

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 03 2024

RE: S.R. No. 164  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2024  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.R. No. 164 entitled:

"SENATE RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A PERFORMANCE AUDIT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S PLANT INDUSTRY DIVISION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to request the Office of the Auditor to:

- (1) Conduct a performance audit of the Department of Agriculture's Plant Industry Division; and
- (2) Submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2025.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Office of the Auditor.

Your Committee finds that the State's mandated biosecurity program is delivered by the Plant Quarantine Branch within the Department of Agriculture's Plant Industry Division. Your Committee further finds that the Plant Pest Control Branch, also within the Department of Agriculture's Plant Industry Division, has been utilizing staff and operational capacity from the Plant Quarantine Branch to carry out its duties. Your Committee



recognizes that additional resources are essential for the Department of Agriculture to fully meet its obligations to protect the State from invasive species. The performance audit requested in this measure will provide the information necessary for decision-makers to allocate the resources necessary to strengthen the State's biosecurity system and mitigate risks associated with invasive species.

Your Committee further recognizes that the Auditor has the duty to conduct postaudits of agency transactions, accounts, programs, and performance pursuant to section 23-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes. Your Committee acknowledges the concerns raised by the Auditor that the scope of the audit requested by this measure is not only broad and undefined, but also includes the evaluation of operational capacity, which is beyond the Auditor's purview. Therefore, this measure needs to be amended to address these concerns.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Narrowing the scope of the performance audit requested to apply to the Plant Pest Control Branch and Plant Quarantine Branch, rather than the entire Plant Industry Division;
- (2) Deleting language that requested the performance audit to include:
  - (A) Follow-ups to:
    - (i) Report No. 17-05, entitled "Audit of Hawai'i Department of Agriculture's Plant Quarantine Branch"; and
    - (ii) Report No. 20-21, entitled "Follow Up on Recommendations from Report No. 17-05, Audit of Hawai'i Department of Agriculture's Plant Quarantine Branch";
  - (B) Reports on the implementation status of the action items of the Hawaii Interagency Biosecurity Plan; and



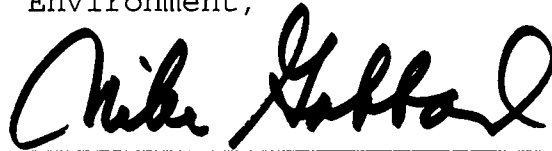
(C) An evaluation of the true operational capacity of the Department of Agriculture to achieve its assigned action items established in the Hawaii Interagency Biosecurity Plan,

and replacing it with language that identifies specific programs and activities within the Plant Pest Control Branch and Plant Quarantine Branch to be audited by the Office of the Auditor;

- (3) Deleting references to the Hawaii Interagency Biosecurity Plan;
- (4) Amending its title to reflect its amended purpose; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

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 concurs with the intent and purpose of S.R. No. 164, as amended herein, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as S.R. No. 164, S.D. 1.

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



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MIKE GABBARD, Chair



The Senate  
 Thirty-Second Legislature  
 State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Agriculture and Environment**  
**AEN**

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:
SR 164	AEN	4/11/2024


The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.  
 If so, then the previous decision was to: \_\_\_\_\_

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312       Pass, with amendments 2311       Hold 2310       Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	X			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	X			
DECOITE, Lynn				X
RHOADS, Karl	X			
AWA, Brenton				X
<b>TOTAL</b>	3	0	0	2

Recommendation:  Adopted       Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature: 

Distribution:      Original      Yellow      Pink      Goldenrod  
 File with Committee Report      Clerk's Office      Drafting Agency      Committee File Copy

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes