

LATE TESTIMONY

Personal Testimony Presented
before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs
January 31, 2008
2:45 p.m.
by
Dr. Andrew G. Hashimoto

SB 3208, Relating to Agriculture

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair English, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrew Hashimoto. I serve as the Dean of UH Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) and an ex-officio member of the Board of Agriculture. I am pleased to provide this personal testimony on Senate Bill 3208, which appropriates funds for a grant to the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation. This testimony does not represent the position of the University of Hawai'i or of CTAHR.

I support SB 3208.

Agricultural research is essential to the success of diversified agriculture in Hawai'i. The knowledge gained through research efforts helps producers boost their yields through informed choices about which crops and varieties to plant, when and where to plant them, how to protect them from pests, and how to optimize postharvest quality. Agricultural research helps increase local food production, improving our state's food security, and also helps Hawai'i's producers compete in both local and export markets.

The Farm Bureau is an important voice for farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural producers. HFBF works closely with CTAHR and other agricultural research institutions, including the Hawai'i Agriculture Research Center, the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center. Together, these organizations and agencies cooperate on research projects to improve the production of Hawai'i crops. We complement each other's efforts, minimizing overlap and assuring the broadest range of research assistance to the agricultural community. The funds appropriated by SB 3208 will be managed by the HFBF to facilitate research that will support the continued expansion of diversified agriculture and help create new local, national, and international marketing opportunities for our agricultural goods.

A good example of this collaborative approach to agricultural research is the ongoing evaluation of blueberries as a potential niche crop for Hawai'i. Blueberries are growing in popularity as consumers learn about the health benefits of the antioxidants they contain. Blueberries command a premium price in Hawai'i, retailing for as much as \$20.00 per pound, so replacing imports with blueberries grown locally promises a good return for Hawai'i farmers who have land at suitably high elevation and cool temperature. In addition, Hawai'i's year-round growing season could allow us to export blueberries at times when supply is limited on the mainland. Following the success of

initial small-scale studies by CTAHR and the USDA, HFBF is helping fund the planting of two research plots totaling about 1,000 plants to evaluate the yield and market potential of various blueberry cultivars. SB 3208 will support this type of research collaboration and promote the continued growth of diversified agriculture here in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

LATE TESTIMONY

For: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs; hearing Thurs 31
Jan, 2:45pm, Rm 224, SB 3208 An Appropriation for HFBB

Aloha,

I am President of the Hawaii Cooperative of Organic Farmers (HICOF) and I submit this testimony on behalf of our co-op, its members and other organic farmers. We support this bill to provide funds for agricultural research under the management of the HFBB with the following comments:

1. We applaud both the commitment of the Legislature to support a continuing program for ag research and the management oversight provided by the Farm Bureau.

2. We believe the bill could be improved by eliminating some of the ambiguous wording. It is unclear if the intent of the bill is for research or for other activities also mentioned such as "development" and "marketing". Our preference is for "Research" only as HDoA provides funds for marketing and development.

3. We believe more organic research should be made available with these funds especially due to the increased demand and that it would be prudent to earmark at least 20% of these funds for "Organic Research".

4. We are concerned that not all agricultural associations have been considered eligible or are notified of the availability of these funds and suggest wording that HFBB improve the notification and outreach process of the program to all ag associations.

Thank you...Al Santoro, Pres, HICOF, 637-4555

**Hawaii
Crop
Improvement
Association**

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

Testimony by: Sarah Styan
SB 3208, Relating to Agriculture
Senate AHW Committee
Thursday, Jan. 31, 2008
Room 224: 2:45 pm

Position: Strong Support

Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Senate AHW 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. 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.

The HCIA strongly believes in research as a tool to keep Hawaii's agricultural industry at the cutting edge of development and global competition. We understand that State funding has diminished over the past decade from approximately \$6 million to \$1.5 million per year. This comes at a time when Hawaii agriculture is no longer represented by large plantations that could fund research and development privately. Instead, many of the producers today are small business entrepreneurs who do not have the capacity to fund private research and development projects.

This request is of great importance to the future of Hawaii agriculture. We support the HFBB request for agricultural research and market development.

We urge your support of this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Michael M. Kliks, PhD
President, Hawai'i Beekeepers' Association
808-988-7203

LATE

Re: SB 3208, Agriculture
Hearing Date: Jan 31, 2008, 2:45 pm, Room 224

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Chair Jill Tokuda, Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee on AHW:

As an entomologist and a commercial beekeeper I am deeply concerned by the lack of urgently needed research funds available to support the present and future needs of our diversified agricultural enterprise in Hawai'i. Virtually all sectors of agriculture are being assaulted by invasive alien pests, parasites and predators and assailed by issues related to water access, land use, pesticide use and abuse, transportation, and global climate change that can only be address by massive, intensive research to develop near term and medium term solutions.

