

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2984

Honolulu, Hawaii

**MAR 06 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 Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 2078, S.D. 1, 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) Clarify 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) Establish a criminal penalty and monetary fines for aquarium fishing violations; and
- (3) 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 the Hawai'i County Council; Hawaii Island Aha Moku; Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition; For the Fishes; Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo; Puakō for Reefs; Earthjustice; Ocean Janitors Hawaii; Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force; Ho'āla Kealakekua Nui, Inc.; Moana Ohana;



HULI PAC; The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra; Ko'olau Foundation; Sierra Club of Hawai'i; two members of the Hawai'i County Council; and seventeen individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from five individuals.

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

Your Committee finds that the State's coastal waters are foundational to its culture, subsistence practices, tourism industry, and overall environmental health, and that aquarium fish species play a vital role in maintaining the coral reefs that sustain the State's nearshore ecosystems. Your Committee also finds that a 2020 ruling by the Environmental Court of the First Circuit of Hawaii required an environmental review before any issuance or renewal of aquarium fishing permits. The Department of Land and Natural Resources implemented the ruling, and in 2021, clarified that those with existing commercial marine licenses could no longer collect aquarium fish. This measure further clarifies the Department's rulemaking authority and strengthens penalties for violations, thereby reinforcing the State's responsibility to protect coastal ecosystems for present and future generations.

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. 2078, S.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

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



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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 2078 SDI	WLA, JDC	2/26/26

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	<del>✓</del> MJA		✓	
<b>TOTAL</b>	4	—	1	—

Recommendation:  Adopted     Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:  


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\*Only one measure per Record of Votes