

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3658

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 05 2024

RE: H.B. No. 2298
H.D. 1
S.D. 2

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred H.B. No. 2298, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CONSUMER PROTECTION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish a timeline by which roasted coffee, instant coffee, and ready-to-drink coffee beverages that use a geographic origin in labeling or advertising are required to contain a certain percent coffee by weight from that geographic origin; and
- (2) Exempt retailers that do not package roasted coffee, instant coffee, or ready-to-drink coffee beverages from liability for the sale of roasted coffee, instant coffee, or ready-to-drink coffee beverages that use a label or advertisement in violation of the coffee labeling law.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture; two members of the Hawai'i County Council; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Mai Mahealani Farm, LLC; Guard Well Farm; Rancho Aloha Coffee Farm; Konaloha Farms; Kona Coffee Farmer's Association; Mountain Thunder Coffee



Plantation; Huahua Farm; Kanalani Ohana Farm; Absolute Palate, LLC; Bea's Knees Farm, LLC; Hawaii Coffee Association; Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; The Buna Coffee Company; Ka'awaloa Trail Farm; Hawaii Coffee Growers Association; Cyanotech Corporation; South Kona Estate Coffee Farm; 'Āina Design Corp.; Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action; Chamber of Sustainable Commerce; The Martin Ohana Farm; The Four Sens, LLC; Ka'u Coffee Mill, and thirty-one individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawaii Coffee Company, Kaiwi Farms, Aloha Hills Coffee, Mulvadi Corporation, A Better Cup Coffea Consulting, and twenty-three individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from Retail Merchants of Hawaii, Hawaii Food Industry Association, and one individual.

Your Committee finds that coffee is a premium commodity and one of the State's important agricultural crops. Despite the premium value of Hawaii-grown coffee, the State has not protected the integrity of the names of coffee origin regions. Instead, existing law allows coffee blends that only contain very small amounts of coffee beans from the State's distinctive regions to use the name of those regions on product packaging, a practice that deceives consumers and harms coffee growers. This measure will protect consumers by ensuring that minimum blend amounts allowed for coffee products that bear geographic origin names constitute a majority of the product from that geographic origin and are sufficient to ensure that the product reflects the quality and character of the region.

Your Committee has amended this measure by making nonsubstantive, technical amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2298, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2298, H.D. 1, S.D. 2.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



