

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1763

Honolulu, Hawaii

, 2023

MAR 30

RE: H.R. No. 85

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Water & Land, to which was referred H.R. No. 85 entitled:

"HOUSE RESOLUTION DESIGNATING HAWAII'S CORAL REEFS AS CRITICAL NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND STRONGLY SUPPORTING NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS SUCH AS CORAL REEF RESTORATION FOR RISK REDUCTION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to designate Hawaii's coral reefs as critical natural infrastructure and convey the strong support for nature-based solutions.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; The Nature Conservancy; Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition; Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition, Inc; and one individual.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii's environmental resources include coral reefs, which can help mitigate the risks and related loss and damage from floods and the effects of climate change and natural disasters if the coral reefs are healthy, effectively managed, and functioning. Your Committee further finds that the health of the State's coral reefs are threatened by global stressors related to climate change and by local stressors from land-based sources of pollution, unsustainable fishing practices, and invasive species.

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Your Committee notes that the Federal Emergency Management Agency provides financial assistance to all states, territories, and federally recognized tribal governments of the United States through its Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs, including the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program, which directs spending toward research-supported, proactive investment in community resilience. Your Committee believes that legislative recognition of coral reefs as critical natural infrastructure will demonstrate political support for nature-based solutions and will highlight the State's commitment to nature-based solutions to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

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. 85 and recommends its adoption.

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

FOR


LINDA ICHIYAMA, Chair



