

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 30 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1953
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. 1953, 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 two-year Conservation and Agriculture Environmental Stewardship Pilot Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity;
- (2) Require a report to the Legislature; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; Kauai Women's Caucus; Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action; Kanalani Ohana Farm; Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i; Hawai'i Climate Future Forum; Restore the Commons; and twenty-six individuals.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii's unique agricultural landscape, which includes tropical weather conditions, island soil



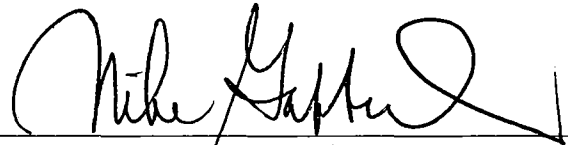
conditions, mixed land use tenure agreements, local growing techniques, and cultural stewardship models requires locally adapted conservation practices, rather than relying on federal conservation programs. Farmers and land stewards further face persistent barriers in adopting conservation agricultural practices including limited access to technical assistance, underinvestment in farm-level conservation infrastructure, and a lack of coordinated statewide support and climate-smart stewardship. Your Committee believes that a coordinated statewide approach is necessary to provide a critical sustainability framework for agricultural producers. This measure incentivizes a transition to regenerative agriculture, furthering the State's commitments to climate mitigation and sustainable food production.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) 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 H.B. No. 1953, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1953, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture and
Environment,



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



