

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 559

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 19 2021

RE: S.B. No. 695  
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 Government Operations, to which was referred S.B. No. 695 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO STATE HOLIDAYS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish La Ku'oko'a, Hawaiian Recognition Day, as an official state holiday; and
- (2) Repeal Election Day as an official state holiday.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO; LGBT Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i; O'ahu Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs; Ka Lei Papahi O Kakuhihewa, and five individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the City and County of Honolulu Department of Human Resources and Common Cause Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii's special heritage and the various holidays currently celebrated distinguishes Hawaii from other states. La Ku'oko'a commemorates the date of November 28, 1843, when, during the reign of Kamehameha III, Great Britain and France recognized the independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom.



Acknowledging La Ku'oko'a, or Hawaiian Recognition Day, is an appropriate and meaningful way to recognize and celebrate the culture and history of Hawaii. However, according to testimony received by your Committee, eliminating Election Day as a state holiday sends the wrong message about the importance of voting and may also create issues or difficulty with determining locations for voter service centers, especially those on government facilities. Your Committee recognizes that Hawaii is a vote-by-mail state with voter service centers on government facilities that currently open ten days prior to primary and general elections. Your Committee further recognizes that the cost of a holiday to the State, not including the cost to the counties, is roughly \$13,600,000.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Designating La Ku'oko'a, Hawaiian Recognition Day, to celebrate the historical recognition of the independence of the kingdom of Hawaii, but not to be construed as a state holiday;
- (2) Removing language that would have eliminated Election Day as an official state holiday; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committee recognizes that the amendment to this measure may be problematic given the bill title and requests that your Committee on Judiciary consider this issue as the measure proceeds.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Government Operations that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 695, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 695, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.




Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Government  
Operations,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SHARON MORIWAKI, Chair



The Senate  
Thirty-First Legislature  
State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Government Operations**  
**GVO**

|  |  |                         |     |         |
|--|--|-------------------------|-----|---------|
| Bill / Resolution No.:*<br><b>SB 695</b>   | Committee Referral:<br><b>GVO, JDC</b> | Date:<br><b>2/18/21</b> |     |         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.<br>If so, then the previous decision was to: _____  |  |                         |     |         |
| The Recommendation is:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313 |  |                         |     |         |
| Members  | Aye                                    | Aye (WR)                | Nay | Excused |
| MORIWAKI, Sharon Y. (C)  | /                                      |                         |     |         |
| DELA CRUZ, Donovan M. (VC)   | /                                      |                         |     |         |
| CHANG, Stanley   | /                                      |                         |     |         |
| GABBARD, Mike  | /                                      |                         |     |         |
| FEVELLA, Kurt  | /                                      |                         |     |         |
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| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>5</b>                               |                         |     |         |
| Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted   |  |                         |     |         |
| Chair's or Designee's Signature:<br>  |  |                         |     |         |
| Distribution:             Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod<br>File with Committee Report     Clerk's Office     Drafting Agency     Committee File Copy  |  |                         |     |         |

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes