

Honolulu, Hawaii
FEB 04 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1606
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred H.B. No. 1606 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to transfer the powers, duties, personnel, personal property, and materials of the Aquaculture and Livestock Support Services Branch and Agricultural Development Division of the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from HIplan; and Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; and Animal Rights Hawai'i. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Agribusiness Development Corporation; Hawai'i County Department of Research and Development; and Hawai'i Farmers Union United.

Your Committee finds that a significant portion of the State's aquaculture industry operates within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism through the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority and with the administering of land and leases for aquaculture operations by the Agribusiness



Development Corporation. Your Committee further finds that bringing aquaculture development, land management, and support services into closer alignment under a single department by transferring the Aquaculture and Livestock Support Services Branch to the Agribusiness Development Corporation will improve coordination, reduce fragmentation, and support more effective long-term planning for Hawaii's aquaculture industry.

Your Committee additionally finds that transferring the Agricultural Development Division to the Agribusiness Development Corporation will provide additional resources and tools that the Corporation has to the Division to further promote the economic viability of commercial agriculture in the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (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. 1606, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1606, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Economic Development & Technology.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture & Food
Systems,



CORY CHUN, Chair



JHSCR 9-26

Bill/Resolution No.: HB1606	Committee Referral: AGR, ECD, FIN	Date: 1/30/26		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
AGR Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. CHUN, Cory M. (C)	✓			
2. KUSCH, Matthias (VC)	✓			
3. KAHALOA, Kirstin	✓			
4. LOWEN, Nicole E.	✓			
5. PERRUSO, Amy A.			✓	
6. QUINLAN, Sean	✓			
7. MATSUMOTO, Lauren		✓		
TOTAL (7)	5	1	1	
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <small>(committee acronym(s))</small>				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				