

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1569-24

Honolulu, Hawaii
APR 01, 2024

RE: H.R. No. 69

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Water & Land, to which was referred H.R. No. 69 entitled:

"HOUSE RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO WORK WITH THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER EXPERTS TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE POPULATION STATUS OF CORAL REEF HERBIVORES AROUND THE ISLAND OF OAHU AND DEVELOP EFFECTIVE POLICIES FOR SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASING THOSE POPULATIONS WITHIN A DECADE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to request the Department of Land and Natural Resources to work with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other experts to conduct a study on the population status of coral reef herbivores around the island of Oahu and develop effective policies for substantially increasing those populations within a decade.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Democratic Party of Hawai'i; Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition; Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i; Friends of Hanauma Bay; The Nature Conservancy; and five individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from For the Fishes.

Your Committee finds that coral reefs provide extremely valuable ecosystem goods and services for the people of Hawaii.

2024-2508 HR69 HSCR HMSO

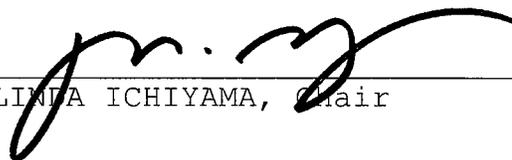


Reefs are also fundamental to the fabric of local communities, providing a source of food, materials, and traditional activities. Your Committee further finds that many reefs around the island of Oahu have been degraded from poor land use practices and are dominated by dead coral covered by seaweeds. The maintenance and recovery of coral reefs require abundant and diverse herbivores, which keep reef surfaces clean so that corals can flourish.

Your Committee notes that the population of coral reef herbivores around Oahu is the lowest in the State, existing at below five percent of its potential. Your Committee believes that strengthening existing statewide fishing rules concerning herbivores, along with other policies and strategies, are needed to help replenish herbivore populations in the coral reefs surrounding Oahu.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water & Land that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.R. No. 69 and recommends its adoption.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Water & Land,

FOR 
LINDA ICHIYAMA, Chair



