

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 13 2025

RE: S.B. No. 763
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Public Safety and Military Affairs, to which was referred S.B. No. 763 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish the Agricultural Enforcement Program (Program) within the Department of Law Enforcement;
- (2) Establish the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture; Department of Law Enforcement; Department of Research and Development of the County of Hawai'i; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; and nine individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance.



Your Committees find that agricultural theft, vandalism, trespass, and other agriculture-related crimes are a major challenge for existing producers to expand production and for new and potential producers to enter and remain in the industry. According to testimony received by your Committees, while agricultural crimes are becoming more pervasive and more dangerous, they continue to be considered low-priority or result in inconsequential sentencing. Your Committees note that the establishment of the Program within the Department of Law Enforcement aligns with the Department's ongoing efforts to protect agricultural communities and collaborate with other agencies and stakeholders in local agriculture. This measure will create a dedicated force to prevent, investigate, and combat agricultural theft and related crimes, thereby bolstering the local food production, security, and self-sufficiency of the State.

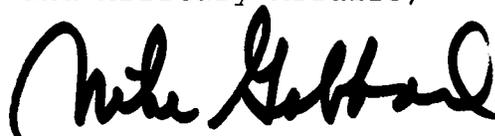
Your Committees have amended this measure by inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Public Safety and Military Affairs that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 763, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 763, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committees on Ways and Means and Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Agriculture and
Environment and Public Safety
and Military Affairs,



BRANDON J.C. ELEFANTE, Chair



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



