

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 19**, 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2372  
S.D. 2  
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 Water & Land, to which was referred S.B. No. 2372, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO TREES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish base selection criteria for designating exceptional trees;
- (2) Establish the significant tree designation, selection criteria, and related processes;
- (3) Establish the State Arborist Advisory Committee within the Department of Land and Natural Resources for administrative purposes;
- (4) Require County Arborist Advisory Committees to have at least six members and designate significant trees; and
- (5) Direct the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the University of Hawaii to cooperate with State and County Arborist Advisory Committees to carry out the Exceptional Trees Program.



Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Kona Community Development Plan Action Committee of the County of Hawai'i; The Outdoor Circle; Manoa Outdoor Circle; Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition; Climate Protectors Hawaii; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Taxation.

Your Committee finds that the preservation of large canopy trees is a highly cost-effective natural-infrastructure strategy. Your Committee further finds that exceptional trees serve as living landmarks that connect residents to history and place. However, across the State, mature urban trees are steadily declining due to development pressures, aging infrastructure, and inconsistent protections. This measure seeks to protect these natural, living treasures.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

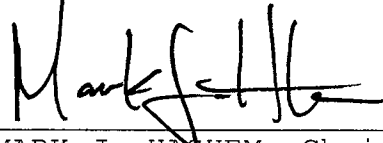
- (1) Changing its effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider streamlining the proposed Exceptional Trees Program to have a statewide coordinator work with the counties under the existing process.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water & Land that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2372, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2372, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Water & Land,



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MARK J. HASHEM, Chair



