

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
*Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā*  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

**WRITTEN ONLY**  
**TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA**  
**DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
**TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**  
**ON**  
**SENATE BILL NO. 763, S.D. 2, H.D. 2**

**March 28, 2025**  
**3:30 p.m.**  
**Room 308 and Videoconference**

**RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill (S.B.) No. 763, S.D. 2, H.D. 2, establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program (AEP) within the Department of Law Enforcement to implement the laws and rules directly related to agricultural crimes; establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund (AESF); appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds for FY 26 and FY 27 to be deposited into the AESF; and appropriates an unspecified amount of special funds out of the AESF for FY 26 and FY 27 for the establishment of 45.00 full-time equivalent positions for the AEP. Revenues for the AESF include legislative appropriations, fees, reimbursements, administrative charges, funds from government agencies or private sources, grants, gifts, interest and other income.

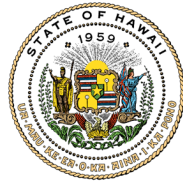
As a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any special fund, which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work, and an

explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding S.B. No. 763, S.D. 2, H.D. 2, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed special fund would be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025**  
**3:30 PM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 30825**

**SENATE BILL NO. 763, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 2**  
**RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill No. 763, SD2, HD2 that establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement (DLE), establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, establishes positions and appropriates funds.

The Department of Agriculture (Department) is in **strong support** of this bill that proposes to distribute specialized law enforcement positions statewide to prevent, investigate, and combat agricultural theft and related crimes committed against Hawaii's farmers and ranchers. The Department is ready to assist the DLE in this effort.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important bill.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
HUI HO'OU LU AINA MAHIAI

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
March 28, 2025  
3:30 P.M.  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

SENATE BILL NO. 763, SD2, HD2  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Chairperson Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support on Senate Bill No. 763, SD2, HD2 that establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement Department, the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, additional positions and appropriates funds.

ADC is in support of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Law Enforcement in their efforts to reduce agricultural theft. Agricultural theft is harming many Hawaii farmers and this bill will support and sustain the industry as it grows. ADC defers to the Department of Law Enforcement for any recommendations regarding appropriation amounts.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



**MIKE LAMBERT**  
DIRECTOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT GOVERNOR  
KE KE'ENA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT**  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai*  
715 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**JARED K. REDULLA**  
Deputy Director  
Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 763, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 2  
RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT  
Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE

Friday, March 28, 2025, 3:30 p.m.

State Capitol Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Testifier: Jared Redulla

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) supports Senate Bill 763, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 2, which establishes an Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement.

This bill establishes a specialized Agricultural Enforcement Program to prevent, investigate, and prosecute agricultural theft and related crimes across the state. The program includes the creation of an Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund and allocates key law enforcement positions across Hawaii's counties to combat these crimes effectively.

Agricultural theft and vandalism continue to significantly impact Hawaii's farming communities. This specialized enforcement program addresses a critical need to protect our agricultural industry, one of Hawaii's most important economic sectors and a cornerstone of food security for our islands.

The DLE has already begun engaging with local agricultural stakeholders and community leaders to build the necessary relationships to effectively combat agricultural crime throughout Hawaii. The establishment of this program through SB763 will formalize these efforts, providing the structure, funding, and personnel needed to systematically address agricultural theft and related crimes.

The program's statewide approach, with investigators assigned across all four counties and an assistant chief administrator to coordinate operations, will ensure consistent, effective enforcement of agricultural theft laws under Section 708-835.55, HRS. Furthermore, the creation of an Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund will provide sustainable funding for these critical enforcement activities.

This bill aligns perfectly with the DLE's mission to provide the highest level of law enforcement service for the public and to protect Hawaii's vital resources. By establishing a dedicated program with specialized personnel focused exclusively on agricultural crimes, we will be better positioned to prevent theft, investigate incidents, and prosecute offenders who target Hawaii's agricultural communities.

DLE recommends the following:

1. Amending page 8, line 6 by inserting \$7,370,423.
2. Amending page 8, line 13 by inserting \$5,289,329.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

**KELDEN B.A. WALTJEN**  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

**SHANNON M. KAGAWA**  
FIRST DEPUTY  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



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## **OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

### **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT TO SENATE BILL NO. 763 SD2 HD2**

**A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO  
THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT.**

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Friday, March 28, 2025 at 3:30 p.m.  
Via Videoconference  
State Capitol Conference Room 308  
415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committees on Finance. The County of Hawai'i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney submits the following testimony in Support to Senate Bill No. 763 SD2 HD2

This bill was created with the goal of establishing an agricultural enforcement program within the department of law enforcement, an agricultural enforcement special fund, and to create positions within the Department of Law Enforcement.

Hawai'i County plays a critical role in the State's agricultural production. Senate Bill No. 763 SD2 HD2 has the potential to enhance the safety and sustainability of our farming and agricultural industry by allowing farmers to focus more on producing high-quality products using sustainable practices, rather than worrying about the security of their agricultural operations.

If signed into law, this legislation would enable the agriculture community to:

1. Safeguard our agricultural industry, which is the bread basket of the State of Hawai'i.
2. Enable our farmers, growers, and ranchers to remain competitive on the global market with Hawai'i-grown products.
3. Hold offenders accountable for actions that undermine food security and hinder economic development for the state.

Agricultural crimes, such as theft, trespassing and vandalism, can severely affect our local farming industry. The addition of specialized law enforcement officers will ensure that farmers can sustain their businesses and contribute to the local economy while restoring and promoting trust in the criminal justice system and serve as a deterrence to those who prey on local agriculture producers.

The County of Hawai‘i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney is dedicated to pursuing justice with integrity and dedication. Senate Bill No. 763 SD2 HD2 represents a significant step toward addressing the serious food security and economic issues caused by agricultural crimes. For these reasons, the County of Hawai‘i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney supports the passage of Senate Bill No. 763 SD2 HD2. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.





COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

**SB763 SD2 HD2**  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Friday, March 28, 2025, 3:30PM  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB763 SD2 HD2** which establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council, authorizes the Council to withdraw and deposit moneys, revenues, and fines into and out of the Animal Industry Special Fund, and appropriates funds.

Agricultural crimes is a not a new issue – but it is getting more pervasive and more dangerous. So dangerous that we lost a young rancher, Cranston Duke Pia, to illegal trespassing and poaching in 2024. This was an incredibly horrific incident that we need to keep from happening again. Without the threat of a penalty, ag crimes will continue to flourish, to the detriment of our food producers. There needs to be a clear way for ranchers and farmers to report crimes, and an effective way to prosecute the crime.

Currently, agricultural crimes is not getting the dedicated attention it needs. Reporting of crimes is low, successful prosecution is limited, and criminals have no reason to be deterred from committing the crimes. Creating the Agricultural Enforcement Program will bring more resources to the farmers and ranchers who deal with agricultural crime on a daily basis – we see this as the most effective way to address agricultural crimes right now. This specialized attention within the Department of Law Enforcement will help to address the ongoing trespassing, vandalism and theft on farms and ranches.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director



**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:45:28 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lani Petrie	Kapapala Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support.



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e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

March 28, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON SB 763, SD2, HD2**  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
3:30 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 763, SD2, HD2**, which establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement, establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, establishes positions, and appropriates funds.

Agricultural crime is a persistent problem facing agriculture. Weather, drought, pests, weeds, disease, unstable markets, transportation, labor issues, and a changing climate all contribute to uncertainty for farmers and ranchers. Few businesses face such challenges, yet we are charged with producing food, feed, fiber, fuel, and flowers for the 99% of non-farmers. Add in the constant threat and impacts of trespass, theft, and vandalism, and it's a wonder farms and ranches remain viable.

Sadly, agricultural crime is a growing trend in Hawai'i. Farmers and ranchers are often victims of those looking for easy targets. Despite our efforts to install cameras, form community ag watch groups, and patrol our farms, these criminals know that being caught and prosecuted is unlikely. Our police departments are trying to help but don't have the staffing and resources to be everywhere at all times.

