

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

80

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 04 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 534  
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025  
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred H.B. No. 534 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LABELING REQUIREMENTS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to prohibit the sale of raw ahi and raw ahi products in retail establishments in the State without a label that states the country where the ahi was landed.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; North Shore Nutrition; Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition, Inc.; Hawaii Longline Association; Farm Link Hawai'i; Paradise Poke Hawaii; Local I'a; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General and Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii's tuna fisheries are a vital part of the State's economy and food system, yet consumers are often misled about the origin of the ahi they purchase, as most ahi sold at retail establishments, particularly in poke and sushi products, is actually imported, previously frozen, and carbon monoxide-treated. Due to a loophole in federal labeling laws, retailers are not required to disclose the origin of these products, leading many consumers to falsely assume they are

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purchasing fresh, locally caught tuna. By ensuring transparency in seafood labeling, this measure empowers consumers to make informed choices, supports Hawaii's fishing industry, and protects the integrity of the State's premium seafood market.

Your Committee notes that further consideration should be given to other ways to strengthen the intent of this measure by looking at other metrics for labeling requirements of processed ahi, such as "fresh" or "previously frozen".

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the labeling requirements apply to processed ahi, rather than raw ahi;
- (2) Adding a definition for "processed ahi";
- (3) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) 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 H.B. No. 534, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 534, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce.

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

  
KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



