

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 22, 2024

RE: S.B. No. 2960
S.D. 1
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committees on Agriculture & Food Systems and Water & Land, to which was referred S.B. No. 2960, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FARMERS,"

beg leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Clarify that agricultural lots shall be used for farming by requiring that purchasers and lessees of farm lots submit proof of using the lots to produce food or conduct other agricultural activities; and
- (2) Authorize certain agricultural cooperatives to apply for farm lots.

Your Committees received testimony in support of this measure from the Agribusiness Development Corporation; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council; and five individuals. Your Committees received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General and Department of Agriculture.

Your Committees find that agricultural lands are a key resource that can be used to meet the State's goals for economic diversification and food self-sufficiency. However, nonfarming



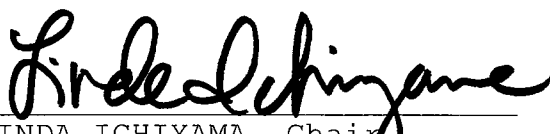
use of agricultural lands has significantly increased over the past few decades. This measure ensures that agricultural lands are used primarily for productive agricultural purposes and further supports food sustainability in the State.

Your Committees have amended this measure by:

- (1) Exempting purchasers or lessees who experience significant economic hardship directly caused by a disaster from certain agriculture-related requirements;
- (2) Clarifying that an agricultural cooperative association may apply for a farm lot if at least fifty-one percent ownership interest is owned by one or more members who qualify as bona fide farmers;
- (3) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the records of votes of the members of your Committees on Agriculture & Food Systems and Water & Land that are attached to this report, your Committees are in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2960, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommend that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2960, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committees on Agriculture &
Food Systems and Water & Land,


LINDA ICHIYAMA, Chair


CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, Chair



