

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1589

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 24 , 2023

RE: S.B. No. 304  
S.D. 2  
H.D. 2

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 S.B. No. 304, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO VISITOR IMPACT FEES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish a Visitor Impact Fee Program within the Department of Land and Natural Resources to collect a fee for a license to visit a state park, forest, hiking trail, or other state natural area;
- (2) Establish and appropriate funds into and out of the Visitor Impact Special Fund for the Visitor Impact Fee Strategic Plan; and
- (3) Appropriate funds for positions to administer the Visitor Impact Fee Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Governor, Department of the Attorney General, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development,

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Friends of Hanauma Bay, Coral Reef Alliance, Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo, Hawaii State Youth Commission, Kohala Coast Resort Association, Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition, Climate Protectors Hawai'i; Kauai Climate Action Coalition, Trust for Public Land, Imua Alliance, Maui Hotel & Lodging Association, Mālama Learning Center, Kupu, The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action, Resources Legacy Fund, Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea, Elemental Excelerator, Pacific Whale Foundation, Maui Ocean Center, Conservation International, Kanu Hawai'i, Surfrider Foundation Hawai'i, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development, Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i, Blue Planet Foundation, Hawai'i Forest & Trail, Hawai'i Youth Climate Coalition, Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations, National Tropical Botanical Garden, Young Progressives Demanding Action, The Conservationist Collective, Pono Hawai'i Initiative, Wild Kids, Parley for the Oceans, Reuse Hawai'i, Hawai'i Land Trust, Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Project, Kuleana Coral Restoration, Zero Waste Hawai'i Island, Travel2Change, Mālama Maunalua, Kailua Beach Adventures, Good Food Movement, Care About Climate, Protea Zero Waste Store, Agripelago, Native Ecosystem Services, Delphi Cinema, Keep it Simple Honolulu, North Shore Community Land Trust, Hawai'i Wildlife Fund, Kingdom Pathways, Kokonut Koalition, Excurinsure, Kokua Foundation, and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from four individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Tax Foundation of Hawaii, Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, and one individual.

Your Committee finds that there is a critical need for additional and scaled revenue to protect, restore, and enhance the State's irreplaceable natural resources. While visitors play a substantial role in the State's economy, they also take a heavy toll on the State's natural resources that cannot be ignored. These resources are invaluable to the livelihoods of the State's residents and an integral driver of the State's economy. The establishment of a visitor impact fee, as intended by this measure, will enable the State to fund land and water protection and stewardship projects as well as provide a pathway to sustainable environmental and economic resilience for the visitor industry.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:



- (1) Delaying the implementation of the Visitor Impact Fee Program, except for the establishment of the Visitor Impact Fee Special Fund, to July 1, 2025;
- (2) Requiring the Department of Land and Natural Resources to provide a report to the Legislature on the creation and implementation of the Visitor Impact Fee Strategic Plan, including the timetable of how the objectives of the Visitor Impact Fee Program will be pursued and implemented, no later than December 1, 2023; and
- (3) 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 Water & Land that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 304, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 304, S.D. 2, H.D. 2.

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

  
LINDA ICHIYAMA, Chair



