

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

645

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14, 2025

RE: H.B. No. 1294
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. 1294, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require and appropriate funds for the Department of Agriculture to establish an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation; Office of Planning and Sustainable Development; Agribusiness Development Corporation; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Kanalani Ohana Farm; Hawai'i Farmers Union; and Hawai'i Food+ Policy. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Land Use Commission.

Your Committee finds that Hawaii's agricultural industry is facing a severe workforce housing shortage, making it increasingly difficult for farmers and farmworkers to secure affordable housing near their worksites. The lack of accessible housing contributes to long commutes, increased operational costs, and worker shortages, ultimately threatening the sustainability of the

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State's agricultural sector. This measure addresses these challenges by establishing the Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group, tasked with exploring policies and recommending solutions to provide farmworker housing while ensuring agricultural lands are protected from non-agricultural residential uses.

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. 1294, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.

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


KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



