

**ACT 238**

H.B. NO. 534

A Bill for an Act Relating to Labeling Requirements.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:*

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that local tuna fisheries and associated seafood markets are an important sector of the State's economy and food production and that the identification of foreign imported tuna is critical to inform and safeguard consumers.

According to statistics from the United States Department of Commerce, the annual dockside value of commercial yellowfin and bigeye tuna (marked as ahi) landed in Hawaii's ports is around \$100,000,000, making tuna the highest valued food commodity produced in the State. Even with these impressive landings, previously frozen and carbon monoxide-treated foreign imported tuna dominates sales at local retail establishments. Due to a loophole in federal country of origin labeling requirements for seafood, retail establishments are not providing consumers with information on where the ahi tuna originates. The legislature is therefore concerned that most consumers that buy ahi at local retail establishments falsely believe that previously frozen, gas-treated ahi is caught by Hawaii fisheries.

Moreover, the legislature further notes that the majority of ahi sold at local retail establishments is in the form of poke and sushi products. Consumers of poke are commonly subjected to misleading advertisements and in-store terminology, such as "prepared fresh", "freshly made", and "locally made", while the ahi used to prepare the poke is foreign-sourced, previously frozen, gas-treated, and imported in pre-cut cubes.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to prohibit the sale of raw processed ahi at Hawaii retail establishments without a label stating the country in which the ahi was landed.

SECTION 2. Chapter 486, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part V to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

**"§486- Raw processed ahi; labeling requirements; retail establishments.** (a) No retail establishment shall keep, offer, display, expose for sale, or solicit for the sale of any raw processed ahi without a label stating the country in which the ahi was landed.

(b) As used in this section:

"Ahi" means yellowfin tuna or bigeye tuna, including farm-raised fish and ahi that meets the definition of "wild fish and shellfish" as defined in title 7 Code of Federal Regulations section 60.133, as amended.

"Farm-raised fish" has the same meaning as defined in title 7 Code of Federal Regulations section 60.106, as amended.

"Raw processed ahi" means a retail item derived from ahi that has undergone transformation by methods including but not limited to cutting, cubing, slicing, and mincing or has been combined with any ingredients (e.g., soy sauce, onions, limu, etc.) and offered for sale.

"Retail establishment" means an establishment licensed under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act of 1930, which includes any retail establishment that purchases over \$230,000 of fresh or frozen produce per calendar year."

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.<sup>1</sup>

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

(Approved June 27, 2025.)

**Note**

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.