

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 09 2009

RE: H.B. No. 1471  
H.D. 2  
S.D. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2009  
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Ways and Means, to which was referred H.B. No. 1471, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FARMS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish a food certification pilot program to benefit farmers throughout the State.

Specifically, this measure:

- (1) Establishes the food certification pilot program to be managed by the Department of Agriculture, with the assistance by the Department of Health;
- (2) Establishes the food certification pilot program special fund within the state treasury to support the program;
- (3) Requires the pilot program to:
  - (A) Encourage farmers to form agricultural cooperatives;
  - (B) Coordinate purchasing agreements between the cooperatives and hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality related businesses; and



- (C) Develop and implement a "safe" food certification for products to promote fresh, high-quality, and locally grown produce; and
- (4) Appropriates funds for the pilot program.

Your Committee received three written comments on this measure. Written comments may be reviewed on the Legislature's website.

News reports over the past couple of years have highlighted the need for the agricultural industry to improve food safety practices due to increasing incidence of bacteria, such as salmonella, found in agricultural products. Your Committee finds that food safety is critical to the State's food supply and world renowned reputation as a high-quality producer of agricultural products and that this measure will provide protection to the agriculture, tourism, restaurant, and retail industries. Furthermore, although the Department of Agriculture has a long history of supporting the purchase of local fresh foods, your Committee believes this measure will increase the growth and sale of safe locally-grown produce by developing a safe food certification process.

Your Committee has amended the measure by:

- (1) Requiring the Department of Agriculture to certify the produce of at least one hundred farmers each year;
- (2) Appropriating \$1 for the food certification pilot program to promote continuing discussion on the matter; and
- (3) Requiring that the pilot program sunsets in two years.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Ways and Means that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1471, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1471, H.D. 2, S.D. 1.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Ways and Means,

  
DONNA MERCADO KIM, Chair



