



Hawaii Agriculture Research Center

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON
EDUCATION
AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
PUBLIC SAFETY
AND
HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING**

**HCR 357, HD1
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
February 8, 2008**

Chairs Sakamoto, Tokuda, Espero and Chun Oakland and Members of your Committees:

My name is Stephanie Whalen. I am Executive Director of the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center (HARC). I am testifying today on behalf of the center, our research and support staff, and our members and clients.

HARC supports of HCR 357 HD1 Relating to the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources studying the feasibility of a multi-purpose, multi-user processing facility at the former DelMonte pineapple packaging and distribution facility.

A rare and possibly unique opportunity to support the infrastructure needs of diversified agriculture is available. Capitalizing on an existing resource to facilitate the growth of emerging farms in an area where farming is and can thrive adjacent to the major market certainly minimizes the risk and maximizes the return.

However, HARC recognizes the magnitude of this request and agrees with the testimony of Dr. Andrew Hashimoto on April 1, 2008 that funds are needed for this task to be done properly. It hopes that while the budget is still evolving some funding can be earmarked for the purpose of this resolution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Personal Testimony Presented before the
Senate Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs
April 18, 2008
2:45 p.m.
by
Dr. Andrew G. Hashimoto

HCR 357 HD1: REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A MULTIPURPOSE, MULTI-USER PROCESSING FACILITY ON THE LAND IN THE EWA, CENTRAL OAHU AREA BEING OFFERED TO THE HAWAII AGRICULTURE RESEARCH CENTER, FOR THE PRODUCTION OF VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS THAT MAKE USE OF LOCALLY-GROWN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

Chair Sakamoto, Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Andrew Hashimoto, and I serve as Dean of the UH Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR). I am pleased to provide personal testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 357 HD1, which asks UH CTAHR to study the feasibility of constructing a multipurpose, multi-user agricultural products processing facility on land in the Ewa, Central Oahu area being offered to the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center (HARC) for the production of value-added products that make use of locally grown agricultural products. This testimony is presented from the perspective of the dean of CTAHR and an ex-officio member of the Board of Agriculture. It does not represent the position of the University of Hawaii.

I support HCR 357 HD1 but have some concerns relating to the associated costs.

Hawaii agriculture and its value-added products contribute \$2.4 billion and more than 28,000 jobs to the state's economy. As sugarcane and pineapple production have declined, diversified crops have become the mainstay of Hawai'i agriculture. The farm-level value of diversified agricultural products has nearly doubled during the past two decades. Diversified agriculture farm revenues, which topped \$456 million in 2006, represent 78 percent of our state's total farm revenues, up from only 31 percent in 1986. The availability of a facility through which farmers and agribusinesses can process and package new products for local, national, and global markets has the potential to substantially increase the contribution that diversified agriculture and value-added products make to our state's economy.

Locating a multipurpose, multi-user processing facility on in the heart of Central Oahu's agricultural region on the land being offered to HARC can contribute to the development of an agricultural business complex supporting diversified agriculture on Oahu. HARC, the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, the Agricultural Leadership Foundation of Hawaii, and the Landscape Industry Council of Hawaii are interested in co-locating their operations at this site to share business-related resources and develop synergies and

economies of scale. CTAHR is also interested in locating some of its programs at this site, including the Agribusiness Incubator Program currently housed at the Mānoa campus, the Poamoho Research Station, and some extension services. Large and small agribusinesses have also expressed interest in establishing long-term leases and locating and expanding their businesses at this location. Creating this agricultural business complex will facilitate close, sustained collaborations that support farmers and producers. A multipurpose, multi-user processing facility would create new opportunities for agricultural businesses located at the complex and in the surrounding area. The facility could also assist neighbor island businesses that supply the Oahu market or export to mainland or global markets via Oahu.

HCR 357 HD1 raises important questions regarding the feasibility of such a processing facility, the best mechanism(s) for facility ownership, the types of products that might be developed, the markets those products might reach, the technologies required, and the historical parallels for Hawai'i's shift from plantation to diversified agriculture. Because success in developing and launching one or more such processing facilities hinges on the answers to these questions, the study proposed by HCR 357 HD1 is needed. However, the scope of the proposed study is quite large, and accomplishing this task will require resources. I am concerned that funds for the study are not provided.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.