

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

586

Honolulu, Hawaii

, 2023

FEB 16

RE: H.B. No. 975

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. 975 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to clarify the requirements for the Cover Crop Reimbursement Pilot Program, which provides up to seventy-five percent cost reimbursement to farming operations for the acquisition of cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that the Cover Crop Reimbursement Pilot Program incentivizes farmers to build soil health, sequester carbon, and enhance productivity and marketability of their crops. This measure ensures that the Department of Agriculture has the clear legal criteria and standards for the distribution of public funds through a grant or subsidy program.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and

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- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

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. 975, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 975, 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,



CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, Chair



