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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ESTABLISH A TWO-YEAR AGRICULTURAL CRIME PILOT PROJECT TO EXAMINE AND ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROSECUTING AGRICULTURAL CRIME CASES, INCLUDING THOSE OF AGRICULTURAL THEFT AND AGRICULTURAL VANDALISM, IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU COUNTY OF KAUAI, AND COUNTY OF MAUI.

1           WHEREAS, agricultural crimes, which include agricultural  
2 theft and vandalism, are a persistent issue affecting farmers  
3 and ranchers of the State; and  
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5           WHEREAS, according to a recent publication by the United  
6 States Department of Agriculture and Hawaii Department of  
7 Agriculture, in 2019, there were nearly nineteen thousand  
8 incidents of theft, vandalism, and trespassing on farms in the  
9 State; and  
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11           WHEREAS, these incidents cost Hawaii farms approximately  
12 \$14,400,000, or ten percent of the estimated 2018 Hawaii net  
13 farm income, in theft and vandalism losses and security costs;  
14 and  
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16           WHEREAS, some individuals often trespass onto farm  
17 property, often armed with weapons and accompanied by dogs, to  
18 illegally hunt, which can be particularly dangerous and  
19 destructive for farming operations and can result in destroyed  
20 crops, lost livestock, illegal drug use, litter, and discarded  
21 animal carcasses on farm property; and  
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23           WHEREAS, agricultural crimes, including agricultural theft  
24 and vandalism, increase the costs of production and decrease the  
25 chances for farming and ranching operations to succeed; and  
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1 WHEREAS, despite the prevalence and cost of agricultural  
2 crimes, many incidents go unreported and few result in  
3 convictions; and

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5 WHEREAS, of the nearly nineteen thousand incidents in 2019,  
6 only nine hundred seventy incidents were reported to law  
7 enforcement, which resulted in seventy-nine arrests and sixty-  
8 seven convictions; and

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10 WHEREAS, recognizing the challenges that local farmers face  
11 regarding agricultural crimes, the Legislature passed Act 217,  
12 Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, which established a two-year  
13 Agricultural Theft and Vandalism Project Program to examine the  
14 effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural theft and vandalism  
15 cases in the counties of Hawaii and Maui, and included cases of  
16 theft and vandalism that affect individuals who are not full-  
17 time farmers or ranchers; and

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19 WHEREAS, the City and County of Honolulu suffered the  
20 highest rates of theft or vandalism of all farms in the State  
21 and the County of Kauai suffered the third highest rates of  
22 theft or vandalism of all farms in the State; and

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24 WHEREAS, this body believes that it is time to replicate  
25 the Agricultural Theft and Vandalism Pilot Project in the City  
26 and County of Honolulu, County of Kauai, and County of Maui as  
27 it will provide resources to suppress incidences of agricultural  
28 crimes and losses to farmers, ranchers, aquaculturists, and  
29 floriculturists in the State; now, therefore,

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31 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
32 Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
33 Session of 2024, the Senate concurring, that the Department of  
34 Agriculture is urged to establish a two-year Agricultural Crime  
35 Pilot Project to examine and assess the effectiveness of  
36 prosecuting agricultural crime cases, including those of  
37 agricultural theft and agricultural vandalism, in the City and  
38 County of Honolulu, County of Kauai, and County of Maui; and

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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture  
41 is also requested to examine and assess the effectiveness of  
42 prosecuting agricultural crimes, including the theft of  
43 agricultural products produced for personal or commercial use on



1 any land, regardless of land classification, and agricultural  
2 vandalism; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture  
5 is requested to coordinate with the Department of Law  
6 Enforcement, the City and County of Honolulu, County of Kauai,  
7 and County of Maui to hire one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
8 enforcement officer for each county, to be placed within the  
9 respective prosecuting attorney's office or any other law  
10 enforcement agency; and

11  
12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture  
13 is requested to assess the implementation of the pilot project,  
14 including the pilot project's effectiveness, to determine  
15 whether to continue, expand, or end the pilot project, by:

- 16 (1) Identifying the number of convictions for agricultural  
17 crimes;
- 18 (2) Identifying best practices for prosecuting  
19 perpetrators of agricultural crimes;
- 20 (3) Identifying best practices for the coordination of  
21 local police and other enforcement officers'  
22 interaction between the prosecuting attorney's office  
23 and the Judiciary;
- 24 (4) Identifying best practices for the development and  
25 implementation of the public's and farmers' reporting  
26 of agricultural crimes or the attempt of agricultural  
27 theft or agricultural vandalism;
- 28 (5) Identifying areas where agricultural crimes are most  
29 prevalent;
- 30 (6) Identifying best practices for preventing agricultural  
31 crimes; and
- 32 (7) Making recommendations for a statewide program to  
33 address agricultural crimes; and
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42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture  
43 is requested to submit an interim report to the Legislature of  
44 its findings and recommendations, including any proposed



1 legislation, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
2 the Regular Session of 2025; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture  
5 is requested to submit a final report to the Legislature of its  
6 findings and recommendations, including any proposed  
7 legislation, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
8 the Regular Session of 2026; and

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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
11 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the  
12 Board of Agriculture; Director of Law Enforcement; Prosecuting  
13 Attorneys for the City and County of Honolulu, County of Kauai,  
14 and County of Maui; and Chiefs of Police of the Honolulu Police  
15 Department, Kauai Police Department, and Maui Police Department.  
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