

Farmforce Housing

On-farm Worker Housing:

- Create a new legal zoning designation for non-permanent, modular homes. Clarify which utilities/services these homes can or can not hook up to in order to remain classified as modular. This may require communication with the State Department of Health to ensure compliance with state law.
 - Electric:
 - independently powered through solar or generator?
 - Can be powered through the MECO grid?
 - Water
 - must be received through catchment, transport, or other methods?
 - Can hook up to residential or ag water meter?
 - Sewer
 - require composting toilets?
 - Require small independent unit grey water treatment systems?
- Amend County Code to allow them to be placed on ag-zoned land, on active farms, to house farmworkers, at a density that is higher than the allowed zoning density for residences with a foundation on ag zoned land.
- Consider/define what kind of terms will be used to qualify residents of these homes as “farmworkers”
 - proof of employment at the farm
 - written work trade agreements
- Draft one master use outreach/education document for distribution to farmers so they can easily understand what kind of housing is legally allowed on a farm, at what density, and navigate the application/permitting process on their own, without paying consultants

Off-farm Worker Housing:

- Identify county-owned land or lands possible for purchase, that can be used to build low cost, simple multi and single family units for rent/sale to our farming workforce
 - Consider/define who would manage the rent/sale of these units. (County housing department? Property management service? Currently existing housing trust or non-profit? Some kind of entity that will be formed to satisfy other goals in this plan?)
 - Consider/define what kind of terms will be used to qualify renters or buyers of units. such as:
 - proof of employment at a farm that qualifies for ag water rates, ag property tax
 - one member of the household must be a leaseholder at county ag park, or employed to work on one of the county ag park lots

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SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF PLANNING TO ESTABLISH AN AGRICULTURAL HOUSING TASK FORCE TO STUDY EXISTING COUNTY AND STATE LAWS, RULES, AND PROCESSES TO PLAN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ON-FARM EMPLOYEE HOUSING WITHIN THE STATE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT.

WHEREAS, the State has the duty to conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency, and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands; and

WHEREAS, the State has made sustainability and self-sufficiency in agriculture and local food production a priority; and

WHEREAS, economically safe, sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing is critical for working farms to attract and retain long-term and short-term farm workers; and

WHEREAS, existing laws governing construction of such on-farm employee housing are complicated and confusing and vary across the State; and

WHEREAS, on-farm housing must comply with different layers of regulations at the federal level and laws and rules at the state and county levels; and

WHEREAS, many of the laws and rules governing construction of traditional residential housing units are ill-suited to the demands and economic realities of working farms; and

WHEREAS, these existing laws, rules, and processes preclude farms from providing safe, sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing to attract and retain farm workers, and stand as an obstacle to the State's agricultural self-sufficiency; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, that the Office of Planning is requested to establish an agricultural housing task force to analyze and provide recommendations that would streamline

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existing laws, rules, and processes to plan for the construction of safe, sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing within the state agricultural district and on farms that are engaged in agricultural production; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the agricultural housing task force is requested to have the following objectives:

(1) Study existing county and state laws, rules, and processes for the construction of employee housing within the state agricultural district across the State;

(2) Identify existing barriers in laws, rules, and processes that prohibit the construction of safe, sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing for farmworkers, including mobile units for temporary and seasonal farmworkers;

(3) Give special consideration to modular housing as a solution;

(4) Create a separate legal designation, as it relates to zoning, for homes with a permanent foundation and modular homes without a permanent foundation;

(5) Make recommendations for changes to existing state and county laws, rules, and processes as necessary; and

(6) Propose one master use application process, as well as laws and rules that can be applied consistently throughout the State for the construction of safe, sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing for farmworkers, including mobile units for temporary and seasonal farm workers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the agricultural housing task force is requested to consist of the following:

(1) The Director of the Office of Planning or the Director's designee, who is requested to serve as chairperson;

(2) The Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture or the Chairperson's designee;

(3) The Deputy Director of the Department of Health's Environmental Health Administration or the Deputy Director's designee;

(4) The Chairperson of the Land Use Commission or the Chairperson's designee;

(5) One representative member from each of the several counties' zoning and planning departments;

(6) Two representative members from an agricultural or farming association, to be selected by the Director of the Office of Planning; and

(7) One representative member from a public interest organization with a focus on housing issues, to be selected by the Director of the Office of Planning; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the agricultural housing task force is requested to:

(1) Submit a preliminary 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 2021, including a discussion of the task force's objectives;

(2) Prepare and submit to the Legislature a draft guide explaining the existing process for, and the laws and rules relating to, approval of employee housing in the state agricultural district across the State, including county and local ordinances that pertain to each locality for the public's understanding and benefit, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2022; and

(3) Submit a final 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 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Office of Planning is requested to provide administrative and clerical support to the agricultural housing task force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of the Office of Planning; Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture; Deputy Director of the Department of Health's Environmental Health Administration; Chairperson of the Land Use Commission; and mayors of the several counties.

OFFERED BY: _____