

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 30 2026**

RE: H.B. No. 2218  
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 Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts, to which was referred H.B. No. 2218, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Authorize the Department of Land and Natural Resources to enter into community co-management agreements and establish qualifications for eligible community co-managers; and
- (2) Authorize the disposition of public lands by a community co-management agreement.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Office of Hawaiian Affairs; University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program; Office of the Mayor of the County of Kaua'i; Hawai'i State Youth Commission; Hawai'i Community Foundation; Kau'āina Ulu 'Auamo; Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force; Ko'olauloa Hawaiian Civic Club; Hui Maka'āinana o Makana; Kūpuna for the Mo'opuna; The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra; Free Access Coalition; Care for 'Āina Now Coalition; Moana Ohana; Sierra Club of Hawai'i; Hawai'i



Food+ Policy; Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs; Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea; Shimanchu Mamuyaa; Hawai'i Wildlife Fund; Sustainable Coastlines Hawaii; Kalanihale; Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development; Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; and thirty-nine individuals.

Your Committee finds that the State alone cannot sustainably manage the State's public trust resources. One possible strategy to address this issue is through the use of community co-management agreements, where government agencies partner with the local community to care for wahi pana and surrounding resources. Your Committee recognizes that, though many communities throughout the State have already initiated and perpetuated decades-long collaboration with the government on the preservation of local environments, the lack of statutory authority, a formalized process, and support through long term co-management agreements limit the effectiveness of these grassroots efforts. This measure will promote more effective stewardship of public trust resources for present and future generations and honor the Native Hawaiian concepts of mālama 'āina and ahupua'a-based management.

Your Committee acknowledges the concerns raised in testimony that the Department of Land and Natural Resource's quintennial report on the community-based organization's progress toward meeting the goals set out in the co-management plan is redundant, based on other statutory reporting requirements, and may also result in undue administrative burden on the Department and the community-based organization. While your Committee understands the request from testifiers to remove the reporting requirement altogether, because the co-management agreement process is being newly established by this measure, your Committee recognizes the need for governmental accountability and transparency during the initial roll-out stage of the process. Your Committee also notes the recommendation provided in testimony by the Department of Land and Natural Resources that collaboration between the applicant and the Department on the co-management plan needs to be explicitly mandated. Amendments to this measure are therefore necessary to address these concerns.



Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language expanding the purposes for which community co-management agreements shall be used solely and exclusively to include the management of public and recreational parks and facilities;
- (2) Specifying that, when deciding whether a community-based organization is qualified to enter into a community co-management agreement, the Board of Land and Natural Resources shall consider a co-management plan recommended by the Department of Land and Natural Resources;
- (3) Changing the timing of the reporting requirements for the Department of Land and Natural Resources to submit to the Board of Land and Natural Resources a report detailing the community-based organization's progress on meeting the goals set out in the co-management plan from five years to ten years after the effective date of the community co-management agreement; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2218, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2218, 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  
Committee on Water, Land,  
Culture and the Arts,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHRIS LEE, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Third Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts**  
**WLA**

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
HB2218 HD2	WLA, WAM	3-23-2026

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
LEE, Chris (C)	✓			
INOUYE, Lorraine R. (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley	✓			
LAMOSAO, Rachele	✓			
DECORTE, Samantha	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	5			

Recommendation:      Adopted      Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:  


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

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes