

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2500

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 2020

RE: S.B. No. 2709  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirtieth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2020  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 2709 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO BEGINNING FARMER TRAINING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish and appropriate funding for the beginning farmer training program to be administered by the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Farmers Apprentice Mentorship Program, Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii, Hawaii Farmers Union United, Hawaii Farmers Union United Haleakala Chapter, Malamalama Farm and Center, Kahumana Organic Farm & Cafe, Pono Hawai'i Initiative, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Ulupono Initiative, Farm Maui LLC, The Jones Family Farm, The Collective Cycle LLC, Wai'anae Community Re-Development Corporation, Maui Chamber of Commerce, and thirty-three individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture and State Procurement Office.

Your Committee finds that it is necessary to support beginning farmers in the State by partnering with nonprofit organizations to expand existing training programs for these farmers. New and aspiring farmers face a myriad of challenges, including acquiring adequate production, business knowledge, and skills and accessing the tools necessary to evaluate their



resources and develop feasible farming and business plans. Furthermore, the State lacks qualified farming method teachers and funding for beginning farmer training, and federal funding for beginning farmers is limited and unreliable.

Your Committee believes that the future of the State's farming industry, food supply, and agriculture is reliant upon increasing and diversifying the number of new farmers in the State; introducing regenerative farming methods into the State; enhancing the long-term viability of farm businesses; utilizing and building upon existing beginning farmer training methods; providing opportunities for potential farmers who are socially or financially disadvantaged; and increasing support for beginning farmers who already own or manage a farm, and have farmed for five years or less.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

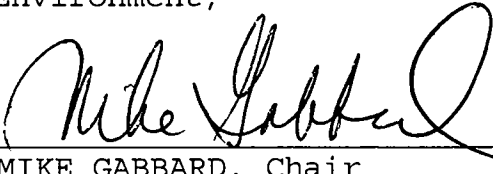
- (1) Replacing the Department of Agriculture with the University of Hawaii, West Oahu, Sustainable Community Food System as the lead agency;
- (2) Deleting language that would have required the program to enter into contracts in accordance with the state procurement code, thereby giving the program the ability to choose the procurement method that is most suitable;
- (3) Deleting language that would have mandated criteria for requests for proposals under the program;
- (4) Authorizing the appropriation to the University of Hawaii to be used for administration costs, staff salaries, and expenses for contracting with outside entities, in addition to establishment and implementation of the beginning farmer training program;
- (5) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose; and
- (6) 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. 2709, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2709, 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,



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MIKE GABBARD, Chair



