

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 09 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1707
H.D. 1
S.D. 2

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

Sir:

Your Committee on Ways and Means, to which was referred H.B. No. 1707, H.D. 1, S.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 promote agricultural production in the State.

More specifically, this measure:

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

Your Committee received written comments in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; County of Hawaii Department of Research and Development; Chamber of Commerce Hawaii; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council; Hawaii Farm Bureau;



Hawaii Farmers Union; Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association; Hawaii Food Industry Association; Hawaii Island Chamber of Commerce; Hawaii Ulu Producers Cooperative; Local Food Coalition; Maui Chamber of Commerce; Watanabe Floral, Inc.; and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that increasing local agricultural production is essential to the long-term sustainability and food security of the State. Your Committee also finds that local agricultural producers face significant economic challenges, particularly with the high costs of transporting agricultural products and necessary supplies across the State, that cause undue strain and financial burdens, limit their ability to compete in local markets, and reduce the overall productivity of Hawaii's agricultural sector. Your Committee believes that establishing a cost reimbursement program that offsets the increased transportation costs of agricultural producers would help strengthen local agriculture, encourage greater self-sufficiency, support the State's broader efforts to diversify its economy, and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Adding a repeal date of June 30, 2029; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for purposes of consistency and clarity.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Ways and Means that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1707, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1707, H.D. 1, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Ways and Means,


DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, Chair