In recent years, not only crops and livestock have been stolen, but also tractors, trucks, farm equipment, and tools. Too often, a farmer or rancher has sweated, worried, and worked to the bone to produce a crop or raise livestock, only to wake up one morning to find that an opportunistic criminal has helped themselves to the harvest. Farmers and ranchers are fed up with this activity and deserve better. We understand that law

enforcement resources are often prioritized for public health and safety. Is a farmer's and his family's health, safety, and livelihood any less important? We think not.

HFB believes a dedicated Agricultural Law Enforcement Program would significantly minimize agricultural crimes and enhance public safety. We hope that this will serve as a deterrent to would-be criminals. An Agricultural Law Enforcement Program will help prevent agricultural crimes and help our farmers and ranchers stay in business.

HFB will continue to work with our policymakers, law enforcement, and the prosecutor's office to find ways to help deter, apprehend, and convict individuals who commit agricultural crimes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject.

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 6:25:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan Gottlieb	Ponoholo Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Currently, agricultural crimes is not getting the dedicated attention it needs. Reporting of crimes is low, successful prosecution is limited, and criminals have no reason to be deterred from committing the crimes. Creating the Agricultural Enforcement Program will bring more resources to the farmers and ranchers who deal with agricultural crime on a daily basis – we see this as the most effective way to address agricultural crimes right now. This specialized attention within the Department of Law Enforcement will help to address the ongoing trespassing, vandalism and theft on farms and ranches.

Please support SB 763 SD2 HD2



March 27, 2025

To: Chair Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and the House Committee on Finance

Subject: **SB763 SD2 HD2**, Relating to the Department of Law Enforcement

Aloha,

I am writing in **support** of **SB763 SD2 HD2**, which asks to establish the Agricultural Enforcement Program as well as the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund. Our farmers and ranchers— the lifeblood of our local food system— continuously face hefty physical, mental, and financial burdens. In return for all their painstaking efforts to feed our communities, the least we can do is help guarantee their safety by making an effort to deter agricultural crime, diligently investigate crimes, and enforce laws.

Across our islands, farmers and ranchers are concerned about agricultural crime in the forms of trespassing, vandalism, illegal hunting, and theft of equipment, machinery, and crops. Not only do these crimes come with a detrimental monetary expense, but there is also the worry of violence. One year ago this month, in February 2024, agricultural communities experienced a tragedy when a hardworking Makaha rancher lost his life from an alleged trespassing incident.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a report in 2020 titled [Hawaii's Agricultural Theft and Vandalism](#) which states that in 2018, losses for theft and vandalism, along with security costs, resulted in a total value of \$14.4 million, which was about 10% of Hawaii's net farm income. The report additionally estimated that the total costs of implementing security measures like cameras, guards, and fencing cost Hawaii farms \$11.2 million.

From the same [USDA report](#), survey respondents indicated that in 2019, more than 14,000 agricultural crime incidents were trespassing, over 3,000 incidents of theft, and about 1,100 incidents of vandalism. Only 970 of these incidents were reported to law enforcement. As explained by the [Hawaii's Department of Agriculture](#), the lack of reporting is likely due to the

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawaii communities.

In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Hawaii/Publications/Miscellaneous/AgTheft\\_2019.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Hawaii/Publications/Miscellaneous/AgTheft_2019.pdf)  
<https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/AGR-SR138-Ag-Crimes.pdf>



difficulty of the process along with staffing issues within law enforcement. Furthermore, these crimes tend to be viewed as low-priority, or result in inconsequential sentencing.

I understand that in uncertain times like these it can be tempting to prioritize other broad issues facing the state. However, I will say that many members of the agricultural community are feeling unheard lately, which is tragic considering how much they contribute to the common good of Hawaii. I urge the committee to pass this measure to show them that their voices matter and that the work they do is valued by their representatives.

I urge the committee to pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue.

