

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

720

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 498
H.D. 2

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 498, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL CRIMES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council (Council);
- (2) Require the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council;
- (3) Establish the Agricultural Enforcement Special Fund; and
- (4) Provide dedicated funding for the Council's establishment and continued operations.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Law Enforcement; Department of Agriculture; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; and Hawaii Food+ Policy. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of the Attorney General and Department of Budget and Finance.

2025-1797 HB498 HD2 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee finds that agricultural crime is a persistent and growing problem for agricultural communities. By creating the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expanding the role of the Department of Agriculture, this measure fosters collaboration, strengthens enforcement, and enhances the safety and security of Hawaii's farmers and ranchers.

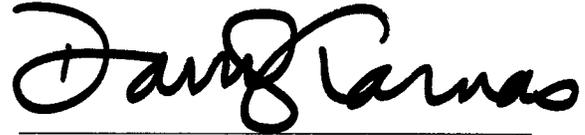
Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Exempting the appointment of the Executive Director of the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council from the provisions of chapter 89, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which relates to collective bargaining in public employment, rather than chapter 84, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which relates to standards of conduct;
- (2) Allowing investigators appointed and commissioned by the Council to carry firearms;
- (3) Specifying the duties and responsibilities of investigators appointed by the Council;
- (4) Requiring every state and county officer charged with the enforcement of laws and ordinances to assist in the enforcement of title 11, Hawaii Revised Statutes; and
- (5) 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 Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 498, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 498, H.D. 2.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary &
Hawaiian Affairs,



DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



