

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2663

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2975
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. 2975 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MARINE LIFE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to authorize the Department of Land and Natural Resources to close all or portions of any marine life conservation district for various periods of time and to adopt rules for the regulation of commercial activity within a marine life conservation district.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; one member of the Maui County Council; Hui Aloha Kiholo; Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo; Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea; Save Honolua Coalition; Surfrider Foundation Hawai'i Region; Hawai'i Reef Ocean Coalition; Hawai'i Ocean Legislative Task Force; Climate Future Forum; The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; Friends of Hanauma Bay; Puakō For Reefs; and eleven individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from Ocean Tourism Coalition; Calypso Charters; Telarani Sailing Adventures; Hawaii Ocean Rafting; Sailing Shipp; Fair Wind Cruises; Sea Quest Hawai'i; Sailing Maui, Inc.; Malolo Charters; Sea Paradise; Sail Maui; Trilogy Excursions; Mani-



Molokai Sea Cruises; Holoholo Charters; Activities and Attractions Association of Hawai'i, Inc.; and nineteen individuals.

Your Committee finds that the number of visitors, primarily non-residents, to certain marine life conservation districts has increased substantially, causing a range of adverse impacts that challenge the original purpose of these protected areas and degrade residential use and enjoyment of them. Multiple carrying capacity studies confirmed the negative impacts, but also elucidated a potential solution, which is the partial closure or restriction of access to these districts. This measure will reduce immediate and long-term adverse impacts of increased visitation to marine life conservation districts, allowing them to conserve and replenish the State's marine resources as originally intended.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Limiting the marine life conservation districts of which the Department of Land and Natural Resources or its authorized representative may close all or portions to a marine life conservation district located on or adjacent to the shores of Oahu;
- (2) Specifying that the Department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 91 for the regulation of commercial activity in a marine life conservation district that is located on or adjacent to the shores of Oahu;
- (3) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose;
- (4) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (5) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment 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. 2975, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B.



No. 2975, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection.

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.:* SB 2975	Committee Referral: WLA, CPN	Date: 2/18/2026
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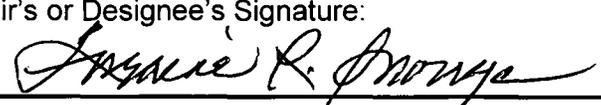
The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.
 If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312
 Pass, with amendments 2311
 Hold 2310
 Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
LEE, Chris (C)	✓			
INOUYE, Lorraine R. (VC)	✓	✓		
CHANG, Stanley				✓
LAMOSAO, Rachele	✓			
DECORTE, Samantha	✓			
TOTAL	3	1		1

Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:


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 File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency

***Only one measure per Record of Votes**