

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 3018

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 06 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2174
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 Judiciary, to which was referred S.B. No. 2174, 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:

- (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 affected farmers and provide compensation; 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 Land and Natural Resources, Hawai'i Food+ Policy, and Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Libertarian Party of Hawaii and one individual.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, and Hawai'i Farm Bureau.

Your Committee finds that weak biosecurity poses a significant threat to the State's food system and food security. The State's food system already suffers from frequent attacks by well-established invasive pests. Even when invasive pests do not directly consume local species, they continue to place the State's ecosystems at risk by reducing crop yields, increasing pest control costs for farmers, and degrading pollination, soil stability, and native biodiversity that support agriculture. Notably, there are roughly two hundred plants that aggressively outcompete native flora. Without further action to address the threats posed by invasive pests, the State's food security will continue to decline. This measure promotes the State's food security goals by implementing critical safeguards to prevent the establishment and spread of invasive species in the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by 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 Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2174, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2174, S.D. 2.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



