

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1295

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 21 2025

RE: H.B. No. 511
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Water and Land, to which was referred H.B. No. 511, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC LANDS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to provide that a survey of the land to be set aside shall not be a condition precedent to the setting aside of public lands to any department or agency of the State.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; and one individual.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from seven individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that land surveys are often expensive, difficult to schedule, and unnecessary if transferring lands between state agencies and organizations. Your Committee further finds that many parcels of unencumbered public lands and lands under revocable permit that the Department of Agriculture has



requested the Department of Land and Natural Resources to transfer to it pursuant to Act 90, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, have not been surveyed. This measure will provide an additional tool for the Department of Land and Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture to complete transfers without incurring the expense and additional time required to complete surveys.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Authorizing the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to utilize Geographic Information System (GIS) map data, existing tax parcel maps, and aerial imagery to define approximate boundaries of public lands set aside if a land survey was not conducted prior to the setting aside of the public lands;
- (2) Requiring the Land Survey Division of the Department of Accounting and General Services to review and approve of any boundary assessments made by the Department using GIS map data;
- (3) Requiring an agency to complete a land survey within five years of receiving public lands set aside if a land survey was not conducted prior to the setting aside of the public lands;
- (4) Authorizing the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board) to exempt a recipient agency from the land survey requirement if the Board determines a land survey is not necessary based on available documentation or data;
- (5) Requiring that before the transfer of any public lands set aside, the Board, in consultation with the Department, shall determine whether the subject lands are high-risk lands or low-risk lands;
- (6) Requiring the Department to complete a land survey before the transfer of any high-risk lands;
- (7) Specifying that low-risk lands shall not require a land survey before transfer if the Department determines that sufficient documentation or GIS map data is available;



- (8) Requiring the Department to establish a digital registry accessible to state and county agencies compiling all transfers of public lands and other records;
- (9) Requiring the Board to establish a mediation process to resolve potential boundary disputes before legal action can be taken;
- (10) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose; and
- (11) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water and Land that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 511, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 511, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

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


LORRAINE R. INOUE, Chair



