

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 13 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1257

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 S.B. No. 1257 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL CRIME,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish an Agricultural Crimes Task Force;
- (2) Establish the offense of agricultural crime to increase penalties for property crimes committed on agricultural property; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.

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 Food+ Policy; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; and eleven individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Office of the Public Defender.

Your Committee finds that agricultural crimes, including agricultural theft, vandalism, and trespassing, lead to



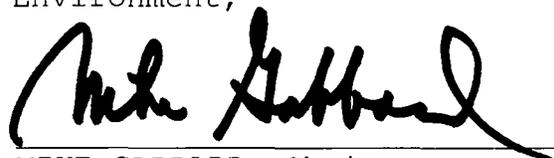
significant economic losses and growing safety concerns for local farmers and ranchers. Your Committee notes that existing law does not define agricultural crimes. This measure seeks to deter potential offenders by establishing a dedicated Task Force to address the issue of agricultural crime in the State and by strengthening penalties for crimes against agricultural property, thereby protecting the safety and livelihood of local farmers and ranchers, agricultural economy, and food security of the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriation to an unspecified amount; and
- (2) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion.

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 S.B. No. 1257, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1257, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committees on Ways and Means and Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture and
Environment,



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