Mahalo,  
Lea laea & the Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Hawaii/Publications/Miscellaneous/AgTheft\\_2019.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Hawaii/Publications/Miscellaneous/AgTheft_2019.pdf)  
<https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/AGR-SR138-Ag-Crimes.pdf>



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

**SB763 SD2 HD2**  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Friday, March 28, 2025, 3:30PM  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

To Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee,

Hilo Couty Farm Bureau **strongly supports SB763 SD2 HD2** which establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council; authorizes the Council to withdraw and deposit moneys, revenues, and fines into and out of the Animal Industry Special Fund; and appropriates funds.

Agricultural crimes is an issue of increasing concern for the over 120 members of the Hilo County Farm Bureau Chapter and the greater rural communities of Hawaii Island. Hilo County Farm Bureau is a local chapter of Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation.

Without the threat of a penalty, ag crimes will persist and worsen to the detriment of our food producers. There needs to be a clear way for ranchers and farmers to report crimes, and an effective way to prosecute the crime.

Creating the Agricultural Enforcement Program will bring more resources to the farmers and ranchers who deal with agricultural crime on a daily basis. This specialized attention within the Department of Law Enforcement will help to address the ongoing trespassing, vandalism and theft on farms and ranches.

The proposed legislation will advance the effort to implement an effective and lasting solution for addressing these concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/ Megan Blazak

Megan M. Blazak, MBA  
President, Hilo Couty Farm Bureau





SC Ranch Company  
P.O. Box 330  
Pa'auilo, Hawai'i 96776  
805.206.8800 / scranchinc@gmail.com

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

**SB763 SD2 HD2**  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Friday, March 28, 2025, 3:30PM  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Charles F. Stevens, I am the owner of SC Ranch Company, Inc. and I am submitting this testimony in **SUPPORT of SB763 SD2 HD2**. **SB763 SD2 HD2** establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council, authorizes the Council to withdraw and deposit moneys, revenues, and fines into and out of the Animal Industry Special Fund, and appropriates funds.

The SC Ranch Company, Inc. has been serving as a steward of 7,042 acres of State land, under General Lease (GL) No. 4477 for over 50 years. I encounter dangerous situations and disputes on a regular basis, caused by trespassers, while conducting everyday ranching activities alongside my family, employees, volunteers, and guests. The trespassers have little regard for our safety, livestock, fencing, or equipment, and we need support and protection.

Agricultural crimes are a legitimate age-old problem that has resulted in serious financial and personal losses, and it deserves the attention of local and national policy makers and law enforcement. Establishment of an Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement plus an Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, including an appropriation of funds, will provide critical support needed to address crimes committed by trespassers. I thank you for hearing this matter, and providing us the opportunity to submit a testimony in **SUPPORT of SB763 SD2 HD2**.

Charles F. Stevens  
SC Ranch Company, Inc.



#### Officers

Kaipo Kekona  
State President

Anabella Bruch  
Vice-President

Maureen Datta  
Secretary

Reba Lopez  
Treasurer

#### Chapter Presidents

Clarence Baber  
Kohala, Hawai'i

Tony Vera  
East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Andrea Drayer  
Ka'u, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta  
Kona, Hawai'i

Fawn Helekahi-Burns  
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer  
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros  
Mauna Kahālāwai,  
Maui

Kaipo Kekona  
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy  
Moloka'i

Negus Manna  
Lāna'i

India Clark  
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman  
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich  
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura  
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska  
Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports and seeks to amend SB763.**

By creating a team of law enforcement officers specifically trained and focused on agricultural crimes, this bill directly supports the interests of local farmers who are often vulnerable to theft and property damage. This specialized program is crucial for safeguarding the livelihoods of those who work tirelessly to sustain Hawaii's agricultural sector. With the implementation of dedicated resources and personnel, farmers can concentrate on their operations with a greater sense of security and support.

Additionally, the creation of the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund and the appropriation of funds not only facilitate the program's launch but also ensure its sustained operation. This financial commitment underscores the state's recognition of the ongoing threat posed by agricultural crime and its impact on the agricultural community's economic viability.

