

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 27 2025

RE: S.B. No. 129
S.D. 2

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.B. No. 129, S.D. 1, 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 extend country of origin labeling requirements for certain ahi tuna products sold at Hawaii retail establishments.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Hawaii Longline Association, Fishing Tales with Mike Sakamoto, Malama Kaua'i, and four individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual.

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 seafood markets are an important sector of the State's economy and food production. Existing federal law applies certain country of origin labeling requirements for seafood, including fish fillets, tuna steaks, and loins. Due to a loophole in the federal law, however, the same requirements do not apply to prepared foods,



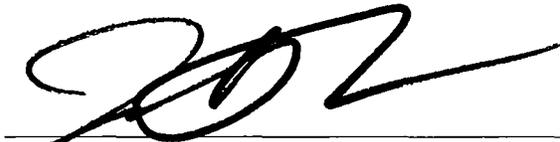
like ahi poke. Ahi poke sold at retail establishments is dominated by previously frozen, carbon monoxide-treated fish. There is a common misconception that this previously frozen, carbon monoxide-treated tuna is derived from Hawaii fisheries, when often it is imported from foreign sources. Some retailers mislead consumers into believing their product is fresh or locally caught by using terms such as "freshly made" and "locally prepared". Your Committee further finds that because many consumers in the State prefer to buy locally sourced food to support the local economy, this measure empowers consumers by providing the necessary information to consumers to make better informed choices.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting a severability clause; and
- (2) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 129, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 129, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Commerce and
Consumer Protection,



JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE, Chair



