



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
*Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā*  
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ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

**WRITTEN ONLY**  
TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WAYS AND MEANS  
AND JUDICIARY  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 763, S.D. 1

**February 19, 2025**  
**10:16 a.m.**  
**Room 211 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill (S.B.) No. 763, S.D. 1, establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program (AEP) within the Department of Law Enforcement to implement the laws and rules directly related to agricultural crimes; establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund (AESF); appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds for FY 26 and FY 27 to be deposited into the AESF; and appropriates an unspecified amount of special funds out of the AESF for FY 26 and FY 27 for the establishment of 45.00 full-time equivalent positions for the AEP. Revenues for the AESF include legislative appropriations, fees, reimbursements, administrative charges, funds from government agencies or private sources, grants, gifts, interest and other income.

As a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any special fund, which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work, and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general

fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding S.B. No. 763, S.D. 1, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed special fund would be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WAYS AND MEANS AND JUDICIARY**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2025**  
**10:16 AM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

**SENATE BILL NO. 763 SD1**  
**RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill No. 763 SD1 that establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement Department, establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, establishes positions and appropriates funds.

The Department of Agriculture (Department) is in strong support of this bill. The Department is ready to assist the DLE in this effort that has plagued the farmers and ranchers statewide.

With great appreciation and respect for the DLE, the Department acknowledges that trespassing is an agricultural crime and will provide "No Trespassing" signs to the DLE, as resources allow.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT  
DIRECTOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT GOVERNOR  
KE KE'ENA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**

*Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai*

715 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

JARED K. REDULLA  
Deputy Director  
Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 763, SENATE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Before the Senate Committee on

WAYS AND MEANS

JUDICIARY

Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 10:16 AM

State Capitol Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Chairs Dela Cruz, Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki, Gabbard, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) strongly supports Senate Bill 763, Senate Draft 1. This bill establishes an Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement, creates an Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, and establishes dedicated law enforcement positions to address agricultural theft and related crimes across Hawaii's counties.

The DLE recognizes the critical importance of protecting Hawaii's agricultural community from theft and related crimes that significantly impact our state's food security and agricultural economy. The proposed program aligns with the DLE's ongoing efforts to address agricultural crimes in Hawaii. The DLE has already begun building relationships with stakeholders in local agriculture and has assigned detectives to investigate agricultural crimes. The establishment of this dedicated program will strengthen these initiatives by providing specialized personnel and resources across all counties.

The creation of the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund will ensure sustainable funding through grants, donations, and legislative appropriations, enabling the program to maintain consistent operations and adapt to emerging challenges. The bill's provision for both voluntary and paid law enforcement positions will allow for flexible staffing solutions while maintaining professional standards under chapter 76 and section 78-1 employment regulations.

The program will facilitate crucial interagency cooperation through mutual aid agreements with county police departments and collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and Department of Land and Natural Resources, creating a comprehensive approach to agricultural crime prevention and investigation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
HUI HO'OU LU AINA MAHIAI

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**LATE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS AND THE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
February 19, 2025  
10:16 A.M.  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

SENATE BILL NO. 763, SD1  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Chairpersons Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** on Senate Bill No. 763, SD1, that establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement Department, the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, additional positions and appropriates funds.

ADC is in support of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Law Enforcement in their efforts to reduce agricultural theft. Agricultural theft is harming many Hawaii farmers and this bill will support and sustain the industry as it grows.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
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February 19, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**TESTIMONY ON SB 763, SD1**  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
10:16 AM

Aloha Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice-Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 763, SD1**, which establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement, establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, establishes positions, and appropriates funds.

Agricultural crime is a persistent problem facing agriculture. Weather, drought, pests, weeds, disease, unstable markets, transportation, labor issues, and a changing climate all contribute to uncertainty for farmers and ranchers. Few businesses face such challenges, yet we are charged with producing food, feed, fiber, fuel, and flowers for the 99% of non-farmers. Add in the constant threat and impacts of trespass, theft, and vandalism, and it's a wonder farms and ranches remain viable.

Sadly, agricultural crime is a growing trend in Hawai'i. Farmers and ranchers are often victims of those looking for easy targets. Despite our efforts to install cameras, form community ag watch groups, and patrol our farms, these criminals know that being caught and prosecuted is unlikely. Our police departments are trying to help but don't have the staffing and resources to be everywhere at all times.

In recent years, not only crops and livestock have been stolen, but also tractors, trucks, farm equipment, and tools. Too often, a farmer or rancher has sweated, worried, and worked to the bone to produce a crop or raise livestock, only to wake up one morning to find that an opportunistic criminal has helped themselves to the harvest. Farmers and ranchers are fed up with this activity and deserve better. We understand that law enforcement resources are often prioritized for public health and safety. Is a farmer's and his family's health, safety, and livelihood any less important? We think not.

HFB believes a dedicated Agricultural Law Enforcement Program would significantly minimize agricultural crimes and enhance public safety. We hope that this will serve as a deterrent to would-be criminals. An Agricultural Law Enforcement Program will help prevent agricultural crimes and help our farmers and ranchers stay in business.

HFB will continue to work with our policymakers, law enforcement, and the prosecutor's office to find ways to help deter, apprehend, and convict individuals who commit agricultural crimes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject.



**Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.**

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

**SB763 SD1**  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 10:16 AM  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB763 SD1** which establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council, authorizes the Council to withdraw and deposit moneys, revenues, and fines into and out of the Animal Industry Special Fund, and appropriates funds.

