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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE RECOGNITION OF A HAWAIIAN SENSE OF PLACE.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1 SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "Hawaiian Sense  
2 of Place Recognition Act".

3 SECTION 2. Chapter 226, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
4 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and  
5 to read as follows:

6 **"PART . HAWAIIAN SENSE OF PLACE RECOGNITION**

7 **S226-** **Definitions.** As used in this part:

8 "Hawaiian sense of place" means the cultural, spiritual,  
9 environmental, and social relationships that Native Hawaiians  
10 and residents of Hawaii maintain with land, water, and natural  
11 and built environments. This concept includes, but is not  
12 limited to the following elements:

13 (1) Connection to 'aina. Recognition of land as a living  
14 entity that sustains and nurtures the community,  
15 embodying ancestral knowledge, history, and genealogy;  
16 (2) Cultural practices. Integration and perpetuation of  
17 traditional practices, including hula, oli (chant),



festivals, and other cultural expressions that reinforce relationships between people and place;

(3) Spiritual significance. Acknowledgment of sacred sites, traditional cultural properties, and places of historical and mythological importance, contributing to individual and community identity;

(4) Community and family relationships. Recognition of the role of 'ohana, community networks, and intergenerational ties in shaping and sustaining place-based identity; and

(5) Environmental stewardship. Commitment to sustainability, biodiversity protection, and traditional Hawaiian environmental practices that promote long-term ecological balance.

**\$226- Promotion and education.** The office shall develop and implement educational and outreach programs to promote understanding and appreciation of the Hawaiian sense of place among residents, visitors, and public employees. These programs shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) The cultural significance of 'aina and place-based identity;



- 1       (2) Traditional Hawaiian environmental and land  
2               stewardship practices; and
- 3       (3) The historical, cultural, and spiritual narratives  
4               associated with specific places throughout the State.

## §226- Land management, planning, and state

6 **construction.** (a) In the planning, management, and development  
7 of land, state agencies shall incorporate the principles of the  
8 Hawaiian sense of place.

13 (1) Architectural and landscape design that reflects  
14 Hawaiian values, cultural context, and environmental  
15 conditions;

16 (2) Integration of culturally and historically significant  
17 sites and features;

18 (3) Sustainable design practices consistent with

**19** traditional Hawaiian environmental stewardship; and



1 (4) Meaningful engagement with Native Hawaiian  
2 practitioners, cultural experts, and affected  
3 communities during planning and design phases.  
4 (c) State agencies shall ensure that community input and  
5 cultural consultation are meaningfully incorporated to uphold  
6 traditions and practices reflective of the Hawaiian sense of  
7 place."

**8** SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY:

Nadine K. Vahn

BY REQUEST

JAN 27 2026



# H.B. NO. 2473

**Report Title:**

OPSD; Hawaii State Planning Act; Hawaiian Sense of Place Recognition Act

**Description:**

Establishes the Hawaiian Sense of Place Recognition Act. Requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to develop educational and outreach programs to promote understanding of the Hawaiian sense of place among residents, visitors, and public employees. Requires state agencies to incorporate Hawaiian sense of place principles into land planning, management, and state construction projects.

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