

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

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Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 773
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred H.B. No. 773 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds for grant specialist positions to assist farmers and ranchers in meeting the requirements to receive grants offered by the United States Department of Agriculture, State, counties, or private entities.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture; Ulupono Initiative; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawai'i Farmers Union; Local Food Coalition; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; and one individual.

Your Committee finds that many of Hawaii's farmers and ranchers struggle to secure the financial support needed to grow and sustain their businesses. While grants from the United States Department of Agriculture, State, counties, and private entities offer valuable funding opportunities, the complex application processes can deter farmers from applying. Without specialized knowledge in grant writing, many farmers and ranchers miss out on critical resources that could strengthen the local agricultural industry. This measure appropriates funds to establish grant specialist positions within the Department of Agriculture to

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assist farmers and ranchers in navigating the application process, securing funding, and fulfilling grant requirements. By providing this support, the State can help to ensure that Hawaii's agricultural businesses thrive and contribute to food security and economic resilience.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the number of full-time equivalent grant specialist positions to an unspecified number;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$200,000 for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) grant specialist positions with the Department of Agriculture.

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 is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 773, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 773, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

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


KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



