STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2976

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 0 6 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2972
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 Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 2972, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO OAHU CORAL REEF RESTORATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to temporarily prohibit the taking by spearing of uhu or kala in state marine waters around the island of Oahu until the Division of Aquatic Resources' Holomua Marine Initiative process adopts applicable regulations.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Sierra Club of Hawai'i, Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition, Na Kama Kai, Malama Pupukea-Waimea, The Nature Conservancy Hawai'i and Palmyra, Hawai'i Food+ Policy, Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force, WAI: Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations, and twenty-one individuals.

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

Your Committee finds that herbivorous reef fish species are critical to the maintenance of ecosystem health and coral reef resilience. Uhu and kala populations, especially around Oahu, are unhealthy and may be at risk of further decline or collapse, which would accelerate the degradation of the State's nearshore

ecosystems. While your Committee recognizes that these fish are staple species for subsistence fishers, it is necessary to prevent further depletion of these important species. This measure will establish a targeted layer of protection for these species that will prevent the further decline of these species and the coral reefs that they help to maintain.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2972, S.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,
Committee on Judiciary,

KARL RHOADS, Chair

The Senate
Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Judiciary
JDC

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SB 2972 SD1	WLA/AEN, JDC	3/3/26

☐ 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
RHOADS, Karl (C)	✓			
GABBARD, Mike (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley	✓			
SAN BUENAVENTURA, Joy A.	✓			
AWA, Brenton			✓	
TOTAL	4	—	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