To further enhance the efficacy of this program, **we request that the Department of Law Enforcement be required to submit an annual report to the legislature.** This report should detail the program's activities, crime statistics, funding status, challenges, and achievements. By instituting this amendment, accountability and transparency will be bolstered, providing valuable insights for continuous improvement and legislative support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Farmers Union

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:59:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MasterJedi Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Ohana Unity Party & Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

To the Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

Subject: A Resounding Endorsement of S.B. No. 763 – A Bold Step to Combat Agricultural Crime and Honor Hawaii’s Rural Legacy

Aloha, esteemed lawmakers of Hawaii’s Thirty-Third Legislature,

I write to you today with fervent support for Senate Bill No. 763, a visionary measure to establish an Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement (DLE), create the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund, and appropriate funds for dedicated positions to tackle the escalating crisis of agricultural crime. This bill is a clarion call to action—a lifeline for our farmers and ranchers who face daily threats to their livelihoods and safety, as tragically exemplified by the 2024 killing of rancher Cranston "Duke" Pia. With robust data underscoring the urgency and the leadership of DLE Director Jordan Lowe and DOLE’s Mike Lambert, I urge you to pass S.B. No. 763 and fortify it with the resources to safeguard Hawaii’s agricultural heartbeat.

**The Crisis in Numbers: A \$30 Million Wound**

Agricultural crime is not a peripheral issue—it’s a gaping wound costing Hawaii’s farmers dearly. The Honolulu Civil Beat (Dec 5, 2024) estimates annual losses from agricultural theft at \$30 million, dwarfing the \$14.4 million cited in the USDA’s 2019 report referenced in the bill. In 2023 alone, one in three Hawaii farmers reported livestock theft (Civil Beat), while the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) logged 66 felony agricultural thefts, 30 trespassing cases, and 48 related offenses in Hawaii County in 2020—numbers likely underreported statewide due to rural isolation and enforcement gaps. The 2022 USDA Census of Agriculture reveals a 12% loss of farmland (82,000 acres) from 2017 to 2022, partly fueled by unchecked crime that drives producers out. Meanwhile, the Hawaii Attorney General’s 2021 Uniform Crime Report notes 41,355 Index Crimes—a 7.4% rise—hitting rural areas hardest, with only 8% of reported ag crimes leading to arrests (Civil Beat, 2019 USDA Survey).

Duke Pia’s death—an “execution-style killing” per Honolulu’s prosecuting attorney—casts a stark spotlight on this crisis. The Civil Beat (Dec 10, 2024) reports Patrol District 8, where Pia was slain, led Oahu in agricultural thefts in 2023, yet suffered the most staff vacancies in the Honolulu Police Department (HPD) as of June 2024. This is a recipe for disaster, as DLE Deputy Director Jared Redulla warned at the 2024 Hawaii Cattlemen’s Council convention: “Weapons, trespassing, and rural communities defending their property—it’s a volatile mix.” S.B. No. 763 is our chance to rewrite this narrative.

### S.B. No. 763: A Data-Driven Fortress

This bill’s three-pronged approach—establishing the Agricultural Enforcement Program, creating a special fund, and funding 45 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions—is a masterstroke grounded in necessity:

1. **Agricultural Enforcement Program:** With 6,569 farms (USDA 2022) and \$670 million in annual agricultural value at stake, the program’s focus on theft under HRS 708-835.55 is critical. The assistant chief and 36 uniformed officers—strategically allocated (8 each to Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui Counties; 12 to Honolulu)—plus 8 investigators will address the 15,000+ trespass cases reported in 2019 (USDA Survey). Collaboration with the Department of Land and Natural Resources’ Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE), managing 1 million acres (DLNR 2025), and county police will amplify impact.
2. **Special Fund:** Fines, grants, and appropriations will sustain this effort. If penalties from S.B. No. 1249 (e.g., \$10,000-\$20,000 for felonies) were enacted, millions could flow into this fund, offsetting the \$30 million in losses and funding drones, cameras, and scales—like HPD’s \$100,000 tech investment (Civil Beat, Dec 10, 2024).
3. **Positions:** The 45 FTEs are a force multiplier. With HPD’s District 8 vacancies and Maui PD reporting zero ag crime arrests in 2023-2024 (Civil Beat), these roles—bolstered by volunteers with aloha and kuleana—will fill gaps where traditional policing falters.

