

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 13 2025

RE: H.B. No. 1497
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred H.B. No. 1497, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require and appropriate funds for the Department of Agriculture (Department) to develop an online reporting tool to document applications of restricted use pesticides; and
- (2) Appropriate funds to convert an unspecified number of temporary Environmental Health Specialist III positions into permanent positions.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Hawaii Crop Improvement Association, Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition, Green Party of Hawai'i, Kauai Climate Action Coalition, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action, and twenty-five individuals.

Your Committee finds that pesticide exposure can cause significant harm to public health and the environment and that



pesticides deemed by the State as RUP have an especially high potential to cause harm. Your Committee further finds that a streamlined and user-friendly online RUP reporting tool would reduce administrative burden and facilitate compliance with the Hawaii Pesticides Law, thereby allowing policymakers and public health experts to better monitor and make evidence-based decisions regarding the use of restricted use pesticides in the State.

According to testimony received by your Committee, although the Department has already developed an online restricted use pesticides reporting tool, it has lacked the consistent staffing to conduct the outreach and education necessary to fully implement the tool. Your Committee additionally finds that converting temporary Environmental Health Specialist III positions into permanent positions could increase the capacity of the Department to not only complete the outreach necessary to fully implement the online restricted use pesticides reporting tool, but also to perform its mandates under the Hawaii Pesticides Law, including pesticide use and safety education that ensures safeguards to protect farmers, the public, and the State's fragile ecosystems.

Your Committee has amended this measure by inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion.

Your Committee notes that this measure contains an unspecified number of full-time equivalent (FTE) temporary Environmental Health Specialist III positions to be converted into permanent positions. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider inserting two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) positions to be converted.

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 H.B. No. 1497, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1497, H.D. 1, 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Gabbard", written over a horizontal line.

MIKE GABBARD, Chair



Record of Votes
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
AEN

*Only one measure per Record of Votes