

MAR 8 - 2019

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO STUDY AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO INCREASE COMPLIANCE WITH THE
VARIOUS REQUIREMENTS FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDS AND TO PREVENT
ABUSE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND LEASES.

1 WHEREAS, it is the State's responsibility under Article XI,
2 Section 3, of the Hawaii State Constitution to conserve and
3 protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture,
4 increase agricultural self-sufficiency, and assure the
5 availability of agriculturally suitable lands; and

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7 WHEREAS, Hawaii's agricultural production is insufficient
8 to meet the State's food consumption needs, and this over-
9 reliance on imported food creates critical issues for the
10 State's health, safety and security, sustainable future, and
11 preparedness in the event of future disaster, emergency, or
12 crisis; and

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14 WHEREAS, over the past few years, the State has made it a
15 priority to shift toward sustainability in agriculture and to
16 decrease the reliance on food imports; and

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18 WHEREAS, state and federal programs offer various
19 incentives and subsidies to promote agriculture, including low-
20 interest loans, low water rates, affordable land leases, tax
21 credits, and grants; and

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23 WHEREAS, some individuals abuse the benefits provided to
24 farmers by building unpermitted structures on agricultural
25 lands, illegally selling their leases, or simply failing to use
26 the land for agriculture; now, therefore,

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28 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
29 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, that the
30 Department of Agriculture is requested to study and make
31 recommendations on how to increase compliance with the various



1 requirements for agricultural lands and to prevent abuse of
2 agricultural land leases, including:

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- (1) Methods to increase the effectiveness of Department of Agriculture employees who inspect agricultural lands for noncomplying structures and uses, including enforcing provisions prohibiting individuals from living on agricultural lands and constructing illegal structures;
- (2) Preventing other impermissible uses of lands within the agricultural district;
- (3) Confiscating leases from individuals who have leased agricultural land from the State and allowed the land to remain uncultivated for extended periods;
- (4) Stopping the illegal subleasing of agricultural leases; and
- (5) Addressing other hindrances, issues, and policies that limit the Department of Agriculture's ability to address violations of agricultural requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture is requested to submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

OFFERED BY:

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S.R. NO. 119

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