

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 2025

RE: S.B. No. 984
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 Health and Human Services, to which was referred S.B. No. 984 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO WATER POLLUTION,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require a landowner in possession of ten thousand or more acres to be liable for damages and fines arising from runoff originating on the land and entering into state waters or onto state lands; and
- (2) Require the Department of Health to adopt rules.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from Hawai'i Food + Policy, Hawai'i Reef Ocean Coalition, and eight individuals.

Your Committees received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; and two individuals.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Health.



Your Committees find that agricultural water pollution has devastating effects on the environment. Climate change fuels extreme rainfall in the State, increasing runoff and polluting vital coastal waters. The documented damage to Kauai and Molokai reefs underscores the urgent need for action.

Your Committees find that this measure appropriately addresses the destructive effects of runoff by establishing civil liability for large landowners whose operations contribute to this problem. Accountability is crucial, and this measure focuses on those with the largest potential impact on our coastal waters, marine ecosystems, and food systems.

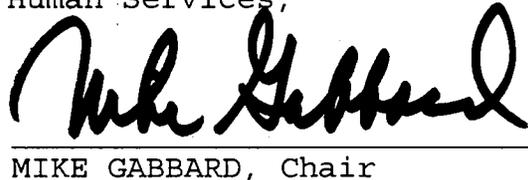
Your Committees have amended this measure by making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Health and Human Services that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 984, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 984, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Agriculture and
Environment and Health and
Human Services,



JOY A. SAN BUENAVENTURA, Chair



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