Agricultural crimes is a not a new issue – but it is getting more pervasive and more dangerous. So dangerous that we lost a young rancher to illegal trespassing and poaching in 2024. This incident was an incredibly unfortunate incident that we need to keep from happening again. Without the threat of a penalty, ag crimes will continue to flourish, to the detriment of our food producers. There needs to be a clear way for ranchers and farmers to report crimes, and an effective way to prosecute the crime.

Currently, agricultural crimes is not getting the dedicated attention it needs. Reporting of crimes is low, successful prosecution is limited, and criminals have no reason to be deterred from committing the crimes. Creating the Agricultural Enforcement Program will bring more resources to the farmers and ranchers who deal with agricultural crime on a daily basis. This specialized attention within the Department of Law Enforcement will help to address the ongoing trespassing, vandalism and theft on farms and ranches.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director





February 18, 2025

To: Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki, Chair Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair Mike Gabbard, and the Senate Committee on Ways & Means and Judiciary

Subject: **SB 763 SD1**, Relating to the Department of Law Enforcement

Aloha,

I am writing in **support** of **SB 763 SD1**, which asks to establish the Agricultural Enforcement Program as well as the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund. The measure states that the Assistant Chief– an administrator experienced in addressing agricultural theft– shall charge the program by determining the duties and responsibilities of state law enforcement officers in the program.

I understand that in uncertain times like these it can be tempting to prioritize other broad issues facing the state. However, I will say that many members of the agricultural community are feeling unheard lately, which is tragic considering how much they contribute to the common good of Hawaii. I urge the committee to pass this measure to show them that their voices matter and that the work they do is valued by their representatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue.

Mahalo,  
Janine Mariano & the Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

**SB-763-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 9:54:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2025 10:16:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristin Mack Almasin	Testifying for Ulupalakua Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We support this measure which establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council, authorizes the Council to withdraw and deposit moneys, revenues, and fines into and out of the Animal Industry Special Fund, and appropriates funds.

Agricultural crime is a constant problem for our ranch. While we work with our local police and DOCARE, neither seems to have the staffing needed to deal with crime in our rural areas. We are often left with the decision to either handle the problem ourselves or let it go because lack of prosecutions will result in them continuing to commit the same crimes without fear of consequences.

For real local food security to increase, farmers and ranchers need to know they can do their jobs without fear of loss of income or even life from agricultural crimes.



February 17, 2025

To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Senate Members of the Committee on Ways & Means, and Senate Members of the Committee on Judiciary

Subject: **SB763 SD1**, Relating to the Department of Law Enforcement

Aloha,

I am writing in **support** of **SB763 SD1**, which asks to establish the Agricultural Enforcement Program as well as the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund. The measure states that the Assistant Chief— an administrator experienced in addressing agricultural theft— shall charge the program by determining the duties and responsibilities of state law enforcement officers in the program.

Our farmers and ranchers, the lifeblood of our local food system, continuously face hefty physical, mental, and financial burdens. In return for all their painstaking efforts to feed our communities, the least we can do is help protect their safety by making an effort to deter agricultural crime, diligently investigate crimes, and enforce laws. Across our islands, farmers and ranchers are concerned about agricultural crime in the forms of trespassing, vandalism, illegal hunting, and theft of equipment, machinery, and crops. Not only do these crimes come with a detrimental monetary expense, but there is also the worry of violence. One year ago this month, in February 2024, agricultural communities experienced a tragedy when a hardworking Makaha rancher lost his life from an alleged trespassing incident.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a report in 2020 titled [Hawai'i Agricultural Theft and Vandalism](#) which states that in 2018, losses for theft and vandalism, along with security costs, resulted in a total value of \$14.4 million, which was about 10% of Hawai'i net farm income. The report additionally estimated that the total costs of implementing security measures like cameras, guards, and fencing cost Hawai'i farms \$11.2 million.

From the same [USDA report](#), survey respondents indicated that in 2019, more than 14,000 agricultural crime incidents were trespassing, over 3,000 incidents of theft, and about 1,100

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In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



incidents of vandalism. Only 970 of these incidents were reported to law enforcement. As explained by the [Hawai'i Department of Agriculture](#), the lack of reporting is likely due to the

difficulty of the process along with staffing issues within law enforcement. Furthermore, these crimes tend to be viewed as low-priority, or result in inconsequential sentencing.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers deserve for their livelihood and safety to be treated like priority by law enforcement. There must be more attention put toward deterring and investigating agricultural crime as well as enforcing laws when necessary. It is important to treat these crimes seriously by demonstrating that these heinous actions come with legal consequences.

I urge the committee to pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue.

Mahalo,  
Lea Iaea & the Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

**SB-763-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 2:46:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2025 10:16:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keith	Testifying for McCandless Land & Cattle Co. LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The incidence last year at Ohikilolo was incredible tragic, however unfortunately without strengthening the existing trespass and ag theft laws, this incident will repeat itself. There have been several incidences over the past year where McCandless Ranch personel have confronted poaches and the poachers have been armed. Word needs to get out that there are substantially new penalties and fines for ag theft, trespassing and poaching, and SB763 is a good start.

**SB-763-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/14/2025 9:40:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2025 10:16:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ruth Love	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Adding additional law enforcement for agricultural theft has been necessary for a very long time. Is there a reason it does not go into effect until 2050 if it is necessary?

Thank you,

Mrs Ruth Love

**SB-763-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/15/2025 8:21:17 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2025 10:16:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Frank Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I see way too many "worker" lodgings on agriculture land that are nicer than some housing developments, especially in the Kunia area.

**SB-763-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/15/2025 8:24:06 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2025 10:16:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support.

Mahalo

**SB-763-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/17/2025 8:45:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/19/2025 10:16:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brendan Balthazar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill . It is about time that agg also get help and stronger laws. Usually when we report agg theft ,even with a licence number of the truck nothing happens.