STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3647

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 09 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2599
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Ways and Means, to which was referred H.B. No. 2599, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AQUATIC PROTECTION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to support the protection and restoration of coral reefs throughout the State.

More specifically, this measure requires the Division of Aquatic Resources of the Department of Land and Natural Resources to:

(1) Manage the aquatic life and aquatic resources of the State, giving the highest priority to protecting, restoring, and maintaining ecosystem integrity and using the best peer-reviewed scientific data available;

(2) Maintain reefs and each native species within the reefs at levels no less than those suggested by the best peer-reviewed science as able to comfortably withstand the worst coral bleaching events and other likely threats to reef ecosystem health in the subsequent five decades;

(3) Set goals, make plans, and take actions to substantially improve coral-reef resilience; and

(4) Provide annual reports to the Legislature.

Your Committee received written comments in support of this measure from the Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition; Malama Pupukea-Waimea; Sierra Club of Hawaii; The Nature Conservancy; Ocean Legislative Task Force; Hoala Kealakekua Nui, Inc.; Kai Kuleana; and numerous individuals.

Your Committee received written comments in opposition to this measure from the Native Hawaiian Gathering Rights Association.

Your Committee received written comments on this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Your Committee finds that coral reefs are a critical component of the State's ecosystem. Accordingly, your Committee finds that it is imperative that the State take immediate and sustained action to protect and restore coral reefs throughout the State, and that this Act will enable and support the necessary actions.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Ways and Means that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2599, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Ways and Means,

DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, Chair

The Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Ways and Means
WAM

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
HB2599, HD1, SD1	WLA, WAM	4/6/2026

☐ 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
DELA CRUZ, Donovan M. (C)	X			
MORIWAKI, Sharon Y. (VC)	X			
DECOITE, Lynn	X			
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C.	X			
HASHIMOTO, Troy N.	X			
INOUYE, Lorraine R.	X			
KANUHA, Dru Mamo	X			
KIDANI, Michelle N.	X			
KIM, Donna Mercado	X			
LEE, Chris				X
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim"	X			
WAKAI, Glenn	X			
FEVELLA, Kurt	X			
TOTAL	12	0	0	1

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