STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3308

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 30 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1615
H.D. 2
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Economic Development and Tourism and Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred H.B. No. 1615, H.D. 2, entitled:

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

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

(1) Declare that the State is an ocean cluster;

(2) Establish the Office of Marine Affairs within the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation for administrative purposes only;

(3) Establish and appropriate funds for the Marine Affairs Coordinator position;

(4) Require the Marine Affairs Coordinator to submit annual reports to the Governor and Legislature;

(5) Transfer the functions of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Marine Affairs to the Office of Marine Affairs; and

(6) Appropriate funds for the Office of Marine Affairs to procure the services of a consultant to support the marine affairs declaration of intent.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of the Governor; Nāmaka Algae, Inc.; Blue Startups; Hawai'i Angels; Hohonu; Kupu Place Aquaponics LLC; WaiHome LLC; Chamber of Commerce Hawaii; Marine Genetics LLC; Privateer Space Inc.; Ocean Era, Inc.; Hawaii Ocean Power Solutions; and seven individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority, and one individual.

Your Committees find that the State's identity, economy, and long-term resilience are inseparable from the ocean. Its marine affairs strategy, however, has not kept pace with those of other coastal states and nations. The lack of a coordinated marine affairs policy framework may damage the competitive advantage the State's unique geography and resources offer in industries such as ocean technologies and aquaculture, leading to missed economic opportunities as these sectors develop. This measure seeks to position the State as a global leader in sustainable ocean development, thereby advancing economic diversification, supporting workforce development, and reinforcing responsible ocean stewardship.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

(1) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 3050, to encourage further discussion; and

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

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Economic Development and Tourism and Agriculture and Environment that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1615, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1615, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Economic
Development and Tourism and
Agriculture and Environment,

MIKE GABBARD, Chair

LYNN DECOITE, Chair

The Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
EDT

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
HB1615, HD2	EDT/AEN, WAM	03/25/26

☐ The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.
If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:
☐ Pass, unamended 2312 ☑ Pass, with amendments 2311 ☐ Hold 2310 ☐ Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
DECOITE, Lynn (C)	✓			
WAKAI, Glenn (VC)	✓			
FUKUNAGA, Carol				✓
KIM, Donna Mercado				✓
FEVELLA, Kurt	✓			
TOTAL	3	Ø	Ø	2

Recommendation: ☑ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:

Distribution: Original — File with Committee Report; Yellow — Committee; Pink — Drafting Agency

*Only one measure per Record of Votes

Revised: 01/02/26

The Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
AEN

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
HB1615, HD2	EDT/AEN, WAM	3-25-26

☐ The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.

If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

☐ Pass, unamended 2312 ☒ Pass, with amendments 2311 ☐ Hold 2310 ☐ Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	X			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	X			
DECOITE, Lynn	X			
RHOADS, Karl	X			
AWA, Brenton	X			
TOTAL	5			

Recommendation: ☒ Adopted ☐ Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature

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Revised: 01/02/26