

Honolulu, Hawaii

, 2026

MAR 24

RE: S.B. No. 2174
S.D. 2
H.D. 1

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

Madame:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred S.B. No. 2174, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Authorize the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to declare an emergency quarantine when it has been reasonably determined that there is a threat to agriculture or the environment in the State;
- (2) Authorize the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to halt operations related to or within the affected area for ninety-six hours, subject to extension by vote of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity;
- (3) Authorize the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to quarantine any business or other area that is known or reasonably suspected to be infested or infected with any pest;
- (4) Require the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to provide certain notices to farmers affected by the



emergency quarantine and provide compensation to farmers who incur losses due to the quarantine order; and

- (5) Authorize the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to establish interim rules governing the transportation of any material into and within the State known to harbor or transport a high-impact invasive species or pest.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Department of Land and Natural Resources; Office of Hawaiian Affairs; The Nature Conservancy Hawai'i and Palmyra; and one individual. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Libertarian Party of Hawaii. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Hawai'i Farm Bureau and Hawai'i Farmers Union United.

Your Committee finds that the introduction and spread of invasive species, pests, and animal diseases pose a serious and ongoing threat to Hawaii's agricultural industry, natural environment, and food security and that rapid response is often necessary to prevent widespread ecological and economic damage. Your Committee further finds that delays in containment can significantly increase the scope and cost of eradication efforts and exacerbate risks to farmers, ecosystems, and public health. Your Committee believes that authorizing the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to quarantine certain areas that are known or reasonably suspected to be infested or infected with any pest and adopt interim rules governing the movement of materials that present a danger to public or ecological health will strengthen the State's ability to respond swiftly and effectively to emerging agricultural and environmental threats, while supporting the protection of Hawaii's agriculture and biosecurity interests.

Your Committee notes the concerns raised by the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity in testimony regarding the lack of statutory authority for the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity to convene within the ninety-six hour timeframe to extend the period of the emergency quarantine to address the emergency or initiate treatment or mitigation options.

Your Committee has accordingly amended this measure by:



- (1) Deleting language that would have:
 - (A) Authorized the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to declare an emergency quarantine when it has been reasonably determined that there is a threat to agriculture or the environment in the State;
 - (B) Authorized the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to halt operations related to or within the affected area for ninety-six hours, subject to extension by vote of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity; and
 - (C) Required the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to provide certain notices to farmers affected by the emergency quarantine and provide compensation;
- (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.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2174, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2174, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture & Food
Systems,



CORY CHUN, Chair



