

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 08 2023

RE: S.B. No. 660  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2023  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 660 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to require and appropriate funds for the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, Beyond Pesticides Hawai'i Organic Land Management Program, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Ho'ola Farms, Kauai Climate Action Coalition, Food+ Policy Internship 2023, 350Hawaii, 'Ai Pohaku, Puamana Gardens, Kanalani Ohana Farm, Our Revolution Hawaii, Adaptations Inc., Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action, Kona Coffee Farmers Association, Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, Sunshine Farms LLC, Pohoku Farm, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Waihunahuna Foundation, Ho'olono Natural Remedies, and sixty-three individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Department of the Attorney General.

Your Committee recognizes that the State is committed to strengthening local food production and food security in Hawaii,



but finds that the commitment to these policies should not come at the expense of public health or the environment. Your Committee additionally finds that the basis of sustainable and healthy farm systems depends on the condition and health of the soil. Thus, this measure establishes and funds a Healthy Soils Program within the Department of Agriculture to establish standards and practices for healthy soil development and conservation and provides Hawaii's farmers with education, assistance, and incentives to meet these standards.

Your Committee has amended this measure, as recommended by Beyond Pesticide's Hawai'i Organic Land Management Program, by:

- (1) Requiring the healthy soils programs to establish standards:
  - (A) For soil health that includes the importance of a holistic approach to land management that integrates cultural, biological, and mechanical practices, which cycle nutrients, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity; and
  - (B) That phase out the use of petrochemical synthetic fertilizers over a period of five to ten years, during which the Department of Agriculture shall provide farmers with assistance in adopting a holistic approach to land management that integrates cultural, biological, and mechanical practices, which cycle nutrients, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 660, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 660, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Agriculture and  
Environment,



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MIKE GABBARD, Chair



