

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 19 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2907  
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 Economic Development and Tourism and  
Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 2907  
entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MARINE AFFAIRS,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Declare that the State is an ocean cluster;
- (2) Establish the Office of Marine Affairs under the Hawaii  
Technology Development Corporation for administrative  
purposes only;
- (3) Establish the Marine Affairs Coordinator position;
- (4) Require the Marine Affairs Coordinator to submit annual  
reports to the Governor and Legislature;
- (5) Transfer the employees and functions of the Governor's  
Advisory Committee on Marine Affairs to the Office of  
Marine Affairs; and
- (6) Appropriate funds for one full-time equivalent Marine  
Affairs Coordinator position.



Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Agribusiness Development Corporation; Hawaii Technology Development Corporation; Nāmaka Algae, Inc.; Ai.Fish; Hohonu; Pacific Economics; Blue Startups; Hawai'i Angels; Essential Leap, LLC; Marine Genetics; Hawai'i Ocean Power Solutions; Activities and Attractions Association of Hawai'i; 1000 Ocean Startups; Privateer Space Inc.; and nine individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawai'i Authority, and Pacific Impact Zone.

Your Committees find that the blue economy represents a significant opportunity for economic diversification and technological advancement. Other jurisdictions, such as Washington State and San Diego, have utilized cluster-based governance approaches to accelerate collaboration and scale blue technology and sustainable aquaculture. Comparably, the State's unique geographic and cultural assets make it well positioned to capture a larger share of the blue economy's growth through targeted investment and coordination. Your Committees note that the annual economic output of the blue economy is projected to double to an estimate of \$3 trillion by 2030, and believe that the State should be leading the nation in developing a blue economy. This measure centralizes marine affairs functions in the State to enhance coordination, streamline policy implementation, and foster innovation in the blue economy.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Establishing the Office of Marine Affairs in the Office of the Governor, rather than the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation;
- (2) Having the salary of the Marine Affairs Coordinator be set by the Governor, rather than the Office of Marine Affairs;
- (3) Specifying that the Marine Affairs Coordinator shall submit the required annual report to the Governor and Legislature no later than December 1 of each year;



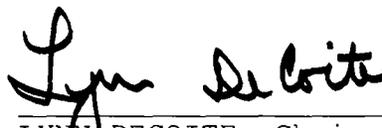
- (4) Changing the appropriation amount from \$150,000 to an unspecified amount and changing the expending agency from the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to the Office of the Governor to encourage further discussion on the measure;
- (5) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (6) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committees note that the Marine Affairs Coordinator will hold a critical strategic leadership role in developing the State's blue economy strategy and should be compensated accordingly. Therefore, your Committees respectfully request that subsequent Committees to which this measure is referred consider requiring that the Marine Affairs Coordinator position be paid not less than the Dean of the University of Hawaii at Manoa School of Ocean Science and Technology and evaluate options to integrate the position with a position at the University of Hawaii that is jointly funded by the University of Hawaii and Office of the Governor.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Economic Development and Tourism and Agriculture and Environment that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2907, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2907, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committees on Economic  
Development and Tourism and  
Agriculture and Environment,

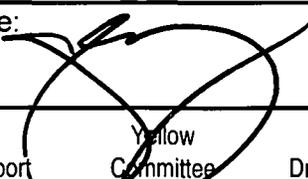
  
MIKE GABBARD, Chair

  
LYNN DECOITE, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Third Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Economic Development and Tourism**  
**EDT**

Bill / Resolution No.:* <b>SB 2907</b>	Committee Referral: <b>EDT/AEN.WAM</b>	Date: <b>2/13/26</b>		
<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
DECOITE, Lynn (C)	✓			
WAKAI, Glenn (VC)	✓			
FUKUNAGA, Carol				✓
KIM, Donna Mercado				✓
FEVELLA, Kurt	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original     Yellow     Pink File with Committee Report     Committee     Drafting Agency				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes

