

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

389

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 968  
H.D. 1

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

Madame:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred H.B. No. 968 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission; Hawai'i Farmers Union; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; 350Hawaii.org; Kauai Climate Action Coalition; Citizens' Climate Lobby Hawai'i; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii's agricultural sustainability and environmental resilience depend on healthy soils. Your Committee further finds that investing in healthy soils is a critical step toward ensuring Hawaii's farms remain productive for future generations while strengthening the local economy and food security. This measure establishes a Healthy Soils Program within the Department of Agriculture to assess and

2025-1637 HB968 HD1 HSCR HMSO



improve soil conditions statewide while providing education and technical assistance to farmers.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriation to an unspecified amount;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$500,000.

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 H.B. No. 968, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 968, 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,

  
KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



HSCR 389

<b>Bill/Resolution No.:</b> <div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">HB 968</div>	<b>Committee Referral:</b> <div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">AGR, FIN</div>	<b>Date:</b> <div style="font-size: 1.5em; font-family: cursive;">2/7/2025</div>		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
<b>The recommendation is to:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
<b>AGR Members</b>	<b>Ayes</b>	<b>Ayes (WR)</b>	<b>Nays</b>	<b>Excused</b>
1. KAHALOA, Kirstin (C)	X			
2. KUSCH, Matthias (VC)	X			
3. LOWEN, Nicole E.	X			
4. PERRUSO, Amy A.	X			
5. QUINLAN, Sean	X			
6. WARD, Gene				X
<b>TOTAL (6)</b>	5			1
<b>The recommendation is:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-family: cursive;">committee acronym(s)</div> </div>				
<b>Vice Chair's or designee's signature:</b> _____				
<b>Distribution:</b> Original (White) – Committee      Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office      Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				