

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 18 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2592
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 H.B. No. 2592 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE MAUNA KEA STEWARDSHIP AND OVERSIGHT AUTHORITY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Clarify the intent of Act 255, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, by explicitly declaring that the transfer of the real property interests in the lands of Mauna Kea to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority on July 1, 2028, shall occur as a matter of law;
- (2) Require the University of Hawaii to negotiate for the transfer of the various astronomical observatory conservation district use permits to the applicable astronomical observatories so that when governance by the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority begins, the Authority will not be in conflict;
- (3) Clarify that the existing plans and administrative rules under which Mauna Kea is currently governed shall continue in full force and effect until a superseding master plan, management plan, or administrative rules,



or any portion thereof, adopted by the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, takes effect; and

- (4) Clarify that the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority falls under the State's sovereign immunity by explicitly making section 26-35(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes, applicable to the Authority.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Canada-France-Hawai'i Telescope; W. M. Keck Observatory; Kalihi Palama Hawaiian Civic Club; Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority; and six individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources and University of Hawai'i System.

Your Committee finds that this measure provides legal clarity for the governance of Mauna Kea by ensuring the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority can fulfill its responsibilities. By clarifying property transfers, affirming the continuity of existing plans and rules during the transition, and explicitly providing sovereign immunity for the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority, this measure strengthens the foundation for effective, stable stewardship. Your Committee further finds that this measure promotes responsible, balanced management of Mauna Kea that honors its cultural, environmental, and spiritual significance while providing certainty for all parties.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

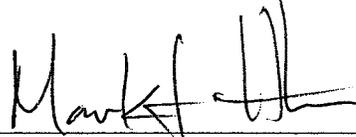
- (1) Clarifying the specific parcels to be conveyed by the Department of Land and Natural Resources to the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority;
- (2) Specifying that the Mauna Kea Stewardship and Oversight Authority shall have an easement for access and maintenance in the road easement, as described in General Lease 4697;
- (3) Changing its effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and



- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

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 H.B. No. 2592, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2592, 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,



MARK J. HASHEM, Chair



