

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 19 2025

RE: H.B. No. 782
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. 782, 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 establish and appropriate funds for a working group within the Department of Agriculture to review and make recommendations on amending or repealing unnecessary or obsolete laws pertaining to agriculture.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; and five individuals.

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

Your Committee finds that the agricultural needs of the State have significantly changed over the years and that many existing agricultural laws and regulations established decades ago may no longer align with the needs of modern farming practices, advancements in technology, and the State's goal of increasing local food production. According to testimony received by your



Committee, a dedicated working group will provide an opportunity for agricultural stakeholders, policymakers, and regulatory agencies to collaborate in identifying and addressing policies that may be hindering the growth of local agriculture.

Your Committee notes the concerns raised by the Hawai'i Farmers Union United that the scope and the membership of the working group, as proposed by this measure in its current form, may prevent it from being inclusive, effective, and aligned with Hawaii's agricultural priorities. Adding to the working group representation from key agencies that regulate land and water use will help ensure that state policies align with its agricultural needs. Further, expanding the scope of issues for the working group to review will help better address the full range of policy barriers that impact agriculture in the State. Amendments to this measure are therefore necessary to address these concerns.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Adding the following members, or their designees, to the working group:
 - (A) Chairperson of the Land Use Commission;
 - (B) Chairperson of the Commission on Water Resource Management; and
 - (C) Director of the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development;
- (2) Clarifying that the designees of the leaders of certain stakeholder groups may be invited by the Chairperson of the working group;
- (3) Requiring the working group to review:
 - (A) Regulations governing agricultural workforce development and farm labor access;
 - (B) Water access and permitting laws; and
 - (C) Procurement policies that impact the use of locally grown food in state institutions;



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

Your Committee notes that this measure contains an unspecified appropriation amount. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider inserting an appropriation amount of \$100,000 for the working group established pursuant to this measure.

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. 782, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 782, 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,



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
AEN

Bill / Resolution No.:* HB 782 HD1	Committee Referral: AEN.WAM	Date: 03-17-25
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The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.
 If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

<input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313
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Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	X			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	X			
DECOITE, Lynn	X			
RHOADS, Karl	X			
AWA, Brenton	X			
TOTAL	5			

Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:

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*Only one measure per Record of Votes