

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE K. OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 2010
10:00 A.M.
ROOM 312

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 183
HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 118
REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONVENE AN
AGRICULTURAL WORKING GROUP TO RECOMMEND STRUCTURAL CHANGES
TO MEET THE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF HAWAII'S AGRICULTURAL
INDUSTRY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Concurrent Resolution No. 183/House Resolution No. 118. We are providing comments on these resolutions to explore ways to meet the needs and opportunities of Hawaii's agricultural industry in the twenty-first century.

This is a very large undertaking and if a comprehensive review and evaluation is to be accomplished to come up with meaningful recommendations, it will take a significant time commitment for all involved as no resources are allocated and staff is already stretched thin. We question whether this is the time to initiate this task.

We would like to recommend that consideration be given to include a representative of the counties as they are mentioned in the resolutions as well as a representative from the Hawaii State Energy Office of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism in order that bio-fuel production be included in the discussion.



Hawaii Farm Bureau
F E D E R A T I O N

2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Neighbor Islands: 1-800-482-1272
Fax: (808) 848-1921; e-mail: info@hfbf.org

TESTIMONY

HR118/HCR183 REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONVENE AN AGRICULTURAL WORKING GROUP TO RECOMMEND STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO MEET THE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF HAWAII'S AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.

Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

HFBB on behalf of our member commercial farm and ranch families and organizations is in strong support of HR118/HCR183 looking at structural changes needed to meet Hawaii's agricultural needs of the future.

Things must change. This year, HFBB took an unprecedented step of supporting taxing ourselves to make sure agriculture in Hawaii can continue. We asked this of our farmers and ranchers while knowing many of them are hanging on by their fingernails. This cannot continue. We must take a pragmatic look at the needs of our industry and the needs of Hawaii ...and we need to do this as soon as possible.

Are we maximizing our collaborative efforts with USDA? What should the ideal structure between State efforts to promote agriculture and County efforts be? Are there functions in other agencies that overlap with agriculture? All of these questions should be investigated.

HFBB looks forward to working with LRB to find solutions. If there are questions, please contact Louella Costales at 848-2074. Thank you

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 8:13 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: gottlieb@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HCR183 on 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM HCR183

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Alan Gottlieb
Organization: Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Address:
Phone: 808-306-7769
E-mail: gottlieb@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/17/2010

Comments:

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 11:17 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: russell@islandnaturals.com
Subject: Testimony for HR118 on 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM HR118

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: comments only
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Russell Ruderman
Organization: Island Naturals Markets
Address: 1221 Kilauea Ave. Hilo HI 96720
Phone: 808-443-1703
E-mail: russell@islandnaturals.com
Submitted on: 3/17/2010

Comments:

Aloha,

This proposed group, to achieve legitimacy, must include grassroots, farmer-based, and organic concerns. It must not be another tool for biotech and companies like Monsanto, which already have a stranglehold on the agriculture legislation community.

My company employs over 150 people, selling primarily agricultural products from Hawaii. The organic segment is the fastest growing part of the agriculture industry. Too often our concerns have been ignored.

We realize any discussion about sustainability and food sovereignty can only achieve meaningful outcomes if the voices and ongoing work of people and organizations now creating positive change ~ through farmers markets, csa's, school gardens, neighborhood groups, conservation and green tech applications, watershed stewardship and restoration and other solutions ~ are included.

A working group such as this, convened at the taxpayers expense, could only conduct meaningful discussions if larger considerations are brought forward through perspectives of organizations such as Hawaii Farmers Union and the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 8:46 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: john@eco-living.net
Subject: Testimony for HR118 on 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM HR118

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: comments only
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: John Schinnerer
Organization: Individual
Address: Kea'au, HI
Phone: 808-982-6529
E-mail: john@eco-living.net
Submitted on: 3/17/2010

Comments:

Aloha,

With regards to the composition of the Agricultural Working Group proposed in this resolution:

The members of the working group need to be far more diverse, and primarily representative of local, small scale, regenerative and diversified agriculture.

As listed, most of the representatives are from large-scale, relatively non-diversified and entirely non-regenerative agricultural sectors or from sectors of industry and academia that support same.

