STAND. COM. REP. NO.

Honolulu, Hawaii FEB 17 , 2023

RE: H.B. No. 443 H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki Speaker, House of Representatives Thirty-Second State Legislature Regular Session of 2023 State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred H.B. No. 443 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Kanalani Ohana Farm; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; 350Hawaii.org; Food+ Policy; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Kuwale Ridge Farms; Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action; and ten individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Department of the Attorney General.

Your Committee finds that soil health and sustainability are vital for agriculture in the State. This measure provides for a system of awards, financial incentives, and educational and technical assistance to small farmers, ranchers, and landowners to implement selected farm management practices that will improve soil health and build carbon stocks.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:



STAND. COM. REP. NO. **(D)** Page 2

- Clarifying the objectives of the Healthy Soils Program, which, as amended, are to:
  - (A) Create a Healthy Soil Assessment and Education Program;
  - (B) Provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils;
  - (C) Operate a Health Soil Grants Program;
  - (D) Administer existing financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils; and
  - (E) Establish other programs to accomplish the purposes of the Healthy Soils Program;
- (2) Further expanding on the Healthy Soil Assessment and Education Program and the Healthy Soil Grants Program of the Healthy Soils Program;
- (3) Specifying that the Department of Agriculture is to encourage collaboration among producers, land managers, landowners, and other agencies in the management of healthy soils;
- (4) Deleting language that established long-term goals of the Healthy Soils Program;
- (5) Clarifying the required content for the annual report by the Department of Agriculture to the Legislature; and
- (6) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion.

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. 443, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 443, 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,

CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, Chair

2023-1769 HB443 HD1 HSCR HMSO

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## State of Hawaii House of Representatives The Thirty-second Legislature



## Record of Votes of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Bill/Resolution No.: HB443	Committee Referral: AGR, FIN			
The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to:				
AGR Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. GATES, Cedric Asuega (C)				
2. KAHALOA, Kirstin (VC)	$\checkmark$			
3. COCHRAN, Elle			<u></u>	
4. LOWEN, Nicole E.				
5. PERRUSO, Amy A.	$\checkmark$		an an an State an An Anna State an	
6. WOODSON, Justin H.				
7. WARD, Gene		in the state of a state	lan general and an	
TOTAL (7) Image: Contract of the second				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature:				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				