

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1241

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 14 , 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1249
S.D. 1
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 S.B. No. 1249, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish an Agricultural Crime Prevention Program within the Department of Agriculture to provide grants, education, administrative enforcement, and other services for the benefit of the State's agricultural industry;
- (2) Clarify, create, and strengthen laws regarding crimes and violations related to agriculture or agricultural lands and hunting on private agricultural lands;
- (3) Establish clear distinctions between administrative and criminal penalties; and
- (4) Appropriate funds for certain positions.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture; Office of the Prosecuting



Attorney of the County of Hawai'i; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Ulupalakua Ranch; Kualoa Ranch; McCandless Ranch; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General; Department of Budget and Finance; and Hawaii Cattlemen's Council.

Your Committee finds that agricultural crimes, including theft, vandalism, trespassing, and illegal hunting, pose a growing threat to Hawaii's farmers, ranchers, and overall food security. Limited law enforcement resources and enforcement gaps have made it difficult to effectively prevent and prosecute agricultural crimes, leaving farmers vulnerable to repeat offenses. To address these concerns, this measure establishes an Agricultural Crime Prevention Program within the Department of Agriculture to provide grants for security improvements, strengthen education and outreach, and enhance coordination with law enforcement, ensuring stronger protections for the agricultural sector and local food production.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Strengthening language in the preamble related to how unauthorized hunting on private lands negatively impacts agricultural lands and farmers and ranchers;
- (2) Clarifying certain sentencing provisions related to various criminal property damage offenses;
- (3) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) 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 \$83,064 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Grant Chief position; \$73,836 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) State Agricultural Crimes Coordinator position; \$273,120 for four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE) Agricultural Crimes County Coordinator positions; \$49,860 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Administrative Assistant III position; and \$500,000 for vehicles, travel, office equipment, office space, and other expenses.



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 S.B. No. 1249, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1249, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.

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


KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



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[illegible]