### Mike Lambert and Interagency Might

Mike Lambert, DOLE’s new head, brings fresh vigor to this fight. Pairing his labor resources with DLE’s enforcement under Director Lowe—who calls Pia’s death a “wake-up call” (Civil Beat, Dec 10, 2024)—and DLNR’s 50-officer DOCARE team creates a powerhouse. Add 911’s 48,000 rural emergency calls in 2023 (Honolulu EMS), and this coalition could cut response times from 12 to 8 minutes, deterring the 300+ annual hunting violations (DLNR 2024) and 15 Oahu crime rings (Civil Beat, Jan 2025). Lambert’s DOLE could train 200 workers yearly for ag crime rapid-response, slashing the \$11.2 million farmers spend on security (Civil Beat, 2019).

### A Legacy Worth Fighting For

S.B. No. 763 isn’t just policy—it’s a promise to Hawaii’s 12,000 producers (Civil Beat) and 6,000+ farm families (USDA 2022). The Hawaii Farm Bureau warns that without action, our goal to boost local food production is slipping away as farms vanish (Civil Beat, Mar 3, 2024).

This bill answers Duke Pia's sacrifice with action, not platitudes. Imagine the headline: "Hawaii Lawmakers Forge a \$30 Million Shield for Farmers!" You hold that power.

I urge you to pass S.B. No. 763 with full funding—\$5 million annually for two years could launch this program, dwarfed by the \$30 million it aims to reclaim. Let this be Duke's legacy—a law that ensures no farmer fears the night, no family mourns a preventable loss, and Hawaii's agricultural soul thrives. I stand ready to support this effort—let's proclaim #justiceforDuke with resolute action!

Mahalo nui loa for your leadership,

With Profound Aloha and Unyielding Resolve,

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire, HRM

Ohana Unity Party, Chairman

[www.Ohanaunityparty.com](http://www.Ohanaunityparty.com)

Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.I.

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:07:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa M Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 763 Which establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Department of Law Enforcement. Establishes the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund. Establishes positions, and Appropriates funds.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:46:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Unger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 763

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:08:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melelani Oshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support **SB763 SD2 HD2**, which establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council, authorizes the Council to withdraw and deposit money, revenues, and fines into and out of the Animal Industry Special Fund, and appropriates funds.



**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:22:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Moniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

As a long-time cattle rancher I **strongly support SB763 SD2 HD2B**. We face chronic trespass, poaching, rustling and other property damage on our ranch. In almost all situations the perpetrators are in possession of firearms, which elevates seriousness and our concern for safety. Our remote location and inconsistent assistance from local police and prosecutors calls out for an agency like the Law Enforcement Department and this Bill's intent to support agricultural crime investigation and enforcement.

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:35:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Gomes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB763 and stand with Hawaii Cattlemen's Council testimony

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:39:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Greenwell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I agree with the testimony of the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:30:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aileen K . F. Yeh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of establishing the Agricultural Enforcement Program within the Dept of Law Enforcement. Establishing the Agricultural Enforcement SSpecial Fund, as well as positons.

This is desperately needed.

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 6:19:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Woody Child	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I !Strongly Support SB763.

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 7:30:51 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Long overdue to help the agriculture industry remain viable. Mahalo!

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:54:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Yeh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support to help reduce ag crime.

Im glad the state and county and are finally getting serious about this issue

**SB-763-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 12:59:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2025 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bud & Katy Gibson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We support and stand behind Hawaii Cattlemen's Council's testimony in support of SB763 SD2 HD2.

Bud and Katy Gibson