

HAWAII FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
2343 ROSE STREET
HONOLULU, HI 96819

STATE TESTIMONY

JANUARY 29, 2008

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &
BUSINESS CONCERNS AND
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 3277
RELATING TO ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

Chairs Tsuji and Yamashita and committee members:

My name is Alan Takemoto, Executive Director, of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, which is the largest non-profit general agriculture organization representing approximately 1,600 farm and ranch family members statewide.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation supports the intent of HB 3277, with amendments.

We agree that the organic sector of our agricultural industry has great potential and opportunity to expand in Hawaii. In doing so, we have taken action and formed an organic subcommittee, within our organization, to help facilitate the discussion to address the many production issues within the organic farming community.

We also recognize that while the organic production in Hawaii is important, we also believe that we should expand the task force to address all sectors of the agricultural industry, including fruits and vegetable, foliage, nursery, livestock, aquaculture and many other commodity groups throughout the State. Our organization also has a commodity advisory committee to allow full exchange of ideas and issues that have commonality with all farmers and ranchers.

Therefore, we ask that this bill be amended to include the various sectors of the agricultural industry and to have Department of Agriculture or UH-CTAHR as the lead agency to assist in this effort. We, of course, are also willing to be an active participant in assisting in this effort.

Thank you.