

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **2235**

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 13 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2319
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 S.B. No. 2319 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate funds for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) grant writer position within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity and convert the position from temporary to permanent.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Ulupono Initiative; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Local Food Coalition; Hawaii Food Industry Association; Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i; Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association; East O'ahu County Farm Bureau; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; and seven individuals.

Your Committee finds that federal grants are a key resource needed to support agriculture in the State, helping to fill agricultural gaps without having to rely on state funding or loan borrowings that need to be repaid. Your Committee further finds that the grant writer position in the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity has obtained \$8.89 million in federal grants this year. These grants have been used to purchase processing



equipment, which has allowed for increased agricultural production and resulted in new value-added products or refrigeration units that increase the shelf-life of agricultural products and maintain cold chains. Your Committee also finds that the grant writer position is currently a temporary position and the funding for the position is uncertain. This measure will ensure financial support and make the position permanent to improve grant capacity at the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity for the benefit of farmers and ranchers in the State.

Your Committee has amended this measure by inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion.

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 S.B. No. 2319, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2319, 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,

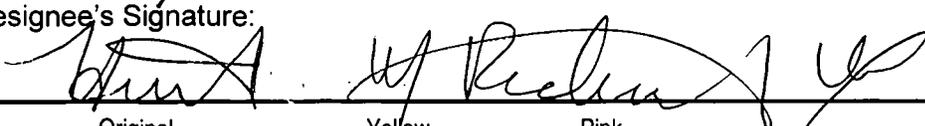


MIKE GABBARD, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
AEN

Bill / Resolution No.:* SB 2319	Committee Referral: AEN, WAM	Date: 2-4-26		
<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			
TOTAL	5	-	-	-
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency				

***Only one measure per Record of Votes**