

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 1904-24

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 15, 2024

RE: S.C.R. No. 164  
S.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2024  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred S.C.R. No. 164, S.D. 1, entitled:

"SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ESTABLISH A TWO-YEAR AGRICULTURAL CRIME PILOT PROJECT TO EXAMINE AND ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROSECUTING AGRICULTURAL CRIME CASES, INCLUDING THOSE OF AGRICULTURAL THEFT, VANDALISM, AND TRESPASS, IN THE STATE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

- (1) Urge the Department of Agriculture to establish a two-year Agricultural Crime Pilot Project to examine and assess the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural crime cases, including those of agricultural theft, agricultural vandalism, and trespassing; and
- (2) Request the Department of Agriculture to:
  - (A) Examine and assess the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural crimes;
  - (B) Coordinate with the Department of Law Enforcement and each of the four counties to hire enforcement officers for each county;

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- (C) Assess the implementation of the pilot project, including the pilot project's effectiveness, to determine whether to continue, make permanent, or end the pilot project;
- (D) Create additional tools such as a Crimestoppers Anonymous phone line, an accessible online form for better reporting, and an Agricultural Crime Task Force;
- (E) Submit an interim report to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2025; and
- (F) Submit a final report to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2026.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture; Kapapala Ranch; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; and four individuals.

Your Committee finds that agricultural crimes, including theft, vandalism, and trespassing, are a persistent issue affecting farmers and ranchers in Hawaii, with nearly nineteen thousand incidents reported in 2019, resulting in approximately \$14,400,000 in losses and security costs. Despite the prevalence and cost of these crimes, many incidents go unreported, and few result in convictions, prompting the Legislature to establish a two-year Agricultural Theft and Vandalism Pilot Project in 2019 to examine the effectiveness of prosecuting such cases in Hawaii and Maui counties. Your Committee acknowledges these ongoing challenges facing local farmers, and this measure works to expand the pilot project statewide to provide resources to suppress incidences of agricultural crimes and losses to farmers, ranchers, aquaculturists, and floriculturists in the State.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of S.C.R. No. 164, S.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Agriculture & Food  
Systems,

  
CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, Chair



