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February 25, 2019

TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Kelly T. King  
Council Chair

Handwritten signature of Kelly T. King in black ink.

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 26, 2019; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 759, SD1, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this bill is to establish a two-year agricultural theft and vandalism pilot project to examine the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural theft and vandalism cases in the counties of Hawaii and Maui, including theft and vandalism affecting individuals who are not full-time farmers or ranchers.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. Given the broad acreage that many farming and ranching operations encompass, it is often difficult for farmers and ranchers to secure their entire operations at all times.
2. Theft and vandalism of farms and ranches dispossesses victims of food they have grown, deprives them of a source of income, and reduces their self-sufficiency.
3. As a result, the cost of production and the shelf price of the vandalized crop increases, and it becomes more difficult for farming and ranching operations to be successful.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.