

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 24 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1707  
H.D. 1  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2026  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred H.B. No. 1707, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish a Local Agriculture Transportation Cost Reimbursement Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to reimburse eligible ranchers and farmers a portion of their costs to transport livestock, livestock products, agricultural commodities, and certain supplies, under certain conditions;
- (2) Establish a position to administer the Local Agriculture Transportation Cost Reimbursement Program; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Chamber of Commerce Hawaii; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawaii Food Industry Association; Maui Chamber of Commerce; Hilo County Farm Bureau;



McCandless Ranch; Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association; Local Food Coalition; Maui County Farm Bureau; East Oahu County Farm Bureau; Caires Farms; and six individuals.

Your Committee finds that the rapidly increasing costs incurred to transport agricultural commodities is a leading barrier to local agricultural producers' ability to scale up their food production capacities. Your Committee further finds that an additional mechanism is necessary to assist eligible agricultural producers, cooperatives, and food hubs with a portion of their transportation costs. The reimbursement program established by this measure will strengthen the State's agriculture and food systems by reducing one of the most persistent structural barriers to growth.

Your Committee acknowledges the concerns raised in testimony regarding the ambiguity of the terms "necessary supplies" and "agricultural commodity". To ensure the program avoids risk of administrative inconsistencies and to ensure the program is aligned with the federal Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program, amendments to this measure are necessary to be amended to address this concern.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that, to be eligible to receive reimbursement payments from the program, the agricultural producer shall incur transportation costs related to necessary supplies and inserting a definition of "necessary supplies";
- (2) Clarifying that honey shall be included in the term "agricultural commodity";
- (3) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

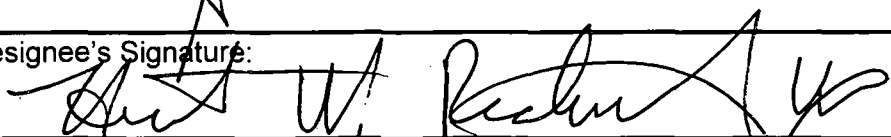
As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of





The Senate  
Thirty-Third Legislature  
State of Hawai'i

**Record of Votes**  
**Committee on Agriculture and Environment**  
**AEN**

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
HB1707, HD1	AEN, WAM	3-16-26		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	X			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	X			
DECOITE, Lynn	X			
RHOADS, Karl	X			
AWA, Brenton				X
<b>TOTAL</b>	4			1
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: <div style="text-align:center; font-family: cursive; font-size: 1.2em;">  </div>				
Distribution:             Original             Yellow             Pink File with Committee Report             Committee             Drafting Agency				

\*Only one measure per Record of Votes