

Statement of

Russell Kokubun

**Gubernatorial Nominee for
Chair of the Board of Agriculture**

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

JAMES J. NAKATANI
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

February 8, 2011

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture
State Capitol, Room 204
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

Re: Governor's Message No. 504 Nomination of Chairperson of the Board of
Agriculture for a term to expire December 31, 2014

I appreciate this opportunity to respond to your letter regarding my nomination as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture and the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA).

It is an honor to be nominated for a position that has the potential to greatly impact the future of Hawaii agriculture.

Growing up in Kaimuki, I gained an early appreciation for agriculture through my mother and grandmother. The extensive family garden was essentially a small farm and working in that garden taught me much about growing plants and the rewards of being able to provide food for family and friends.

Soon after graduating from college, I began working as a farm laborer on the Big Island. After a few years, I purchased and operated a vegetable farm in Volcano, which I still have today. While my career path has taken me to public service in the county and state levels, Hawaii's farmers and agriculture have always remained of significant interest and concern to me.

In my various positions throughout the years, I have been able to gain a better understanding of the complexities and the tremendous challenges that agriculture faces. Though these issues are not easily resolved, Hawaii's future relies heavily on our ability to enhance and expand our agricultural industry. It is with this conviction and optimism that I provide the following responses to your questions below:

1. A description of your experience in the field of agriculture, or any related field:

Career: Farm laborer, Reiso Nakamoto Farm, Waimea, Hawaii, and a hydroponic farm, Keaau, Hawaii – 1974 - 1976
Farm 49, Volcano, Island of Hawaii – owner, 1978 to present



FEB 8 REC'D

Hawaii County Council – Chair 1988 – 1992, Member 1984 – 1988
Hilo Mainstreet Program – Manager, 1992 – 1995
County of Hawaii – Administrative Assistant to the Mayor, 1995 – 1997;
Deputy Planning Director, 1997 – 2000
National Trust for Historic Preservation – Board of Advisors, 1994 – 1999
Board of Land & Natural Resources – Hawaii Island Member, 1998 – 2000
Hawaii State Senator, 2000 – 2010
Positions held: Senate VP; Chair – Water, Land Agriculture and Hawaiian
Affairs; Chair – Commerce, Consumer Protection and Housing;
Chair – Hawaii Sustainability Task Force; & Vice-Chair Ways and Means

2. An assessment of your strengths and weaknesses:

- My degree in business administration has helped me to understand farming from a business perspective.
- My roots as a farmer helps me to understand the many problems and challenges faced by Hawaii farmers. In addition, it also provides me with the background to envision, develop and support potential solutions. Farmers need advocates in government who have knowledge of the business and have the skills to implement changes that truly support the farmers, ranchers and the industry as a whole.
- As the Deputy Director of the Hawaii County Planning Department, I had the opportunity to work intensively on land designation and zoning issues, particularly as it pertains to preserving agricultural lands. In addition, my tenures as Chair of Senate committees covering land, water and agriculture issues have given me additional perspectives on competing interests for land and water in Hawaii.
- Overall, previous positions in the county, state and legislative bodies have allowed me to become well-versed in many aspects of agriculture and also the budgeting process, which can be difficult in changing economic times.
- A criticism I change jobs too many times – this coming mainly from my mother. But, in retrospect, all of my professional experiences have contributed to a broader view of agriculture and the many issues that surround it.

3. An assessment of the department/agency's strengths and weaknesses. Please include an explanation of how the department/agency's strengths may be best utilized, as well as how the department/agency's weaknesses may be improved:

- The main strength of HDOA is the people who work for the department. As I get more familiar with the administrators and staff, I find that they are more dedicated to agriculture than most realize. The budget cuts,

including the reduction-in-force and furloughs, have taken a heavy toll on staff in terms of morale, but more importantly, it has taken a toll on their ability to do their jobs. If we are to expect excellence in government, we must provide the resources and the means for it to fulfill its mandate.

