

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12 , 2020

RE: H.B. No. 2167
H.D. 1.

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirtieth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2020
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred H.B. No. 2167 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish a three year Cover Crop Reimbursement Pilot Program to provide up to one hundred percent cost reimbursement to farming operations in the State for acquiring cover crop seeds or green manure;
- (2) Establish a Cover Crop Reimbursement Pilot Program manager position within the Department of Agriculture to administer the program; and
- (3) Require a report to the Legislature with a recommendation on whether the pilot program should be extended.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Center for Food Safety; Pono Hawaii Initiative; Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action; Larry Jefts Farms, LLC; Sierra Club of Hawaii; Hawaii Farm Bureau; Young Progressives Demanding Action; A'a Li'i Farm; and numerous individuals. Your



Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that this measure would create an incentive for farm management practices that enhance the quality and sustainability of Hawaii's agricultural lands. In addition to reducing the cost of and reliance upon fertilizer, pesticides, and herbicides, cover crops have been found to mimic soil-building and microbial-friendly conditions in diverse soils, conserve moisture, prevent erosion and runoff, and reduce crop consumption of irrigation water. Your Committee finds that a three-year pilot program to reimburse farming operations in the State for the costs of acquiring cover crop seeds or green manure will allow the State to observe the benefits of these practices while promoting local farmers and the environment alike.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

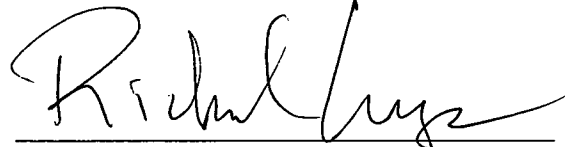
- (1) Changing the appropriation to an unspecified amount;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 2150, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Should your Committee on Finance decide to hear this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider appropriating \$1,000,000 for the Cover Crop Reimbursement Pilot Program and related manager position.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2167, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2167, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture,



RICHARD P. CREAGAN, Chair



