

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 21 2025

RE: H.B. No. 309  
H.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Water and Land and Higher Education, to which was referred H.B. No. 309, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FISHPONDS,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish a fishpond inventory working group within the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program to create an inventory and map of all fishponds on state land and conduct a literature review of Hawaiian language newspapers that includes any relevant sources used for collecting the inventory date; and
- (2) Appropriate funds.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation Commission, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, University of Hawai'i System, Office of the Mayor of the County of Maui, Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo, Sierra Club of Hawai'i, Historic Hawai'i Foundation, Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force, The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i Food+ Policy, Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition, and five individuals.



Your Committees find that fishponds, or loko i'a, are an integral part of Hawaiian culture, history, and sustainability practices. Fishponds demonstrate the ecological knowledge of early Hawaiian communities and continue to play a significant role in the health of coastal ecosystems and adjacent communities. The maintenance and restoration of existing fishponds is therefore critical to the State's cultural, food security, and sustainability goals. Accordingly, this measure establishes a working group to develop an inventory of all state-owned fishponds, which is an important next step in protecting these invaluable resources.

Your Committees note that the University of Hawaii Sea Grant College Program maintains that it could conduct the project, as currently described, entirely in-house and without third-party consultants by leveraging the resources and expertise available to the Program, including graduate research students, faculty within the Program, and Hawaiian language experts at the University of Hawaii.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Water and Land and Higher Education that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 309, H.D. 1, and recommend that it pass Second Reading 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 Higher Education,

  
DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair

  
LORRAINE R. INOUÉ, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Third Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Water and Land**  
**WTL**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>HB 309 HD 1</b>	Committee Referral: <b>WTL/HRE, WAM</b>	Date: <b>03/18/25</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
INOUYE, Lorraine R. (C)	✓			
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C. (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley	✓			
MCKELVEY, Angus L.K.				✓
DECORTE, Samantha	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
Distribution:             Original     Yellow     Pink     Goldenrod File with Committee Report     Clerk's Office     Drafting Agency     Committee File Copy				

**\*Only one measure per Record of Votes**