- I feel the neighbor islands have been overlooked in terms of services and attention. Due to the already small staff size on the neighbor islands, the impact of personnel cuts in these locations become amplified.
- To help enhance the reach of the department's programs, I would like to explore the use of high-tech communication systems to bridge the interisland gap. The expense of physical travel may be restrictive, especially during tough budgetary periods, so we should look at technology to provide new and effective routes of communication and interaction.
- I would also like to schedule more Hawaii Board of Agriculture meetings on the neighbor islands to provide island farmers and residents an opportunity to address the Board and to give members of the Board a better view and understanding of agriculture statewide.

4. An overall vision for the department/agency, specifically what goals can be accomplished within the next four years and what types of annual benchmarks can be used to evaluate the department/agency's progress towards those goals:

- To re-establish agriculture as essential to the well-being of our island society by rejuvenating the economy, protecting important resources, and gaining greater self-sufficiency in food production and alternate energy development.

To measure progress, the department historically and routinely collects data on many aspects of farming and agricultural industries. The collection and compilation of quality data is important to providing valid assessments and evaluations.

- Identification and designation of important agricultural lands (IAL) is also a key priority. Some of our counties may need more assistance in the identification process.

To measure the progress, the department keeps track of lands designated as IAL. Also, the department certifies the qualification of landowners for tax incentives associated with IAL designation.

- The restoration, maintenance and improvement of agricultural infrastructure are also priorities for this administration. The state's aging irrigation systems that were built to support plantation agriculture in the

past are key to support and enhance diversified agriculture. The availability of affordable surface irrigation water is important to hundreds of farmers and ranchers. Without these water delivery systems, major agriculture areas cannot be sustained.

In addition, other ag infrastructure, such as agriculture processing facilities are also important to increase ag production and food sustainability.

5. The department/agency's top budgetary priority for the biennium:
 - We are currently working to restore key staff positions that were previously lost during the reduction-in-force.
 - Important operations, such as plant quarantine inspections, require a dedicated funding source to sustain critical programs on a long-term basis and we are working on legislation that will ensure such programs.
6. An assessment of the department/agency staff's morale, including the turnover rate for personnel.
 - Morale is at a definite low at HDOA, as it may be in every state department. But, morale itself may not be the core problem, but a symptom of a more critical and invasive problem. Much of the discontent evolves around the loss of resources, including staffing, which have drastically reduced the department's ability to do its job, much less to do its job well. It is that inability to do what is expected of the department that may be at the root of the morale problem.

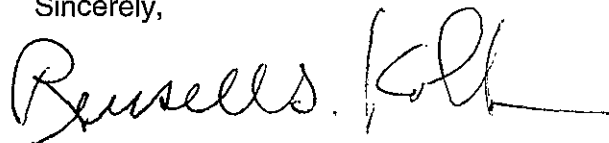
Furthermore, during the RIF, staff saw valuable co-workers being laid off and some who chose early retirement over bumping a co-worker out of a job. When teamwork is important to a project or mission, the loss of a member not only weakens the team's ability, but also the team's resolve.

- At the end of 2010, the department experienced a slew of early retirements by seasoned staff. Many of the retirees had planned to work several more years, but after the RIF and furloughs, they decided to take early retirement due to the increased stress and demands on staff and a decrease in job satisfaction. HDOA lost an invaluable amount of knowledge and experience, which cannot be replaced.

The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara
February 8, 2011
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Again, I would like to thank Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee for this opportunity to share my thoughts and initiatives. I appreciate your consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell S. Kokubun". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Hawaii Board of Agriculture

GM 504

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1101

To: The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture

Re: GM504 (Russell S. Kokubun)
Date: Thursday, February 10, 2011
Time: 2:45 p.m.
Place: State Capitol, Room 229

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **strong support** of the nomination of Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

As you know, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) have worked cooperatively for decades. Over the years both entities have developed a number of initiatives to assist Hawaii's farm industry while protecting our state from the threat of invasive species. Because of this partnership, HDOA needs a chairperson who is a strong leader and cares deeply for the department's constituency—Hawaii's farmers.

As someone who chose his occupation to be a farmer on the Big Island, Mr. Kokubun understands the challenges that the farmers of Hawai'i face each day. Whether these challenges relate to the availability of water or the demand for agricultural land, Mr. Kokubun has a keen awareness of such problems, not just because he has heard about them, but because he has faced them personally.

