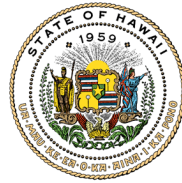


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9560 FAX: (808) 973-9613

SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026
2:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2798, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT**

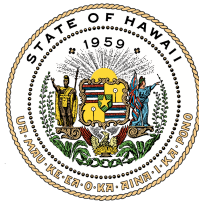
Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2798, SD 1, HD1 that makes permanent the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program established pursuant to Act 235, SLH 2025. The program is to be renamed as the Agricultural Enforcement Program and expands the program statewide.

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) strongly supports this measure. Agricultural crimes is a serious problem and a challenge for farmers and ranchers on all islands. Agricultural crimes reduce the viability of agricultural operations and threatens public safety. Farmers and ranchers should not have to be fearful just trying to make a living and having permanent dedicated law enforcement will reduce these pressures. DAB otherwise defers to the Department of Law Enforcement and their pivotal role in protecting the State's agricultural legacy and the individuals and communities who dedicate themselves to this critical industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT
Director

ERNEST J. ROBELLO
Deputy Director
Administration

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai
715 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2798, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1

RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Before the House Committee on
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 2:00 PM
State Capitol Conference Room 325
Testifier: Mike Lambert

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) supports Senate Bill 2798, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1. This bill makes permanent the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program originally established pursuant to Act 235, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, renames it the Agricultural Enforcement Program, and expands the program statewide. It amends Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 353C-16 and modifies the relevant provisions of Act 235, SLH 2025, with an effective date of July 1, 3000.

DLE supports SB2798 SD1 HD1 for numerous reasons. First, DLE has recognized the critical need to address agricultural crimes in Hawaii. Agricultural theft and vandalism continue to harm Hawaii's farming communities, threaten food security, and undermine the livelihoods of those who contribute to the State's agricultural economy. Since its inception, the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program has represented a meaningful and targeted response to these pressing concerns, and making the program permanent reflects the State's commitment to sustaining that response over the long term.

Second, the DLE believes that expanding the program statewide is a natural and necessary progression. Agricultural crimes are not confined to a single county or region. Hawaii's farmers and agricultural operations across all islands face vulnerabilities that require a coordinated, uniform enforcement presence. A statewide Agricultural Enforcement Program ensures that all of Hawaii's agricultural communities receive equal protection and that enforcement efforts are consistent, well-resourced, and strategically deployed.

Third, this bill aligns directly with the DLE's broader mission of centralizing and strengthening state law enforcement functions to improve public safety and reduce duplication of efforts. The DLE has previously engaged with farmers, community leaders, and the Department of Agriculture to build collaborative relationships aimed at combating agricultural crime. Making this program permanent and expanding it statewide furthers those collaborative efforts and provides a stable, institutional framework for enforcement officers to operate effectively across the State.

Finally, renaming the program as the Agricultural Enforcement Program signals a long-term institutional commitment to protecting Hawaii's agricultural sector. This is not merely a symbolic change but a reflection of the maturation of the program from a pilot initiative into a permanent and essential component of Hawaii's law enforcement infrastructure.

The DLE looks forward to continued collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, county law enforcement partners, and agricultural stakeholders to ensure the success of the Agricultural Enforcement Program as it expands statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

KELDEN B.A. WALTJEN
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

SHANNON M. KAGAWA
FIRST DEPUTY
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



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OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF **SENATE BILL 2798, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1**

A BILL FOR AN ACT
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
Representative David Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 2:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference
State Capitol Conference Room 325
415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs: The County of Hawai'i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney submits the following testimony **in support** of Senate Bill 2798, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1.

SB 2798, SD 1, HD 1 was drafted with the intent to make permanent the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program established pursuant to Act 235, SLH 2025, renames the program as the Agricultural Enforcement Program, and expands the program statewide.

Hawai'i Island plays a critical role in the State's agricultural production. SB 2798, SD 1, HD 1 has the potential to enhance the safety and sustainability of our farming and agricultural industry by holding offenders accountable, deterring future agriculture crime, and encouraging farmers and ranchers to focus more on producing high-quality products using sustainable practices rather than worrying about the security of their agricultural operations. This bill also aims to address ongoing concerns related issues that have long plagued our Hawai'i Island agriculture community including illegal hunting on private lands, animal trespass resulting in property damage, and other agriculture crimes.

If signed into law, this legislation would enable the agriculture community to:

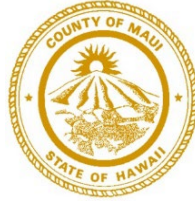
1. Safeguard our agricultural industry, which is the breadbasket of the State of Hawai'i.
2. Enable our farmers, growers, and ranchers to remain competitive on the global market with Hawai'i-grown products.
3. Hold offenders accountable for actions that undermine food security and hinder economic development for the state.

