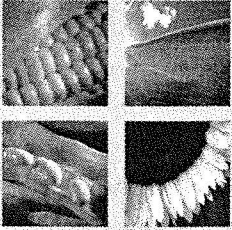


LATE TESTIMONY

Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii



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Testimony by: Sarah Styan
SB 2480sd2, Relating to Technology Workforce and Development
House EDB Committee
Tuesday, March 11, 2008
Room 325: 8:30 am

Position: Support

Chair Yamashita and Members of the House EDB 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.

We applaud this measure that seeks to grow a highly skilled workforce and innovation in Hawaii through a comprehensive system of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), with focus on developing these skills in children from the middle school through high school years and inclusion of post-secondary education systems. Agriculture biotechnology, and specifically the seed corn industry has been a cornerstone of this innovation for nearly 40 years.

Through its member companies, HCIA provides more than 1,000 workers with employment among our five companies on the islands of Molokai, Kauai, Maui and Oahu. These jobs range from field worker to technicians to scientists. Like many other businesses in Hawaii, we struggle with finding qualified employees. This measure is key to developing a strong workforce of Hawaii youth for high-value, high-paying jobs in an industry like the seed crop industry.

We offer our assistance in the development of the STEM programs, particularly for agricultural science curriculum development and agriculture workforce development. I can be reached at 808-338-8300 ext. 113 if there are any questions.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

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