STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1268

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 17 , 2023

S.B. No. 1498 RE:

> S.D. 1 H.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred S.B. No. 1498, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF TARO,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to improve protections for wetland taro lands and ancient wetland agricultural structures on undeveloped state-owned or -acquired lands.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Chamber of Sustainable Commerce, Ko'olau Foundation, Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, Hawai'i Food+ Policy, 'Ai Pchaku, and fourteen individuals.

Your Committee finds that there is a compelling state interest in conserving state agricultural lands. Your Committee further finds that Act 22, Session Laws of Hawaii 2008, as amended by Act 196, Session Laws of Hawaii 2010, established a Taro Security and Purity Task Force (Task Force). As part of its duties, the Task Force was responsible for developing guidelines, protocols, and recommendations for taro policy. In 2009, the Task Force recommended improved protections for taro growing lands, including loi (wet fields and terraces), mala (dry fields and

terraces), kuana or paepae pohaku (stone walls), and auwai (irrigation ditches). The Task Force also found that these key structural elements for viable wetland taro production were being destroyed, severed, and built upon by private and public development due to gaps in land use, historic preservation, and planning laws and policies. This measure seeks to fill in those gaps to support taro farmers and ensure the continued cultivation of taro in Hawaii.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1498, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1498, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Water & Land.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems,

CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, Chair

## State of Hawaii House of Representatives The Thirty-second Legislature

HSCR 1268

## **Record of Votes of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems**

Bill/Resolution No.: 513 1498501	Committee Referral: AGR, WAL,	FIN Date:	3/15/202	ス
☐ The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to:  Pass, unamended (as is) Pass, with amendments (HD) Hold Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
AGR Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. GATES, Cedric Asuega (C)				
2. KAHALOA, Kirstin (VC)			BUTTURE BUTT	G NE ZONE DO NO
3. COCHRAN, Elle				
<b>建筑区区域建筑</b>				
4. LOWEN, Nicole E.	V			
DEPOSITO A			Manager 1988 Dig	
5. PERRUSO, Amy A.	PERADA DESCRIPTION			
6. WOODSON, Justin H.		A STATE OF THE STA	rockussinger (style st.)	
7. WARD, Gene				
TOTAL (7)	6			1
The recommendation is:    Adopted				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature:				
Distribution: Original (White) - Committee Duplicate (Yellow) - Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) - HMSO				