The County of Hawai‘i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney is dedicated to pursuing justice with integrity and commitment. SB 2798, SD 1, HD 1 represents a significant step toward addressing the serious food security and economic issues caused by agricultural crimes. For these reasons, the County of Hawai‘i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney supports the passage of Senate Bill 2798, Seante Draft 1, House Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

ANDREW H. MARTIN
Prosecuting Attorney

SHELLY C. MIYASHIRO
First Deputy Prosecuting Attorney



DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
PHONE (808) 270-7777 • FAX (808) 270-7625

TESTIMONY ON
S.B. 2798 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

March 23, 2026

The Honorable David A. Tarnas
Chair
The Honorable Mahina Poepoe
Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Maui respectfully submits the following comments **in support of S.B. 2798 SD1 HD1, Relating to Law Enforcement**. This bill protects local agriculture by making permanent the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program established by Act 235 SLH 2025 and expands the program statewide.

We support this bill because it will help reduce agriculture crime statewide. For years, if not decades, our farmers and ranchers have been targeted by criminals that destroy vital farm infrastructure such as equipment, storage units, fences and gates; illegally hunt and poach on ranch lands; and steal valuable crops. Although our law enforcement partners have increased the assistance provided to the agriculture community, the relative isolation of most farms and ranches make it difficult to hold criminals responsible for the damage they cause to an already endangered industry. The resources and authority allocated by this bill would be a significant step in helping keep our farms and ranches safe.

For these reasons, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Maui **supports S.B. 2798 SD1 HD1**. Please feel free to contact our office at (808) 270-7777 if you have any questions or inquiries. Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 24, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2798, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 2798, SD1, HD1, which makes permanent the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program established pursuant to Act 235, SLH 2025, renames it the Agricultural Enforcement Program, and expands the program statewide.

Agricultural crime remains a serious and ongoing challenge for farmers and ranchers across all islands, not just on O'ahu and Hawai'i Island. Theft, trespass, vandalism, poaching, and illegal dumping directly threaten farm and ranch viability, public safety, and agriculture production statewide.

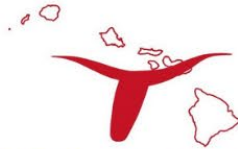
While Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program is limited geographically, agricultural crime is not confined to just two islands. Farmers and ranchers on Maui, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i experience similar challenges and deserve the same level of protection and support as those on O'ahu and Hawai'i Island.

We appreciate that this measure builds on an existing program rather than creating a new one. Making the program permanent and statewide recognizes that agricultural crime is not a temporary issue and requires sustained, dedicated enforcement resources. The Agricultural Enforcement Program allows law enforcement officers to focus on offenses involving agricultural products and commodities and to work collaboratively with federal, state, and county partners.

Farmers and ranchers already face numerous risks beyond their control, including weather, pests, disease, market volatility, and labor shortages. Agricultural crime adds another layer of uncertainty that undermines investment and long-term planning. A dedicated, statewide Agricultural Enforcement Program helps deter crime, improve response times, and sends a clear message that agricultural crimes will be taken seriously.

HFB appreciates the Legislature's continued attention to this issue and urges the Committee to support SB 2798, SD1, HD1, to ensure that all agricultural communities across the State benefit from consistent and effective agricultural law enforcement.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

SB2798 SD1 HD1

RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

March 24, 2026, 2:00 PM

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB2798 SD1** which makes permanent the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program established pursuant to Act 235, SLH 2025. Renames the program as the Agricultural Enforcement Program and expands the program statewide.

Thanks to the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program, we have had more attention and resources directed towards agricultural crime than ever before. Expanding this program statewide is necessary, as agricultural producers experience vandalism, trespassing, poaching, and theft in all counties. We urge the legislature to ensure that with the expansion of the program, the permanent program receives adequate funding for the Department of Law Enforcement to hire, train, and retain staffing to address the needs of those who grow food for our community.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Ranchers produce a high-quality protein and are the stewards of almost 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or nearly 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President



Christian Zuckerman
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Kelii Gannet
Kohala, Hawai'i

East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Ka'u, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawai'i

Gina Lind
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy
Moloka'i

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

India Clark
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Rachel LaDrig
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports SB2798.**

By making the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program permanent and expanding it statewide, this legislation acknowledges the ongoing need for effective enforcement and protection mechanisms within the agricultural community. It ensures that farmers can continue their essential work without the persistent threat of illegal activities that can disrupt operations, harm livelihoods, and diminish the overall integrity of Hawaii's agricultural sector.

Moreover, expanding the program across the state will allow for more equitable access to enforcement resources, providing small and large farmers alike with the support needed to safeguard their crops, livestock, and property. This statewide commitment not only enhances security but also promotes a resilient agricultural economy that is vital to the sustenance and wellbeing of Hawaii's communities. Institutionalizing the Agricultural Enforcement Program in this manner demonstrates a strong investment in the future of agriculture in Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

SB-2798-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 6:21:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Cabral	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support

SB-2798-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/21/2026 7:48:12 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2798 SB RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

SB-2798-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 4:08:40 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!!! MAHALO!

SB-2798-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/22/2026 8:28:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Moniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testifying in strong support of this Bill. Thank you for supporting the pilot project on Oahu and Hawaii Island. Please continue your support to deter and control agriculture crimes and expand this program statewide.

SB-2798-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 10:24:31 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Gomes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

SB-2798-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 4:00:44 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Ashman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill to make the ag law enforcement program permanent and extend it to all counties. Farmers and ranchers face constant trespass, theft, and vandalism that prevents them from staying viable. Thank you.