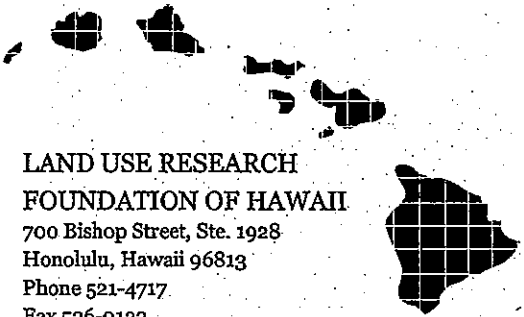
Over the past 5 years I have repeatedly testified that agricultural research and development should be restored to its role as the foundation of Hawaii's agricultural industry. Only by investing heavily in our diversified agriculture will we be able to cope with future threats to our food security, food production self-sufficiency and sustainability. . .and free ourselves of a dangerous, and un-necessarily heavy, dependence on costly and environmentally destructive imported foods. It is clear that we need to focus our efforts more on **import replacement** as well as on producing exports that will be able to compete in the global marketplace!

Last year before this committee I testified in opposition to the dramatic decline in research funding over the past decade from approximately \$6 million to \$1.5 million per year. **Annual funding for research should be increased to \$10 million for FY2008-2008 and should rise to at least \$20 million per year by 2015.** These systematic reductions have discouraged our research scientists and have affected our farmers' and ranchers' and beekeepers' ability to remain competitive with imported products. If these research efforts were abandoned due to lack of funding, Hawaii's producers will eventually **lose both local and global markets to world competitors.**

This increase will allow HFBF to address critical issues such as the research of pest and diseases of taro, fruits and vegetables, tropical flowers and foliage, honey bees, livestock and other commodities needing assistance. In addition, funds will be needed to assist farmers and ranchers maintain and expand their businesses. With these additional funds, HFBF will be able to build capacity for an ongoing program to directly assist agribusiness in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony. MMK

LATE TESTIMONY



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January 31, 2008

The Honorable Jill Tokuda, Chair and Members
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 244
Honolulu, HI 96813

BY E-MAIL

Dear Chair Tokuda and Members:

Subject: Testimony on Senate Bill No. S.B. 3208 Relating to Agriculture

My name is David Arakawa, Executive Director of the Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF), a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable and rational land use planning, legislation and regulations affecting common problems in Hawaii.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our testimony **in support of S.B. No. 3208**, which would appropriate funds for a grant to the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation ("Farm Bureau"). S.B. No. 3208 would appropriate funding from the general revenues of the State of Hawaii for a fiscal year 2008-2009 grant, pursuant to the provisions of chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for the Farm Bureau to conduct valuable agricultural research and development.

Background. The Farm Bureau is a non-profit (501c-5) organization, originally established 60 years ago, in 1948. Its purpose is to represent, protect and advance the social, economic and educational interests of Hawaii's agricultural sector. Farm Bureau is the largest non-profit general agriculture organization in Hawaii, and it represents approximately 1,600 farm and ranch family members located statewide, on the islands of the Kauai, Oahu, Maui, Molokai and the Big Island. Today, the Farm Bureau continues to do an excellent job working to resolve problems faced by farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural producers. The Farm Bureau is also affiliated with the American Farm Bureau Federation, which represents more than five million farm families nationwide.

LURF strongly supports all efforts toward a viable agricultural industry in Hawaii. We understand that the Farm Bureau has developed "A Strategic Plan for Hawaii's Agriculture" which identified the following fundamental problems facing the Hawaii's agricultural industry: land and water, environment and food safety, transportation, taxation and fees, farm management and labor, research development, and marketing and competitiveness.

Cutting-edge agricultural research to address these problem areas is one of the most critical factors which will allow Hawaii's agricultural industry to remain competitive locally and in the global market. Unfortunately, we understand that there has been a dramatic decline in State funding over the past decade from approximately \$4 million annually in the early 1990's to \$1.5 million annually, at the present time. We have also been informed that this substantial decrease in state funding has reduced research efforts and has resulted in missed opportunities which have had a crippling impact on the capability of local agricultural producers to remain competitive. Without this grant, further research efforts may be abandoned and Hawaii's producers will eventually lose their local agricultural market to outside competitors and will lose further opportunities to compete on a global scale.

It is important for Hawaii's agricultural industry to have access to a local private research organization, such as the Farm Bureau, to service their needs as well as to lead them to a successful future. The Farm Bureau is in the unique position to engage Hawaii's small and large farmers and agricultural stakeholders in a collaborative, cooperative and organized effort to address and assist with production issues, including food safety, best agricultural practices, quality assurance, product availability, and business training workshops. The Farm Bureau can also use its considerable credibility and expertise to coordinate and guide statewide comprehensive marketing and production efforts to strategically produce and market locally grown products to new and potential consumers who will hopefully purchase large and consistent volumes of local products.

This grant would support ongoing and new research projects involving production and marketing, conducted by various local organizations, including the Department of Agriculture, the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center, the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resource and other non-profit agencies. Such projects could enhance the production and marketability of Hawaii's agricultural industry in general, as well as specific commodities, including, but not limited to, taro, vegetable crops, coffee, papaya, ornamental nursery, tropical fruit and flowers, and macadamia nuts.

The Farm Bureau has been an active and successful advocate for the agricultural industry for over 60 years and has successfully partnered with the Department of Agriculture, CTAHR, and HARC and several other non-profit agencies on agricultural research and marketing projects.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express our views on this matter and we urge you and your committee to **support and pass this measure.**