

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

24

Honolulu, Hawaii

JAN 31 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 781
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. 781 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE WAIAHOLE WATER SYSTEM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds for the Waiahole water system for bond debt service and tunnel repair.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Agribusiness Development Corporation; Kunia Village Title Holding Corporation; Bayer; Hawaii Agriculture Research Center; Ulupono Initiative; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawaii Crop Improvement Association; Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council; Kunia Agriculture Park, LLC; Aloun Farm, Inc.; Larry Jefts Farms, LLC; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; and one individual. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual.

Your Committee finds that the Waiahole water system transports water from the windward side of Oahu to the leeward side of the island, serving approximately five thousand six hundred acres of land in central and leeward Oahu, of which approximately eighty-six percent is in active agricultural use at any given time. The current agricultural water rate for users of the Waiahole water system is more than double that of comparable

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area rates for agricultural water. These costs are passed on to consumers, resulting in higher food prices. Therefore, as the debt service fees continue to escalate and deferred maintenance repairs need to be addressed, it is critical to appropriate funds to the Agribusiness Development Corporation to fully pay off the bond debt service on the Waiahole water system and repair critical infrastructure.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriations to unspecified amounts;
- (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 \$4,500,000 to pay the bond debt service on the Waiahole water system and \$2,000,000 for the repair of the adit 8 tunnel of the Waiahole water system.

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. 781, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 781, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Water & Land.

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


KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



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Bill/Resolution No.:	Committee Referral:	Date:		
H.B. 781	AGR, WAL, FIN	1/29/2025		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
AGR Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. KAHALOA, Kirstin (C)	X			
2. KUSCH, Matthias (VC)	X			
3. LOWEN, Nicole E.	X			
4. PERRUSO, Amy A.	X			
5. QUINLAN, Sean	X			
6. WARD, Gene				X
TOTAL (6)	5	0	0	1
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral _____ did not support recommendation. committee acronym(s)				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				