

Honolulu, Hawaii

**FEB 28 2025**

RE: S.B. No. 890

S.D. 2

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

Sir:

Your Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Economic Development and Tourism, to which was referred S.B. No. 890, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO BUSINESS REGULATION,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to prohibit the sale, offer for sale, display, or marketing for sale of any product labeled as "poi" unless the product is wholly derived from taro (kalo) that is grown within the State.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, He'eia National Estuary Research Reserve, Ko'olau Foundation, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, and five individuals.

Your Committees received testimony in opposition to this measure from Pomai Kulolo, LLC and one individual.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General and one individual.

Your Committees find that poi, historically a major staple food in Hawaiian culture, was traditionally made of one hundred percent Hawaiian grown kalo. Poi holds a sacred place in Hawaiian culture not only as a staple food, but also as a symbol of life,



lineage, and identity. At a time when many consumers are increasingly growing more conscious of the sources and quality of their food, it is important to maintain transparency and honesty in product labeling for consumers, especially when it comes to the origins and authenticity of the poi that they purchase. Products labeled as "poi" that are not made of Hawaiian kalo would be misleading to consumers. This measure, as originally drafted, was intended to ensure that the term "poi" was reserved for products that genuinely reflected the traditional practices and agricultural methods of Hawaii and support local farmers who cultivate kalo.

Your Committees note, however, that although the most culturally significant and widely known form of poi is kalo, alternative forms of poi, such as breadfruit poi (poi 'ulu) and sweet potato poi (poi 'uala) were also traditional and essential foods in Hawaii, particularly in areas where taro was scarce. Your Committees further note that, even today, there is a shortage of Hawaii-grown taro, due to limited agricultural resources. Your Committees find that the term "poi" itself comes from the Hawaiian verb poi, which means to pound or mash, highlighting the preparation process rather than the ingredient itself. Amendments to this measure are therefore necessary to address these concerns.

Accordingly, your Committees have amended this measure by:

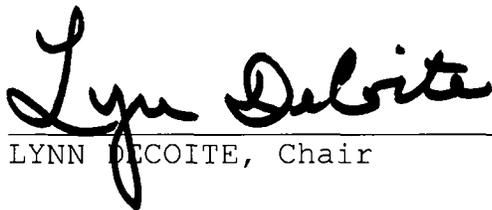
- (1) Modifying the language to require, rather than prohibit, products labeled, marketed, or sold as "poi" to contain labels stating whether the poi is made of wholly Hawaii-grown ingredients or from ingredients sourced outside the State;
- (2) Replacing references to "taro" with "ingredient" to expand the scope of the measure to include poi made from other ingredients;
- (3) Inserting a severability clause to clarify that, if any provision of this measure conflicts at any time with federal law, then federal law shall prevail, and the relevant provisions of the measure shall be ineffective and invalid; provided that the ineffectiveness or invalidity of the provisions shall not affect any other provisions and shall be severable;



- (4) Adding a definition for the term "ingredient";
- (5) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (6) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Commerce and Consumer Protection and Economic Development and Tourism that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 890, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 890, S.D. 2, and be placed on the calendar for Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committees on Commerce and  
Consumer Protection and  
Economic Development and  
Tourism,

  
LYNN DECOITE, Chair

  
JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, Chair





