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KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT
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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
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS**

**Monday, March 2, 2026, 10:02 AM
State Capitol Conference Room 211**

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) supports Senate Bill 2798, Senate Draft 1, SD1. Senate Bill 2798, SD1, proposes to make permanent the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program originally established pursuant to Act 235, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, to rename the program the Agricultural Enforcement Program, and to expand the program statewide, effective July 1, 2050.

The DLE has long recognized the critical need to address agricultural crimes across the State of Hawaii. Agricultural theft, vandalism, and related offenses cause significant harm to Hawaii's farming communities, threaten the State's food security, and undermine the livelihoods of local farmers and agricultural producers. The DLE has been actively engaging with agricultural stakeholders, community leaders, and partner agencies to build collaborative relationships to combat agricultural crime. The formalization and statewide expansion of the Agricultural Enforcement Program represent a meaningful and necessary step in ensuring that these communities receive dedicated, consistent, and professional law enforcement support.

Second, the DLE supports making the Agricultural Enforcement Program permanent because, by its nature, a pilot program is limited in scope, duration, and resources. The experience and data gathered during the pilot phase under Act 235, SLH 2025, provide a strong foundation for a permanent, statewide program. A permanent program will allow the DLE to strategically deploy and maintain dedicated agricultural enforcement officers across all counties, establish uniform training standards, and develop lasting partnerships with the Department of Agriculture, county law enforcement agencies, and local farming communities. This permanence will provide Hawaii's agricultural sector with the stability and sustained law enforcement presence it deserves.

Third, the statewide expansion of the program is vital. Agricultural crimes are not confined to any single island or region. Hawaii's diverse agricultural landscape spans all major islands, and crimes such as theft of crops, livestock, and equipment, as well as vandalism of farmland and irrigation infrastructure, occur throughout the State. By expanding the Agricultural Enforcement Program statewide, SB 2798, SD1 ensures that all of Hawaii's farmers and agricultural producers, regardless of their geographic location, will have access to dedicated enforcement resources. This equitable distribution of law enforcement resources aligns with the DLE's core mission to promote public safety and protect the residents and industries of Hawaii.

Finally, the DLE believes that a permanent, statewide Agricultural Enforcement Program is consistent with the broader goals of centralizing and strengthening state law enforcement functions. The DLE remains committed to working closely with the Department of Agriculture, county police departments, and other partner agencies to ensure the success of this program and the protection of Hawaii's vital agricultural resources.

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

KELDEN B.A. WALTJEN
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2798 SD1

A BILL FOR AN ACT
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Monday, March 2, 2026 at 10:02 a.m.
Via Videoconference
State Capitol Conference Room 211
415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Ways and Means: The County of Hawai'i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney submits the following testimony **in support** of Senate Bill 2798, Senate Draft 1.

SB 2798 SD1 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 SD1 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:

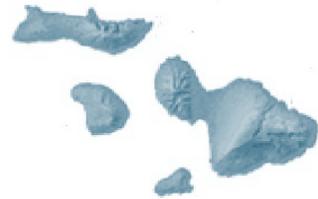
1. Safeguard our agricultural industry, which is the bread basket of the State of Hawai'i.
2. Enable our farmers, growers, and ranchers to remain competitive on the global market with Hawai'i-grown products.
3. Hold offenders accountable for actions that undermine food security and hinder economic development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

The County of Hawai‘i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney is dedicated to pursuing justice with integrity and commitment. SB 2798 SD1 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. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

ANDREW H. MARTIN
Prosecuting Attorney

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First Deputy Prosecuting Attorney



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

March 1, 2026

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Chair
The Honorable Sharon Y. Moriwaki
Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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, 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**. 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.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

SB2798 SD1
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Monday, March 2, 2026, 10:31 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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



SB-2798-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2026 7:30:49 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin Mack Almasin	Testifying for Ulupalakua Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We support SB2798. Thank you.



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March 2, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2798, SD1
RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:01 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, 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, 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 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.

SB-2798-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 4:18:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa Thompson	Testifying for Thompson Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 2798 RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson, Kula, Maui

SB-2798-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 5:32:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2026 10:31:00 AM

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-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2026 9:06:43 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory FRIEL	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the committee,

My name is Gregory Friel and I'm a cattle producer on Maui and I support 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 protect our members of the Agricultural community.

Mahalo,

Gregory Friel

SB-2798-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2026 10:16:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2026 10:31:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Blane	Testifying for Parker Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Parker Ranch stands with the Hawaii Cattlemen’s Council in **strong support of SB2798 SD1**, expanding the Agricultural Enforcement Pilot Program statewide and making it a permanent program.

Ag crimes have become an increasing challenge for ag producers across the state. It hurts our cattle operation and ultimately Hawaii’s local beef industry. We appreciate the ongoing support of our legislators and local law enforcement in recognizing the severity of this issue and assisting us in finding solutions.

We thank you for the opportunity testify on this measure and offer our continued support of initiatives that help to reduce crime on agricultural lands across the state.

SB-2798-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 3:53:40 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/2/2026 10:02:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am in total support of SB2798 and support Hawaii Cattlemens Council testimony.