



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR
THEODORE E. LIU
DIRECTOR
MARK K. ANDERSON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: www.hawaii.gov/dbedt

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
THEODORE E. LIU
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
and
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Tuesday, January 29, 2008
8:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

in consideration of
HB 3277
RELATING TO ORGANIC AGRICULTURE.

Chairs Yamashita and Tsuji, Vice Chairs Wakai and Brower and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and House Committee on Agriculture.

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) defers comment to HB 3277, which establishes an organic agriculture task, to the Department of Agriculture (DOA). There have been many good ideas introduced this legislative session that support the State's economic development goals. DBEDT strongly believes that DOA is in a much better position to provide comments impacting on the organic agriculture industry given DOA's mandate to manage the state's organic certification program and Hawaii's agriculture industry as a whole.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 Fax: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS CONCERNS
JANUARY 29, 2008
8:30 A.M.**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 3277
RELATING TO ORGANIC AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Tsuji, Chairperson Yamashita, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 3277. The purpose of this bill is to establish an organic agriculture task force under the direction of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) to focus on the promotion of organic agriculture as a key industry of the State. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) offers the following comments.

Organic farming is a growing segment of the agricultural industry as it strives to meet the increasing market driven demand. While it is true that we would like to have more production of organic food in Hawaii, it is also true that we would like to have greater production of our food in general. While imported organic produce has a high risk for carrying invasive species, conventionally raised produce also poses a risk as far greater volumes are imported.

We would point out that the main difficulties in raising organic produce are the same as for all of agriculture. These are the basic issues of having access to good land at affordable costs with long term leases, having reliable, affordable agricultural water, having affordable transportation options, an increasing number of farms that meet the food safety requirements, more access to capital investment, and having labor to expand production levels.

Organic agriculture may have some additional needs over and above these requirements but the basic issues of agriculture must be addressed to assure that Hawaii can retain and expand its agricultural industries.

**Hawaii
Crop
Improvement
Association**

Sarah Styan, President
P.O. Box 609
Waimea, Hawaii 96796
Phone: 808- 338-8300 ext 113

Testimony by: Sarah Styan
HB 3277, Relating to Organic Agriculture
House EDB/AGR Committee
Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2007
Room 325: 8:30 am

Position: Support, With Recommendation

Chairs Yamashita and Tsuji, and Members of the House EDB/AGR Committee:

My name is Sarah Styan. I am a Kauai resident, President of HCIA and research scientist of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Waimea Research Station. The HCIA represents seed production and research facilities operating in Hawaii for nearly 40 years. The HCIA is comprised of five member companies that farm an estimated 8,000 acres on four islands, valued at \$97.6 million in operating budget (2006/2007 HASS). We are proud members of Hawaii's diversified agriculture and life sciences industries.

HCIA believes in co-existence of all farming practices, whether it might be organic, conventional and biotechnology practices. We continue to be supportive of increasing the organic agriculture sector. Certainly, with a robust organic agriculture sector there will be less reliance on imported organic produce, which contributes to the importation of invasive species into Hawaii. Consumer demand for organic produce is at an all time high and Hawaii grown organic produce will increase its contribution to the general revenue of the State.

However, we also believe that DBEDT's assistance/task force should include a plan for marketing and promotion of all of Hawaii's agriculture sectors. Hawaii has much to offer in its unique, Hawaii-grown agriculture produce and products.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

wakai1-Karen

From: Franz Weber [fweber@unfi.com]
Sent: Friday, January 25, 2008 5:21 PM
To: EDBtestimony
Subject: Testimony regarding bill HB3277- oppose

To

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

THE TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE

REGULAR SESSION OF 2008

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS CONCERNS

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: January 29, 2008

TIME: 8:30a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 325

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

To whom it may concern

I would like to inform you that the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association is strongly opposed to this bill. The task force is not set up to represent organic farmers. The Senators who originally intended to introduce the same bill in the Senate are withdrawing it.

Franz Weber

President

Board of Directors

Hawaii Organic Farmers Association

76-789 'Io Place, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

tel (808) 322-6633, fax (808) 322-6636

fweber@unfi.com