

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1415

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 22 , 2023

RE: S.B. No. 660
S.D. 2
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred S.B. No. 660, S.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to establish the Healthy Soils Program within the Department of Agriculture and appropriate funds for this purpose.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association; Kona Coffee Farmers Association; Down to Earth; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; 350Hawaii.org; Synergistic Hawai'i Agriculture Council; Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Kanalani Ohana Farm; Kuaiwi Farm; Kona Restoration Farm; Kona Bae Farm; Ho'ōla Farms; Chamber of Sustainable Commerce; Bea's Knees Farm, LLC; Beyond Organic Consulting, Inc.; Tinyville Farm; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of the Attorney General, CropLife America, and Hawaii Crop Improvement Association. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

2023-2714 SB660 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee finds that healthy soils are the baseline requirement for agricultural success and a foundation for sustainable agribusinesses. The State cannot increase its food self-sufficiency if it does not understand and protect its soil ecosystems. Healthy soils translate to healthy plants that are more resistant to disease. Your Committee further finds that empowering the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program is a necessary first step to bring Hawaii in line with cutting-edge agriculture states, such as California, New Mexico, and Washington.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Modifying some of the functions of the Healthy Soils Program, including removing the establishment of standards to phase out the use of petrochemical synthetic fertilizers;
- (2) Establishing standards for the grant program;
- (3) Changing its effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 660, S.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 660, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture & Food
Systems,



CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, Chair