During his career in public office, he has served as a strong advocate for agriculture both as a member on the Hawaii County Council and a State Senator. While serving on various incarnations of the Senate agriculture committee, including his time as chair of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs, Mr. Kokubun has developed an intimate knowledge of the long-standing problems that have plagued the department during the previous administration.

Additionally, through his work with the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Task Force, where he served as chairperson, Mr. Kokubun will be well-suited to moving Hawaii's agriculture industry forward with the goal of significantly decreasing the state's dependence on imported produce while increasing the consumption of locally-grown food. Mr. Kokubun has personally looked into the feasibility of nontraditional crops for Hawai'i, such as artichokes, vanilla, and tea, to support diversification.

In direct relation to his commitment to agriculture, Mr. Kokubun played a key role in the preservation of open space by introducing legislation that created Hawai'i's Legacy Land Act

and the accompanying Land Conservation Fund. As the main author of this measure, I relied on Mr. Kokubun for setting the priorities on which lands were to be acquired via the fund during my time as Senate President. It is important to note that at one time Mr. Kokubun needed to advocate for the recognition and identification of agricultural lands as legacy lands. As a result of his efforts, this law and these lands will serve not only as his legacy, but they will also serve as his contribution to future generations of Hawai'i's people.

Mr. Kokubun is ready to step up to a new challenge of defining and accepting agricultural easements as another means of preserving these lands for the future. That is what this nomination is about -- the future of agriculture.

As a friend and former colleague of Mr. Kokubun, I am confident that he is worthy of being confirmed by this committee. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.



COLLEEN HANABUSA
U.S. Representative
Hawai'i, 1st District



STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

235 S. Beretania Street, Room 205
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-0186 Fax: (808) 586-0189

TESTIMONY OF ALFREDO LEE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE

Thursday, February 10, 2011
2:45 pm
Conference Room 229

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 504
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE
CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL
NOMINEE, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN,
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2014

Chairperson Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) is in **strong support** for the consideration and confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun as chairperson of the board of agriculture.

Mr. Kokubun has a very impressive background in public service. Besides having served over 10 years as a state senator, he spent many years in county government as council chair, council member, and deputy planning director on the Big Island. Most importantly in our view he was a farmer.

ADC has worked closely with Mr. Kokubun for the past 10 years on various agricultural related issues. He had always been involved either as chair

or as a member of the senate agriculture committee. He is well known in the agriculture community and is familiar with the major issues facing agriculture today. We believe his broad background and extensive experience as a law maker will serve him well as chairperson of the board of agriculture. We strongly urge your support regarding his confirmation. Thank you.



STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
711 KAPI'OLANI BOULEVARD, SUITE 500
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

February 9, 2011

Hawaii State Senate
Committee on Agriculture
GM 504

Testimony in **SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and members of the committee,

I am honored to speak in **support** of former Senator Russell Kokubun's confirmation as Chairman of the Board of Agriculture for the State of Hawai'i.

I have had the privilege and honor of knowing Mr. Kokubun for almost forty years. I grew up in the farm belt of Waimea in North Hawai'i. Russell came to Waimea to develop and hone his interests in farming with the Reiso Nakamoto family in Lālāmilo in the 1970's, a prominent family who continue their farming tradition and legacy until today. Russell then moved to Volcano and started his own farming operation. He has always had aloha 'āina in him, a great love for the land and coupled with that, a great love for people. Those of us who know Russell well proudly saw our farmer friend become a leader, a "mover and shaker" on our island. Russell committed himself to public service; served with distinction first on our County Council and then in the State Senate. He has earned our trust, confidence and aloha. His lifelong involvement with "touching the earth and helping it to bring forth good fruit" and his long involvement in community, government and public service has prepared him well to take on the kuleana of Chairman of the Board of Agriculture for the State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support** of his confirmation.

Aloha,

Robert K. Lindsey, Jr.
Trustee, Hawai'i Island
Office of Hawaiian Affairs



GM504

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Senate Committee on Agriculture

February 10, 2011

2:45 p.m.

