

MAR 16 2026

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESILIENCE TO SUPPORT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S SECONDARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND THE FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA PROGRAM.

1 WHEREAS, the State imports more than eighty-five percent of
2 its food and is considered highly vulnerable in its food
3 security; and

4

5 WHEREAS, to address this vulnerability, the State has
6 adopted various food and agricultural self-sufficiency goals
7 that necessitate strategic investment into the local
8 agricultural sector and related trades, particularly through the
9 expansion of education and training opportunities to address the
10 State's declining agricultural workforce; and

11

12 WHEREAS, since 1930, the Department of Education's
13 Secondary Agricultural Education Program, now known as the
14 Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Program, and the
15 companion agricultural leadership youth organization, Future
16 Farmers of America, have supported the development of a
17 qualified local agricultural workforce through an experiential
18 educational curriculum; and

19

20 WHEREAS, through agricultural content, Future Farmers of
21 America leadership training, and project-based learning known as
22 the Supervised Agricultural Experience Program, this curriculum
23 teaches students the application of science and academic skills,
24 encourages civic engagement, and exposes them to diverse
25 agricultural career pathways; and

26

27 WHEREAS, before 2000, the Secondary Agricultural Education
28 Program had a robust presence in over thirty high schools and
29 statewide Future Farmers of America enrollment totaled over
30 eight hundred members; and



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41

WHEREAS, since 2000, however, enrollment in the Program has declined due to policy shifts caused by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, local loss of science credit for agriculture education courses, funding cuts due to implementation of the Weighted Student Formula, closure of the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Education's Secondary Agriculture Teacher Degree Program, and loss of centralized content specialists because of adoption of the School/Community Based Management governance structure; and

WHEREAS, despite this decline, increased student exposure to agricultural occupations through the emerging regional kitchen initiative and new school gardening and farm-to-school programs offers a unique opportunity to restore and develop the Secondary Agricultural Education Program; and

WHEREAS, through immediate and targeted professional development, the State can support its food self-sufficiency goals and rising demand for agricultural producers and the many occupations that support agricultural production; and

WHEREAS, employing an extension agent at the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience offers an efficient professional development solution by performing outreach and creating a direct line of agricultural best practices to local schools conducting Future Farmers of America activities; and

WHEREAS, many land grant universities have successfully deployed this model of establishing a pipeline from lower to higher education to quickly transfer agricultural technology and knowledge to teachers and students contemplating agricultural careers; and

WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience, as one of the best tropical agriculture colleges in the world, is uniquely well-suited to housing an extension agent to enable a high-quality teacher workforce; now, therefore,



S.C.R. NO. 134

1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2026, the
3 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
4 Education and the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of
5 Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience are requested to
6 support the Department of Education's Secondary Agricultural
7 Education Program and the Future Farmers of America program; and

8
9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
10 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
11 Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, and President
12 of the University of Hawaii System.

13
14
15

OFFERED BY: Mike Gabbard