These persons and organizations simply do not have the practices, skills or information necessary to increase local food security and self-sufficiency. They ought to be present in the working group in order to learn, however they do not belong in the driver's seat.

I urge you to explicitly include representatives from organizations such as all local farmers' markets, Hawaiian cultural practitioners focused on agriculture, the Hawai'i Farmers Union, and other truly local voices for our agricultural future.

mahalo,
John Schinnerer

2029 Nuuanu Ave. #1510
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
March 18, 2010

Representative Clift Tsuji, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture
State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Representative Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

I am sending this testimony to express my **strong support for HR118/HCR183**, “Requesting the Legislative Reference Bureau to Convene an Agricultural Working Group to Recommend Structural Changes to Meet the Needs and Opportunities of Hawaii’s Agricultural Industry in the Twenty-First Century.” Hawaii currently imports almost all of its food supply, causing a \$3.7 billion drain on Hawaii’s economy and placing the State at risk of food shortages if there is ever an interruption in ocean transport. Hawaii could produce far more food than it presently does, but the expansion of agriculture and aquaculture are constrained by economic, social, and regulatory factors.

Under Hawaii’s Constitution, it is the responsibility of State government to encourage the expansion of diversified agriculture and promote agricultural self-sufficiency. I do not believe that the State can fulfill this responsibility without major changes in policy regarding land use, water development, environmental and health regulation, and transportation. We need a comprehensive plan to address these policies, and a multigenerational commitment to carry out the plan. The agricultural working group that would be established by HR118/HCR183 is a first step towards creating such a plan.

I would like to suggest one small amendment to these resolutions, however. As an individual who has been involved in Hawaii’s growing commercial aquaculture industry for the last 30 years, I would like to see a person with authority in this industry – perhaps the President of the Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association, the Director of the State’s Aquaculture Development Program, or the Director of the University of Hawaii’s Sea Grant program -- be included in the list of working group members.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Sincerely,

Frederick M. Mencher

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 4:31 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: kaleopono@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HR118 on 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM HR118

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kaleopono Norris
Organization: Individual
Address: 78-1021 Mokuaikaua Road Holualoa, HI
Phone: 8083241615
E-mail: kaleopono@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/17/2010

Comments:

I support and wish to see this initiative flourish. Please consider involving a representative of the Agricultural Leadership Foundation of Hawaii. In my opinion, the goal of self-sufficiency in food for Hawaii cannot be achieved without resorting to a widespread decentralized, family gardening framework. There are many grassroots community organizations in Hawaii that have furthering this goal as one of their purposes. Far more vigorous community education and outreach is certainly warranted! Aloha.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 10:30 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: jtluvmw@lava.net
Subject: Testimony for HCR183 on 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM HCR183

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: james trujillo
Organization: Individual
Address: 1728 Hulu Rd kapaa, HI
Phone: 346 7725
E-mail: jtluvmw@lava.net
Submitted on: 3/17/2010

Comments:

Members of the committee,
Please consider adding more representatives from the non industry side of agriculture. your proposed makeup of the committee is heavy on the industrial and large scale type of operations and weak on grassroots agriculturalist who actually produce and sell at local markets for local consumption and not for off island markets.
the list of participants should be broad and diverse and not just be a an industrial group advancing the agenda of corporate exploitation at the expense of public interest and well being.
sincerely,

james g trujillo
kapaa, HI

David Takaki
1515 Alapai Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

HR 118 Testimony
Agriculture Committee

I take this opportunity to endorse HR 118, save that the Director of Hawaii Sea Grant be included in the list starting on line 11, page two of said Resolution. Hawaii Sea Grant's Extension Service is integral to the development of aquaculture and mariculture in the State of Hawaii.

Hawaii's economy imports over 70% of the seafood consumed within the state and this omission is unwarranted.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2010 2:18 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: waioli2@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Testimony for HR118 on 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/19/2010 10:00:00 AM HR118

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: chris kobayashi
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: waioli2@hawaiiantel.net
Submitted on: 3/18/2010

Comments:

i support the intent of this resolution only with the following amendment.
i strongly believe that representatives from Hawaii Farmers Union and HOFA and the Taro Security and Purity Task Force need to be a part of this investigative agriculture working group.
the representatives that are suggested in the resolution do not reflect a balanced group and would be a waste of our precious taxpayers time and money.