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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TARO.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. Kalo (Colocasia esculenta (L.) Schott), the  
2 Hawaiian word for taro, is a culturally significant plant to the  
3 kanaka maoli, Hawaii's indigenous peoples. According to the  
4 kumulipo, the Hawaiian creation chant, kalo grew from the first-  
5 born son of Wakea, the sky father, and Papa, the earth mother,  
6 through Wakea's relationship with his and Papa's daughter,  
7 Hoohokulani. This son, named Haloa, was stillborn and buried.  
8 From Haloa's grave grew the first kalo plant. Wakea and  
9 Hoohokulani named their second son Haloa, after his older  
10 brother. From the second Haloa came the genesis of man. Kalo  
11 provides the kanaka maoli's life-giving sustenance, poi, and is  
12 seen as the older brother of mankind.

13           Over three hundred kalo varieties may have existed at the  
14 time of the arrival of European explorers. Today there are  
15 approximately seventy varieties of taro and of these, the  
16 majority are unique to the Hawaiian islands due to the  
17 horticultural skills of native Hawaiian farmers.



1           The important cultural relationship between kalo and the  
2           kanaka maoli continues today in the cultivation of kalo and  
3           ohana, the Hawaiian word for family. The cut stalk of the kalo,  
4           called the huli, is planted to become the next generation. Huli  
5           means to turn or turnover. When "ohana" is broken into root  
6           words, "oha" is the smaller taro corms growing from the older  
7           part of the taro plant that is used to feed one's family and  
8           "ana" is a conjunctive word connoting regeneration or  
9           procreation.

10           Therefore, kalo intrinsically ties the interdependency of  
11           our past, the present, and the future, the essence of  
12           procreation and regeneration, as the foundation of any  
13           sustainable practice. Kalo expresses the spiritual and physical  
14           well-being of not only the kanaka maoli and their heritage, but  
15           also symbolizes the environmental, social, and cultural values  
16           important to the State. This relationship is symbolized in the  
17           use of the kalo plant upon the crown of King Kalakaua and today  
18           in the logo of the office of Hawaiian affairs and many  
19           commercial enterprises throughout the state.

20           The purpose of this Act is to recognize the importance of  
21           the kalo in the heritage of the state by adopting, establishing,  
22           and designating the kalo plant as the official state plant.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended  
2 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to  
3 read as follows:

4 "§5- State plant. Kalo (Colocasia esculenta (L.)  
5 Schott), the Hawaiian word for taro, is adopted, established,  
6 and designated as the official plant of the State."

7 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

8 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2025.



**Report Title:**

Taro; State Plant

**Description:**

Establishes the taro plant as the state plant. (HB659 HD2)

