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 improve the protections for wetland taro lands (lo'i kalo) and traditional taro lands that retain historic structural evidence of lo'i kalo on undeveloped state-owned or -acquired conservation lands for Hawaii's long-term food security and well-being by:

- (1) Creating a classification of agricultural public lands entitled "taro lands"; and
- (2) Making an appropriation to the Board of Land and Natural Resources to create an inventory of lands classified as taro lands.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Taro Security and Purity Task Force; Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs; 'Ai Pohaku; E Kupaku Ka Aina; Hawaii Farmers Union United; Ho'okipa Network - Kauai; Hydroponics Alternatives LLC; Kipahulu Ohana, Inc.; Lyon Arboretum; PAN of North America; Hawaiian Land Restoration Institute; Koolau Hawaiian Civic Club; Aha Moku Advisory Committee; and eighteen individuals. Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Department of Agriculture; Voyaging Foods; and one individual.



This measure is a product of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force, established by Act 211, Session Laws of Hawaii 2008, to guide policy and research related to taro and taro farming, as well as to support the vitality, economic viability, and perpetuation of taro and taro farming in the State.

Your Committees find that access to affordable taro lands remains a major challenge for young taro growers striving for success, greater family food self-sufficiency, and community well-being. In 2009, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force found "no logical reason why we should continue to import any type of taro to meet local needs" and provided a series of recommendations for improving taro and taro farmer success.

In its 2010 and 2014 reports to the Legislature, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force recommended greater protections for wetland taro lands (lo'i), including their structural elements, such as terraces, kuauna or paepae pohaku (stone walls), and 'auwai (irrigation ditches) within the boundaries of the State's public conservation districts to help meet food security needs and to support community and cultural resilience in the face of the rising costs of imported food for local families. The Task Force also found that these key agricultural structures for wetland taro production are frequently destroyed, severed, and built upon due to gaps in land use designations, historic preservation records, planning, laws, and agency policies, making the need for improved taro land protections more urgent.

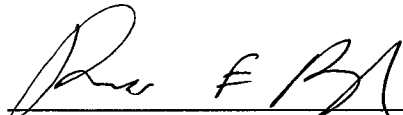
Your Committees further find that there is a compelling interest in preserving wetland taro lands and their supporting structures on public conservation lands under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land and Natural Resources for these purposes.

Your Committees note that two questions were raised during the hearing: whether to apply this measure to lands other than the conservation district and whether this measure should include dryland taro, as that species can be grown in a variety of areas, whereas wetland taro requires specific soils and conditions. Your Committees note that the Taro Security and Purity Task Force recommended that the focus be on conservation district lands rather than agricultural lands, and further recommended that this measure focus on preserving the fewer, more specific areas required for wetland taro cultivation.




As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Water and Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 774 and recommend that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
RUSSELL E. RUDERMAN, Chair


  
\_\_\_\_\_  
LAURA H. THIELEN, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MAILE S.L. SHIMABUKURO, Chair



The Senate  
 Twenty-Eighth Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

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

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SB 774	WTL/ABL/HWN, WAM	2-2-15
<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	
THIELEN, Laura H. (C)	✓	
GALUTERIA, Brickwood (VC)	✓	
IHARA, Jr., Les	✓	
RIVIERE, Gil	✓	
RUDERMAN, Russell E.	✓	
SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L.	✓	
SLOM, Sam	✓	
<b>TOTAL</b>	7	
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted		
Chair's or Designee's Signature:		
		
<b>Distribution:</b> Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod File with Committee Report     Clerk's Office     Drafting Agency     Committee File Copy		

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes

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**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Agriculture**  
**AGL**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 774</b>	Committee Referral: <b>WTL/AGL/HWN, WAM</b>	Date: <b>2/2/15</b>
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The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.  
 If so, then the previous decision was to: \_\_\_\_\_

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312    
  Pass, with amendments 2311    
  Hold 2310    
  Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
RUDERMAN, Russell E. (C)	X			
RIVIERE, Gil (VC)	X			
CHUN OAKLAND, Suzanne	X			
TANIGUCHI, Brian T.				X
THIELEN, Laura H.	X			
WAKAI, Glenn				X
SLOM, Sam	X			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>			<b>2</b>

Recommendation:  Adopted      Not Adopted


Chair's or Designee's Signature:  


**Distribution:**     Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod  
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**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Hawaiian Affairs**  
**HWN**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 774</b>	Committee Referral: <b>WTL/AGL/HWN, WAM</b>	Date: <b>02-02-15</b>		
<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
SHIMABUKURO, Maile S.L. (C)	✓			
GALUTERIA, Brickwood (VC)	✓			
INOUYE, Lorraine R.	✓			
KAHELE, Gilbert	✓			
SLOM, Sam	✓			
<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            Yellow            Pink            Goldenrod File with Committee Report            Clerk's Office            Drafting Agency            Committee File Copy				

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