

Honolulu, Hawaii

**FEB 12 2025**RE: S.B. No. 129  
S.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Economic Development and Tourism, to which was referred S.B. No. 129 entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to prohibit the sale of raw ahi and raw ahi products in retail establishments 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; Hawaii Longline Association; Fishing Tales with Mike Sakamoto; Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition, Inc.; Forage Hawai'i; Farm Link Hawaii; and twenty-six individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General and Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that local tuna fisheries and associated seafood markets are an important sector of the State's economy. In fact, data from the United States Department of Commerce has shown that tuna contributed approximately \$100,000,000 to Hawaii's economy annually. Your Committee acknowledges however, that foreign imported tuna dominates the local Hawaii tuna markets without adequate advertising of this phenomenon. This measure therefore, will reduce misleading advertisements meant to obscure



the origin and freshness of tuna by extending country of origin labeling requirements for certain ahi tuna products at Hawaii retail establishments.

Your Committee acknowledges the concerns raised in the testimony of the Department of the Attorney General that the country-of-origin labeling requirement proposed in this measure may be preempted by the Federal Agricultural Marking Act of 1946, as amended, and its corresponding regulation. Your Committee finds that this concern merits further consideration and respectfully requests that subsequent committees to which this measure is referred examine this issue.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Adding ahi poke and processed ahi to the products subject to the country of origin in labeling requirement;
- (2) Inserting language that defines "ahi poke" and "processed ahi";
- (3) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Economic Development and Tourism that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 129, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 129, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Economic  
Development and Tourism,

*Lynn DeCoite*

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LYNN DECOITE, Chair



