

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

235

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12 2021

RE: S.B. No. 1235
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2021
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 1235 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to establish two new positions on the Board of Agriculture, specifying that one of the positions shall be reserved for a resident of the island of Molokai and one of the positions shall be reserved for a resident of the island of Lanai.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from two members of the County Council of Maui; Hawai'i SEED; Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Molokai Chapter; and three individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that there is often inequitable representation of neighbor island issues through boards and commissions. Access to many government services and functions are difficult for Molokai and Lanai residence because most government operations are based on Maui and Oahu. Molokai's agricultural environment, needs, and realities are different than the other islands that currently hold designated seats on the Board of Agriculture. Molokai's reliance on its subsistence economy and lifestyle, agricultural infrastructure, resources, economies of



scale, challenges to imports and exports, access to supplies and inputs, opportunities for growth, and delivery pipelines to markets are complex agricultural issues unique to the island and are currently not represented on the Board of Agriculture.

Your Committee also finds that Lanai faces unique agricultural issues. Fifty percent of the island's lands are designated as agricultural land by the Land Use Commission. While Lanai's food resources once supported at least six thousand people, the closure of the pineapple plantation has led to a large reliance on imported foods due to the lack of limited water resources, declining forest ecosystems, and limited economic diversity. Lanai continues to rely on subsistence hunting and is seeking to promote the identification of untapped agricultural niche markets and value-added products to support the growth of small-scale agriculture.

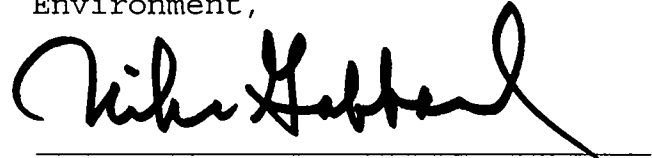
Your Committee has noted the concerns of the Department of Agriculture that keeping the four at-large positions on the Board of Agriculture provides the most diverse representation of agricultural knowledge and experience. Historically, the Board member representing Maui County has represented the interests of the entire county, including Molokai and Lanai. Additionally, there is an exclusive opportunity for residents of Molokai to have a decision-making vote as a member for the Molokai Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board for the Molokai irrigation system water service. Additionally, there have been challenges for the Department of Agriculture to fill vacant advisory board positions with Molokai residents.

Your Committee has amended this measure by 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. 1235, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1235, 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Gabbard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right and then loops back down.

MIKE GABBARD, Chair



