

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 20 2025

RE: H.B. No. 1294
H.D. 2
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Housing,
to which was referred H.B. No. 1294, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE
HOUSING,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group within the Department of Agriculture to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State;
- (2) Require an interim report to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2027 and a final report to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2028; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; Office of Planning and Sustainable Development; Land Use Commission; Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation; Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Hawaii Farmers Union, Hana Chapter; Kanalani Ohana Farm; Green Party of Hawai'i;



Kauai Climate Action Coalition; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; Malama Kaua'i; Maui Chamber of Commerce; and twenty-five individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committees find that adequate agricultural workforce housing has been a long-standing concern for the agricultural sector in the State. Your Committees recognize that providing affordable and adequate housing is essential for the stability and productivity of Hawaii's agricultural sector. According to testimony received by your Committees, by assessing current policies, identifying housing needs, and exploring partnerships, the working group established in this measure can help develop targeted solutions to improve workforce retention, support farm operations, and facilitate the creation of critical workforce housing necessary to maintain a reliable and skilled agricultural workforce that advances the State's agriculture industry and food security initiatives.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Housing that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1294, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1294, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Agriculture and
Environment and Housing,


STANLEY CHANG, Chair


MIKE GABBARD, Chair



