

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2562

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 2026

RE: S.B. No. 2709
S.D. 1

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

Sir:

Your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and
Transportation, to which was referred S.B. No. 2709 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO BIOSECURITY,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to establish rules to enforce the Akamai Arrival Program; and
- (2) Require the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to strengthen enforcement of plant and non-domestic animal quarantine and microorganism importations.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Hawai'i Food+ Policy, and one individual.

Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity and Alaska Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines.

Your Committees find that strategic management of imports is a cornerstone of biosecurity and the prevention of invasive species entering the State. According to state law, completion of



the State of Hawaii Biosecurity Declaration, which records certain biosecurity hazards upon arrival, is a requirement for any individual entering the State. Your Committees further find that to improve overall compliance, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity instituted an online version of the Declaration, also known as the Akamai Arrival Program. By strengthening the State's importation containment mechanisms, this measure seeks to protect Hawaii's fragile ecosystems, agricultural industry, and local economy.

Your Committees acknowledge the concerns raised in testimony by Alaska Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines that the requirements for inspectors limits critical discretionary action, which is essential in a system where certain access, security protocols, and operational control are comprehensively regulated at the federal level. Therefore, amendments to this measure are necessary to address this concern.

Accordingly, your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Restoring language in existing law that grants any inspector of the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity the discretion to enter and inspect an aircraft if the inspector believes there is cause; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture and Environment and Transportation that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2709, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2709, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Agriculture and
Environment and Transportation,


LORRAINE R. INOUE, Chair


MIKE GABBARD, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Transportation
TRS

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
SB 2709	AEN/TRS, WAM	02/17/26		
<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
INOUYE, Lorraine R. (C)	✓			
ELEFANTE, Brandon J.C. (VC)	✓			
KANUHA, Dru Mamo	✓			
LEE, Chris	✓			
DECORTE, Samantha	✓			
TOTAL	5	0	0	0
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