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## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR CONDUCT A PERFORMANCE AUDIT  
OF THE TEN AGRICULTURAL PARKS OPERATED BY THE AGRICULTURAL  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE.

1           WHEREAS, agricultural parks are areas set aside  
2 specifically for agricultural activities to encourage  
3 continuation or initiation of agricultural operations; and  
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5           WHEREAS, the Governor announced in 2016 that he was  
6 committed to doubling Hawaii's food production by 2020; and  
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8           WHEREAS, the Department of Agriculture, through its  
9 Agricultural Resource Management Division, operates ten  
10 agricultural parks on the island of Hawaii, Oahu, Kauai, and  
11 Molokai; and  
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13           WHEREAS, the agricultural parks contain a total of two  
14 hundred twenty-seven plots that provide access to irrigation and  
15 other infrastructure designed to support small family farms; and  
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17           WHEREAS, the State's Agricultural Park Program is intended  
18 to make land available to small farmers at reasonable cost with  
19 long-term leases; and  
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21           WHEREAS, a February 2021 article in the *Honolulu Civil*  
22 *Beat*, entitled "Hawaii Farmers Need Land. State Efforts to Help  
23 Aren't Working", noted that the State's Agricultural Park  
24 Program has allowed small, family farms to flourish, but the  
25 application process is burdensome and the most effective way to  
26 get a plot is to take over an existing lease, which may shut out  
27 small farmers with thinner profit margins; and  
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# H.C.R. NO. 77

1           WHEREAS, the article also noted that some agricultural  
2 parks are popular, while others have undesirable plots that sit  
3 empty for so many years that the Department of Agriculture stops  
4 advertising their availability; and

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6           WHEREAS, these issues, among others, have raised questions  
7 among small farmers about whether the Agricultural Park Program  
8 is still serving its original purpose and have prompted calls  
9 for the Department of Agriculture to make changes; and

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11           WHEREAS, the Agribusiness Development Corporation was  
12 created in 1994 to develop an aggressive and dynamic program to  
13 fill the void created by the closure of sugar and pineapple  
14 plantations; and

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16           WHEREAS, a legal action has been filed against the  
17 Department of Agriculture regarding its management practices for  
18 a certain agricultural park and is currently pending; and

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20           WHEREAS, in January 2021, the Office of the Auditor  
21 released Report No. 21-01, entitled "Audit of the Agribusiness  
22 Development Corporation", which found that the agency was  
23 deficient in several key areas; and

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25           WHEREAS, a broader issue is whether the Department of  
26 Agriculture is adequately managing its farm lands to help Hawaii  
27 grow more of its own food; now, therefore,

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29           BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
30 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
31 of 2022, the Senate concurring, that the Office of the Auditor  
32 is requested to conduct a performance audit of the ten  
33 agricultural parks operated by the Agricultural Resource  
34 Management Division of the Department of Agriculture; and

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36           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of the Auditor is  
37 requested to submit a report of its performance audit, including  
38 any findings, recommendations, and proposed legislation, to the  
39 Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the Regular  
40 Session of 2023; and

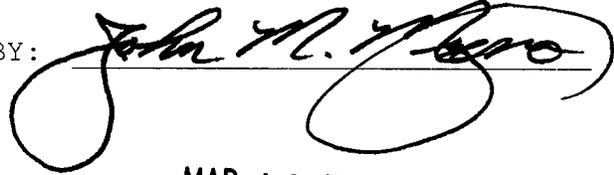


# H.C.R. NO. 77

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the  
3 Board of Agriculture and Auditor.

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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Perno", written over a horizontal line. The signature is highly stylized with large loops.

MAR 10 2022

