

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3938

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 29 2026

RE: GOV. MSG. NOS. 649,
650

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts, to which was referred Governor's Message Nos. 649 and 650, submitting for study and consideration the nominations of:

PACIFIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

G.M. No. 649 GILBERT KUALI'I
for a term to expire 06-30-2029; and

G.M. No. 650 PHILIP FERNANDEZ
for a term to expire 06-30-2029,

begs leave to report as follows:

Your Committee reviewed the personal histories, resumes, and statements submitted by Gilbert Kualii and Philip Fernandez for service on the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

GILBERT KUALI'I

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the appointment of Gilbert Kualii from the Department of Land and Natural Resources and two individuals.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Mr. Kualii's experience, background, and commitment to public service qualify him for appointment to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. Since retiring from the United States Navy in 2003, Mr. Kualii has dedicated himself to the practice and



perpetuation of Native Hawaiian fishing methods, including spearfishing, throw net, palu ahi, ika shibi handline fishing, and Kona crab harvesting. Mr. Kualii has further demonstrated his commitment to traditional Hawaiian practices, as well as ethical wildlife stewardship, through his service with numerous federal, state, and community-based organizations, such as the Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council Advisory Panel, East Hawai'i Fishers Working Group, and Hilo Trollers Fishing Club. Your Committee further notes that Mr. Kualii currently serves as an interim commissioner of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and has a thorough understanding of the roles and responsibilities of its members. Your Committee therefore recommends that Gilbert Kualii be appointed to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission based on his knowledge, experience, and commitment to public service.

PHILIP FERNANDEZ

Your Committee received testimony in support of the nomination for the appointment of Philip Fernandez from the Department of Land and Natural Resources and one individual.

Upon review of the testimony, your Committee finds that Mr. Fernandez's experience, background, and commitment to public service qualify him for appointment to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. Mr. Fernandez has served on many advisory and decision-making bodies central to the State's ocean and coastal resource management framework, including the Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition, Marine and Coastal Zone Advocacy Council, and Maunalua Bay Fisheries Management Area Partnership, in addition to national and regional-level service on the American Fisheries Advisory Committee, Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery Team, Papahānaumokuākea National Marine Monument Reserve Advisory Council, and Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. Beyond his expertise in fisheries, Mr. Fernandez brings decades of business and financial management experience earned from various leadership roles in the tech industry and from overseeing the finances of the American Red Cross. Your Committee further notes that Mr. Fernandez currently serves as an interim commissioner of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and has a thorough understanding of the roles and responsibilities of its members. Your Committee therefore recommends that Philip Fernandez be



appointed to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission based on his knowledge, experience, and commitment to public service.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts that are attached to this report, your Committee, after full consideration of the background, experience, and qualifications of the nominees, has found the nominees to be qualified for the positions to which nominated and recommends that the Senate advise and consent to the nominations.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Water, Land,
Culture and the Arts,



CHRIS LEE, Chair



