

Honolulu, Hawaii
FEB 11 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1621
H.D. 1

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

Madame:

Your Committees on Agriculture & Food Systems and Energy & Environmental Protection, to which was referred H.B. No. 1621 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish and appropriate funds for a Conservation Agriculture and Soil Health Incentive Program within the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission to provide assistance to farmers that supports science-based conservation practices.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission; University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience; County of Hawai'i Department of Research and Development; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Kanalani Ohana Farm; Carbon Cashback Hawai'i; 350Hawaii.org; Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i and Palmyra; Citizens Climate Lobby-Hawaii; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Green Party of Hawai'i; and numerous individuals.

Your Committees find that Hawaii's agricultural sector is facing growing challenges from climate change, soil degradation,



and the need for food security and economic resilience. Your Committees further find that the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) demonstrates substantial expertise in land management, conservation planning, and stewardship duties, which correspond with the administration of conservation agriculture and soil health initiatives. Your Committees believe that consolidating existing conservation efforts under the Commission through a Conservation Agriculture and Soil Health Incentive Program will remove structural barriers that prevent small farms and socially disadvantaged farmers from accessing conservation incentives.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriation to an unspecified amount;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committees respectfully request your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$1,500,000 for the establishment of the Conservation Agriculture and Soil Health Incentive Program.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture & Food Systems and Energy & Environmental Protection that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1621, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1621, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Agriculture &
Food Systems and Energy &
Environmental Protection,



NICOLE E. LOWEN, Chair



CORY CHUN, Chair



