

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2644

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2372
S.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Water,
Land, Culture and the Arts, to which was referred S.B. No. 2372
entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO TREES,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish base selection criteria for exceptional trees;
- (2) Establish the significant tree designation, selection criteria, and related processes;
- (3) Establish the State Arborist Advisory Committee within the Department of Land and Natural Resources for administrative purposes;
- (4) Require County Arborist Advisory Committees to have at least six members, adopt new exceptional tree selection criteria, and designate significant trees; and
- (5) Direct the Department of Land and Natural Resources and the University of Hawaii to cooperate with State and County Arborist Advisory Committees to carry out the Exceptional Trees Program.



Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, The Outdoor Circle, Climate Protectors Hawai'i, Trees for Honolulu's Future, and seven individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Taxation.

Your Committees find that, from a water and land management perspective, preserving large canopy trees and other significant and exceptional trees is a highly cost-effective natural infrastructure strategy. Mature trees intercept rainfall, stabilize soils, reduce runoff, and moderate temperatures. From a cultural and community standpoint, exceptional trees serve as living landmarks that connect residents to history and place. Your Committees further find that it is critical to support and foster community tree stewardship, arborist training, county partnerships, and canopy protection efforts statewide. Accordingly, this measure will ensure protections for exceptional and significant trees, which will prevent long-term damage such as cultural historical loss, soil erosion, flooding, and infrastructure damage.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Specifying that not less than five, rather than four, individuals with expertise relevant to the State Arborist Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Governor to be members of the State Arborist Advisory Committee;
- (2) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Water, Land, Culture and the Arts that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2372, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form

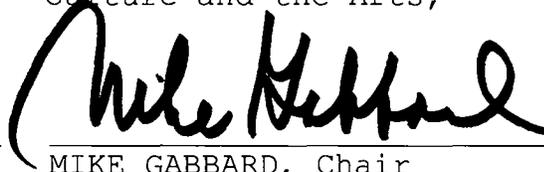


attached hereto as S.B. No. 2372, S.D. 1, and be referred to your
Committee on Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Agriculture and
Environment and Water, Land,
Culture and the Arts,



CHRIS LEE, Chair



MIKE GABBARD, 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.:* SB 2372	Committee Referral: AEN/WLA, JDC	Date: 2-11-2026
---	--	---------------------------

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)	✓			
INOUE, Lorraine R. (VC)	✓			
CHANG, Stanley	✓			
LAMOSAO, Rachele	✓			
DECORTE, Samantha	✓			
TOTAL	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