STAND. COM. REP. NO. 291 -26

Honolulu, Hawaii
FEB 17 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1615
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Economic Development & Technology, to which was referred H.B. No. 1615 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to contract for the services of a consultant to support the development, coordination, and implementation of certain state ocean technology and innovation initiatives and appropriate funds for this purpose.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation; Hawaii Pacific Drone Solutions; Pacific Impact Zone; Chamber of Commerce Hawaii; HIplan; Small Kine Farm; Hawaii Ocean Power Solutions LLC; Gtscientific LLC; Blue Startups; Hohonu; WaiHome; Purple Mai'a Foundation; Builders VC; Ai.Fish; Havoc AI; Ocean Era, Inc.; Essential Leap; Namaka Algae, Inc.; Pacific Economics; Hawaiian King Candies, LLC; Purdyco, Ltd dba Island Princess; COHI, Inc. dba Coffees of Hawaii; and six individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from 1000 Ocean Startups.

Your Committee finds that the blue economy, which involves the sustainable use of ocean and aquatic resources to support

economic growth, presents a major opportunity for the State to utilize its natural resources to spur economic development. This measure seeks to provide resources and funding to support economic development in the blue economy and establish a central entity to oversee the State's marine affairs-related industries.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

(1) Replacing the requirement and appropriation for the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to procure the services of a consultant to support certain ocean technology and innovation initiatives with an unspecified appropriation amount for the Office of Marine Affairs to procure the services of a consultant to support the marine affairs declaration of intent;

(2) Inserting a provision that declares that the State is an ocean cluster;

(3) Establishing the Office of Marine Affairs and Marine Affairs Task Force within the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation;

(4) Establishing and appropriating an unspecified amount for the Marine Affairs Coordinator position and requiring the Coordinator to submit annual reports to the Governor and Legislature;

(5) Repealing the powers and duties of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism in marine affairs;

(6) Transferring the functions of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Marine Affairs to the Office of Marine Affairs;

(7) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and

(8) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider appropriation amounts of:

(1) $500,000 for the Office of Marine Affairs to procure the services of a consultant; and

(2) $150,000 to fund one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Marine Affairs Coordinator position.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Economic Development & Technology that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1615, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1615, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Economic
Development & Technology,
Development & Technology,

GREGGOR ILAGAN, Chair

State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
The Thirty-third Legislature

HSCR 291-26

Record of Votes of the Committee on Economic Development & Technology

Bill/Resolution No.:	Committee Referral:	Date:
HB 1615	ECD, FIN	1/30/26

☐ The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.

The recommendation is to: ☐ Pass, unamended (as is) ☑ Pass, with amendments (HD) ☐ Hold
☐ Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)

ECD Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. ILAGAN, Greggor (C)	✓			
2. HUSSEY, Ikaika (VC)	✓			
3. HOLT, Daniel	✓			
4. TAM, Adrian K.	✓			
5. TEMPLO, Shirley Ann	✓			
6. YAMASHITA, Kyle T.	✓			
7. GEDEON, Joe	✓			
TOTAL (7)	7			

The recommendation is: ☑ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted

If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation.
committee acronym(s)

Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____

Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO