

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2645

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 18 2022

RE: S.B. No. 2768
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Water and Land and Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 2768 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE HAWAII YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Authorize the Governor to designate the Department Of Land and Natural Resources to administer or enter into an agreement for the administration of a green jobs youth corps to provide temporary work and training opportunities in the fields of natural resource management, agriculture, or other sustainability-related professions to young adults ages twenty-six and younger;
- (2) Require the Department of Land and Natural Resources to partner with an organization that has received accreditation from the Corps Center of Excellence Accreditation Program or has at least ten years of experience providing similar programming statewide in the State, or both; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.



Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department Of Land and Natural Resources, Hawaii State Energy Office, Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo, Hawaii Fish Company Inc., Kupu, Hawai'i's Thousand Friends, Hawai'i Food + Policy Internship, Re-use Hawai'i, The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i Green Fee, and four individuals. Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance.

Your Committees find that the State is currently facing an unemployment epidemic. Many skilled and promising young people in the State lack meaningful opportunities to participate in the workforce.

Your Committees additionally find that during the Regular Session of 2020, the Legislature passed Act 9, Session Laws of Hawaii 2020 (Act 9), which used funds designated for the State by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act to establish a workforce and training program that, among other accomplishments, funded a short-term green jobs program in partnership with the nonprofit Kupu. Under the Kupu Aina Corps, over three hundred fifty displaced workers and recent graduates were matched with work and training opportunities across the State. Kupu's partnership with conservation and agricultural host sites enabled individuals to work within their own communities, while also contributing to Hawaii's economy and environment.

Your Committees further find that, despite the success of the program established pursuant to Act 9, more must be done to support the diversification of Hawaii's economy. Your Committees note, too, that the program established under part XV of Act 9 is no longer active.

Accordingly, your Committees find that this measure will revive the benefits of the workforce program previously enacted under Act 9 in terms of economic diversification and stimulus, but with a greater focus on young adults. This measure will also make the program permanent and place it under the administration of the agency most familiar with conservation and oversight of a conservation corps, and provide the authority to administer a green jobs youth corps in partnership with a qualified community organization.

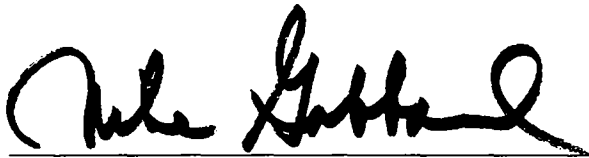


Your Committees have amended this measure by:

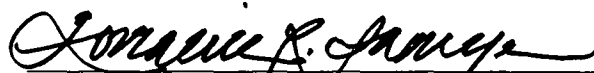
- (1) Increasing, from twenty-six to thirty-eight, the age limit for participation in the program authorized by this measure to encourage greater participation, as recommended in the testimony of Kupu; and
- (2) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Water and Land and Agriculture and Environment that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2768, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2768, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Water and Land
and Agriculture and
Environment,



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



LORRAINE R. INOUE, Chair



