

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2504

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 2026

RE: S.B. No. 3247
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 Hawaiian Affairs and Water, Land, Culture and the Arts, to which was referred S.B. No. 3247 entitled:

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

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish a Royal Mausoleum Commission within the Department of Land and Natural Resources to develop and implement policy for the preservation, operation, and outreach of Mauna 'Ala;
- (2) Allow the Royal Mausoleum Commission to make rules as necessary, employ staff, and receive private or federal funds;
- (3) Require the Royal Mausoleum Commission to report annually to the Legislature; and
- (4) Require the Legislature to appropriate sufficient funds to support the Royal Mausoleum Commission.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Royal Order of Kamehameha I, Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, Daughters of Hawaii, Kia'i Iwi Alaka'i, and eight individuals.



Your Committees received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO; Daughters and Sons of the Hawaiian Warriors; Kia'i Iwi Alaka'i; and 'Ahahui Ka'iulani.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Your Committees find that since the transfer of Mauna 'Ala to the State in 1967, cultural practitioners, ali'i trusts, and Native Hawaiian organizations have consistently raised concerns about the state management decisions and the integration of traditional practices in the care and access of the site. Your Committees further find that the management of Mauna 'Ala needs a culturally grounded approach to honor and safeguard one of Hawaii's sacred cultural sites. This measure establishes a Royal Mausoleum Commission under the Department of Land and Natural Resources to help ensure the respectful stewardship, preservation, and culturally appropriate management of Mauna 'Ala. Your Committees find that this will strengthen both cultural preservation and community stewardship of the Mauna 'Ala for future generations.

Your Committees acknowledge the concern raised in testimony that the measure needs to include enforceable protections for kuleana-based traditional and customary practices at Mauna 'Ala and Hale Ho'olulu. Therefore, amendments to this measure are necessary to address these concerns.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Replacing the establishment of the Royal Mausoleum Commission with a working group to develop the criteria for an oversight entity to ensure the effective stewardship and long term management of the Royal Mausoleum;
- (2) Authorizing the Royal Mausoleum Working Group to create a potential management policy independent from the department, except for budgetary, fiscal, and personal administration purposes, regarding the Royal Mausoleum;



- (3) Inserting definitions for "lineal descendant", "kahu family", "traditional and customary practice", "substantially burden", and "Hale Ho'olulu";
- (4) Removing two lineal descendants of those interred at Mauna 'Ala that are representative of the Kamehameha dynasty and the Kalakaua dynasty, or kahu family members whose genealogy is connected to those interred at Mauna 'Ala from the membership of the Working Group;
- (5) Adding the following three members to the Royal Mausoleum Working Group:
 - (A) One lineal descendant representative of those interred at Mauna 'Ala connected to the Kamehameha dynasty;
 - (B) One lineal descendant representative of those interred at Mauna 'Ala connected to the Kalakaua dynasty; and
 - (C) One member who is a lineal descendent of High Chief Ho'olulu and a member of the Ho'olulu kahu family, selected pursuant to a written process established by the Ho'olulu ohana lineal descendent;
- (6) Requiring the Royal Mausoleum Working Group to establish protocols governing the appointment, duties, and removal for cause of the official kahu, curator, and caretaker of the Mauna 'Ala, including continuity of traditional and customary practice and, to the extent feasible and consistent with safety and stewardship needs, residential stewardship of Hale Ho'olulu;
- (7) Specifying that the Royal Mausoleum Working Group shall submit a brief report to the Legislature every six months beginning in January 2027 and shall submit the final comprehensive report sixty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2028;



- (8) Inserting language that requires the Royal Mausoleum Working Group to comply with chapters 92 and 84, Hawaii Revised Statutes;
- (9) Inserting language that requires each member of the Royal Mausoleum Working Group to disclose conflicts of interests and recuse themselves from decision-making;
- (10) Inserting language that requires the Royal Mausoleum Working Group, in adopting any rule, protocol, management plan, or decision to protect all rights customarily and traditionally exercised for cultural and religious purposes and make written findings;
- (11) Inserting language that requires the Royal Mausoleum Working Group to provide advance public notice and a reasonable opportunity to be heard before adopting any action;
- (12) Inserting language providing for due process and contested cases;
- (13) Inserting language that prohibits the Department of Land and Natural Resources from appointing, designating, recognizing, or contracting for any person to serve as kahu, curator, caretaker, or any substantially similar stewardship role for Mauna 'Ala except as provided by the Royal Mausoleum Working Group protocol;
- (14) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose;
- (15) Inserting an effective date of September 9, 2129, to encourage further discussion; and
- (16) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Hawaiian Affairs 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. 3247, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form



attached hereto as S.B. No. 3247, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Committees on Hawaiian Affairs and Water, Land, Culture and the Arts,



CHRIS LEE, Chair



HERBERT M. RICHARDS, III, 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 3247	Committee Referral: HWN/WLA, WAM	Date: 2-13-2026
---	--	---------------------------

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)	✓			
INOUYE, Lorraine R. (VC)		✓		
CHANG, Stanley				✓
LAMOSAO, Rachele	✓			
DECORTE, Samantha	✓			
TOTAL	3	1		1

Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:
Lorraine R. Inouye

Distribution: Original Yellow Pink
File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency

*Only one measure per Record of Votes