REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONVENE AN AGRICULTURAL WORKING GROUP TO RECOMMEND STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO MEET THE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF HAWAII'S AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.

WHEREAS, for decades the call has been made for more agricultural self-sufficiency for the State to limit the need for importing the produce and commodities that are consumed in-state; and

WHEREAS, the recent specter of worldwide pandemics has heightened the concerns to raise the level of agricultural self-sufficiency within the State; and

WHEREAS, additionally, with our year-round growing seasons and expanding growth in our seed industry and overall agricultural technology industry, agriculture can become a significant economic driver in bringing revenue into the State through the export of agricultural products; and

WHEREAS, like economies worldwide, Hawaii's farmers have been severely impacted by global, national, and local economic upheavals causing businesses to close or teeter on the brink of closure; and

WHEREAS, the economic downturn has resulted in severe budget cuts to state agricultural programs and reduced federal and private grants to government and nongovernmental agencies; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to review our present situation and consider dramatic and radical reforms in restructuring to these new economic, social, and environmental paradigms; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to
convene, in collaboration with the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, a working group comprised of stakeholders in the State's agricultural industry to assess and advise the Legislature and Governor of recommended structural changes to meet the needs and opportunities of Hawaii's agricultural industry in the twenty-first century; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is requested that the working group be comprised of:

(1) The Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, or the Chairperson's designated representative, who is requested to chair the working group;

(2) The Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, or the Chairperson's designated representative;

(3) The Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, or the Chairperson's designated representative;

(4) The Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Manoa, or the Dean's designated representative;

(5) The State Executive Director of the Farm Service Agency, United States Department of Agriculture, or the Director's designated representative;

(6) The Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Agricultural Resource Center, or the Chairperson's designated representative;

(7) The Chairperson of the Board of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, or the Chairperson's designated representative; and

(8) Working agriculturalists, including but not limited to agriculturalists from the fields of the seed and high technology sector, cattle and dairy industry, fresh
produce and tropical fruit industry, poultry industry, and aquaculture and mariculture industry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested to explore ways to:

1. Define the state government’s role in supporting the growth of agricultural self-sufficiency and growth with the objective of increased and sustained exportation of agricultural products from the State;

2. Reevaluate the role of various state departments and agencies, identify duplication, and suggest streamlining of functions as it relates to agriculture;

3. Utilize federal and county programs, including ways to increase access to federal programs and grants by Hawaii's agricultural industry, and identify long-term working relationships with various federal and county agencies; and

4. Identify private partnerships to reduce dependence on government; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to submit a report of the working group's findings, recommendations, and any proposed legislation to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Legislative Reference Bureau; the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation; the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture; the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources; the Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Manoa; the Chairperson of Board of the Agribusiness Development Corporation; Hawaii Food and Agriculture Council; United States Department of
Agriculture; and the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of
the Hawaii Agricultural Resource Center.

OFFERED BY:

MAR 08 2010