

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 17 2025

RE: H.B. No. 858
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred H.B. No. 858, H.D. 1, entitled:

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

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Agriculture to revitalize and enhance the Agricultural Statistics Program to collect data on local agricultural interests; and
- (2) Appropriate funds for the establishment of positions and other expenses for the program.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture; Department of Research and Development of the County of Hawai'i; Ulupono Initiative; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.; Hawai'i Food+ Policy; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; and one individual.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the University of Hawai'i System.

Your Committee finds that the Agricultural Statistics Program (Program) has several shortcomings, including limited access to



accurate and timely agricultural data and outdated collection, analysis, and dissemination of agricultural statistics. Your Committee recognizes the significant need for consistent agricultural statistics to help mitigate and manage various challenges of agricultural activities in the State. This measure establishes staff positions and funds surveys that will support the Program to empower local farmers and stakeholders to make informed decisions, develop effective policies, and monitor the efficacy of the State's agricultural programs.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committee notes that this measure contains an unspecified appropriation amount, including unspecified allocation amounts for: the establishment of an unspecified number of full-time equivalent (FTE) agricultural economist positions; an unspecified number of full-time equivalent (FTE) research statistician positions; secured office space, equipment, the development of electronic data collection systems, and program expenses for six islands; and contracted specialty surveys to be conducted by third-party entities, focusing on critical agricultural data needs. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider inserting an appropriation amount of \$880,000 for the fiscal biennium to be allocated as follows:

- (1) \$170,000 for the establishment of two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) agricultural economist positions;
- (2) \$280,000 for the establishment of four full-time equivalent (4.0 FTE) research statistician positions;
- (3) \$130,000 for the secured office space, equipment, the development of electronic data collection systems, and program expenses for six islands; and



- (4) \$300,000 for contracted specialty surveys to be conducted by third-party entities, focusing on critical agricultural data needs.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 858, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 858, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture and
Environment,



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
AEN

Bill / Resolution No.:* HB858 HD1	Committee Referral: AEN.WAM	Date: 3/10/25
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The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure.
 If so, then the previous decision was to: _____

The Recommendation is:

Pass, unamended 2312
 Pass, with amendments 2311
 Hold 2310
 Recommit 2313

Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	X			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	X			
DECOITE, Lynn	X			
RHOADS, Karl				X
AWA, Brenton	X			
TOTAL	4			1

Recommendation: Adopted Not Adopted

Chair's or Designee's Signature:


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*Only one measure per Record of Votes