

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

389

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 968
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. 968 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require and appropriate funds for the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission; Hawai'i Farmers Union; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; 350Hawaii.org; Kauai Climate Action Coalition; Citizens' Climate Lobby Hawai'i; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii's agricultural sustainability and environmental resilience depend on healthy soils. Your Committee further finds that investing in healthy soils is a critical step toward ensuring Hawaii's farms remain productive for future generations while strengthening the local economy and food security. This measure establishes a Healthy Soils Program within the Department of Agriculture to assess and

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improve soil conditions statewide while providing education and technical assistance to farmers.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriation to an unspecified amount;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment 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 \$500,000.

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. 968, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 968, 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



