

Honolulu, Hawaii

, 2026

MAR 20

RE: S.B. No. 3253
S.D. 2
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Water & Land, to which was referred S.B. No. 3253, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO CONSERVATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish the Hawaii Conservation Sanctuary, a nonprofit organization to enhance and support the work of conservation and endangered species and wildlife preservation and to oversee related and ancillary programs.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from three individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from The Native Hawaiian Gathering Rights Association. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources and Care for 'Āina Now Coalition.

Your Committee finds that successful sanctuary models in the United States and other nations generate substantial revenue for conservation efforts by serving as educational centers for local schools and visitor destinations and providing critical habitats for endangered and other species. The State's climate and environment provide more diverse habitats for wildlife than found



elsewhere in the continental United States. With appropriate considerations and protections to ensure no adverse effects on Hawaii's environment, the State can improve the living conditions of rescued animals from other states and generate significant revenue for state conservation efforts. Your Committee further finds that the State is uniquely positioned to become a national center for endangered species research, education, and protection. Establishing sanctuaries in Hawaii like those that have proven successful elsewhere can advance the State's position as the premier place for endangered species work and conservation and create pathways for local education, jobs, investment, and research. Your Committee also finds that successful nonprofit models for the establishment and operation of endangered species sanctuaries are an effective and preferable way to supplement broader government-run efforts and programs. A nonprofit model would offer more flexibility and adaptability for management, operations, innovation, and community engagement.


Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Limiting the Hawaii Conservation Sanctuary to protect and expand populations of endangered species and other native wildlife from only within the State;
- (2) Deleting the development and operation of a conservation sanctuary in an area appropriate for the protection of rescue animals and larger species of wildlife;
- (3) Changing its effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water & Land that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 3253, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 3253, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Water & Land,



MARK J. HASHEM, Chair



