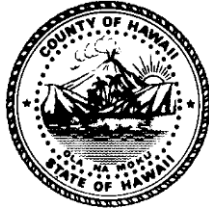


Harry Kim
Mayor



Roy Takemoto
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

January 30, 2020

Representative Richard P. Creagan, Chair
Representative Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair De Coite, and Committee Members:

RE: HB 2189, Relating to Agriculture

HB 2189 does not have a preamble, but its contents reflect the vulnerabilities agriculture has to theft and vandalism. Our news media has documented farmers who have gone out of business because of their losses, and the problem seems to get worse year by year.

The Hawai'i County Prosecuting Attorney's office has had an investigator working on agricultural crimes, and we have received positive comments from the agriculture community about his work. We therefore believe that a statewide program is warranted, based on the results achieved on the Big Island. As to whether a new program needs to be established within the Department of Agriculture, or could more efficiently be funded by the Department of Agriculture contracting county prosecutors, I defer to the wisdom of this Committee.

Whichever your decision, we support the idea of a statewide, state-funded, anti-theft program, and urge favorable consideration of HB 2189.

Respectfully Submitted,

For Harry Kim
MAYOR