

STAND. COM. REP. NO. 2491

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 2026

RE: S.B. No. 3256  
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. 3256 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 the Hawaii Agricultural Transportation Assistance Program, to consist of a reimbursement program and a grant program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, to assist certain farmers and livestock producers with transportation costs for agricultural products, inputs, supplies, and production and distribution of agricultural commodities;
- (2) Establish the Hawaii Agricultural Transportation Assistance Special Fund;
- (3) Require reports to the Legislature; and
- (4) Appropriate funds.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Hawaii Food Industry Association; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawaii Floriculture



and Nursery Association; Bayer; Local Food Coalition; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; and Kapapala Ranch.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from Animal Rights Hawai'i.

Your Committee finds that the State relies heavily on shipping for the import and export of goods, significantly increasing the cost of transporting agricultural inputs, which places persistent economic transportation expenses on the State's agricultural producers. While Hawaii faces significant transportation costs, farmers and ranchers on the continental United States have benefited from the federal United States Department of Agriculture's Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program, which has successfully supported geographically disadvantaged farmers and ranchers by offsetting high transportation costs and improving market competitiveness. Your Committee believes that this measure, which remodels the federal program to a Hawaii-specific assistance apparatus, will enhance the resiliency and sustainability of the State's agricultural producers.

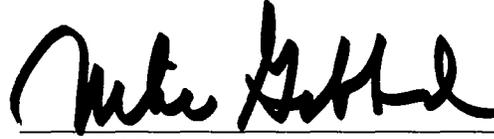
Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the interest earned or accrued on monies deposited into the special fund shall be retained by the fund;
- (2) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) 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 S.B. No. 3256, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 3256, 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Gabbard", written over a horizontal line.

MIKE GABBARD, Chair



