

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 7 - 2019

RE: S.B. No. 1148
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirtieth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2019
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 1148 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate funds to financially support the local farmers and ranchers who have experienced losses caused by disasters through grants and loans.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, County of Hawai'i Department of Research and Development, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, Hawaii Crop Improvement Association, Hawaii Coffee Association, Maui Farmers Union United, Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association, Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii, Maui County Farm Bureau, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, O'ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, Local Food Coalition, Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council, Hawaii Farmers Union, Kapoho Land Partnership, and thirty-six individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that farmers and ranchers are vulnerable to natural disasters, and farmers and ranchers throughout the



State directly suffered millions in damages due to extreme weather in 2018. Your Committee further finds that dedicated funding for agricultural disasters will help local farmers and ranchers recover from natural disaster emergencies. Your Committee recommends that farmers and ranchers who were directly impacted by a disaster and remain in the immediate vicinity of where the disaster occurred, should receive a preference on their loan application under this program.

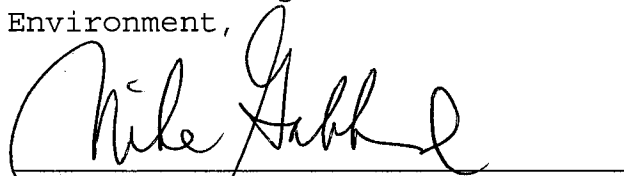
Your Committee agrees with the Department of Agriculture that this disaster funding should be routed to its existing agricultural loan program instead of creating a new disaster program, as staffing and rules for providing loans to farmers and ranchers during emergencies already exists in the agricultural loan program.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an appropriation amount of \$5,000,000;
- (2) Directing the appropriation into and out of the agricultural loan revolving fund to provide loans pursuant to the agricultural loan program; 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. 1148, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1148, 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,


MIKE GABBARD, Chair



