

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2602

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2078
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 S.B. No. 2078 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) Establish a criminal penalty and monetary fines for aquarium fishing violations; and
- (2) Clarify that each fish or aquatic life specimen taken in violation of certain fishing laws regarding aquarium fish and the possession and use of prohibited explosives, electrofishing devices, and poisonous substances constitutes a separate offense.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from one member of the Hawai'i County Council, Ko'olau Foundation, Sierra Club of Hawai'i, Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo, and Moana Ohana.

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



Your Committee finds that the Environmental Court of the First Circuit of Hawaii has ruled, in part, that the issuance of aquarium fishing permits is subject to the Hawaii Environmental Policy Act and, therefore, an environmental impact statement must be completed before the Department of Land and Natural Resources approves or renews additional aquarium fishing licenses and permits. In January 2021, the Department clarified that, in addition to not approving or renewing commercial marine licenses for aquarium fishing without a complete environmental review process, licensees could no longer collect aquarium fish. This measure will align with the Court's ruling and further protect aquarium fish and other aquarium resources in the State's nearshore waters through increasing fines for illegal activities related to aquarium fishing.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language clarifying that rules adopted by the Department of Land and Natural Resources pursuant to section 190-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, may regulate aquarium fish permits;
- (2) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose; and
- (3) 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 S.B. No. 2078, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2078, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

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

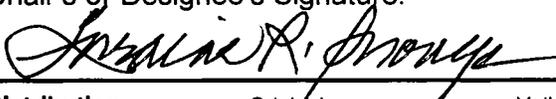


CHRIS LEE, Chair



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:		
SB 2078	WLA, JDC	2-18-2026		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
LEE, Chris (C)	✓			
INOUYE, Lorraine R. (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley				✓
LAMOSAO, Rachele	✓			
DECORTE, Samantha	✓			
TOTAL	4			1
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> 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