Room 229

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** GM 504, which would confirm Russell S. Kokubun as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Since 2000, Mr. Kokubun has represented the 2nd Senatorial District which includes Ka'ū, Puna, and Hilo on Hawai'i Island. His leadership role extends to serving as the Chair of the Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee, Vice President of the Senate, Chair of the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force, and Chair of the Commerce, Consumer Protection and Affordable Housing Committee. His prior experience includes being elected to the Hawai'i County Council in 1984 and as Chair of the County Council from 1988 to 1992.

As a public servant and leader, Mr. Kokubun has demonstrated his ability to tackle the difficult issues, listen to the needs and concerns of the everyday citizen, and work toward solutions.

Therefore, OHA urges the committee to PASS GM 504. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

February 7, 2011

The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture
State Capitol, Room 229
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Regarding Governor's Message 504

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

I am Sylvia Yuen, Interim Dean and Director of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) at the University of Hawai'i. This personal testimony is offered in strong support for GM 504, which nominates Russell Kokubun to serve as the Director of the Department of Agriculture. It does not represent the position of the University of Hawai'i or CTAHR.

This is a crucial time for agriculture in Hawai'i, where a strong visionary leader is needed to advance this important sector of the economy. Mr. Kokubun's previous experiences and personal qualities preeminently qualify him to serve as the DOA director and to move agriculture significantly forward in our state. As a Senator in the State Legislature, Mr. Kokubun served as Chairman of the Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee and as a member of the Education and the Energy and Environment Committees. He also chaired the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Task Force. These positions gave him deep knowledge and understanding of the context in which agriculture operates and the complex direct and indirect ways in which it intersects with other sectors of our society. Moreover, as the catalyst for and stalwart leader of the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force— an initiative in which hundreds of community members participated—Mr. Kokubun demonstrated the importance of planning ahead to create a desirable future for Hawai'i and its people.

In the brief interim period that Mr. Kokubun has led the DOA, he has created a receptive environment for new ideas and ways of doing things. He has improved communication and fostered collaboration with others. For example, the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human (CTAHR) is partnering with DOA to address and contain two recent crises that have caused great harm to farmers, the coffee berry borer and the basil downy mildew pathogen. We have been better able to serve the agricultural community and state because Mr. Kokubun recognized the benefits of using our collective resources in a unified fashion. In addition, CTAHR and DOA will be working jointly on sharing expertise and data to enhance the dissemination of agricultural information.

I believe Mr. Kokubun is eminently qualified to serve as the DOA director, and I am pleased to support his nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

public policy center

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

Testimony before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture
Thursday February 10, 2011, 2:45 p.m.
Conference Room 229

Sharon Y. (Miyashiro) Moriwaki

Associate Director, Social Sciences Public Policy Center

Statement in **Strong Support** of Governor's Message No. 504,
Nominating Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture

To : The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Chair; Gilbert Kahele, Vice-Chair; and
Members of the Committee:

It is my pleasure and honor to strongly support the nomination of Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. I know of no other who is more eminently qualified to lead the Department of Agriculture in its mission to preserve, promote, and facilitate the growth of our local agricultural and aquacultural resources and industry.

Over his ten years in the Hawaii State Senate, Senator Kokubun has proven his commitment to agriculture and commerce as well as to a long-term vision to ensure a sustainable Hawaii. The impact of his leadership goes far beyond the interests of his district and constituents. It has and continues to benefit the entire state.

The UH Public Policy Center (PPC) worked closely with Senator Kokubun on one of the most significant and meaningful statewide planning efforts in the last 30 years – developing the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan (known as the “H2050 Plan”). His inclusive, collaborative, and visionary leadership engaged thousands of citizens and organizations across the state. At the helm of the 25 member H2050 Task Force, he worked tirelessly to meet with citizens at community meetings in neighborhoods in all counties. When the legislature was not ready to adopt the citizen-driven recommendations of the H2050 Plan in 2008 and directed the PPC to review the plan recommendations with community leaders, Senator Kokubun volunteered to work with us. And when he was selected by

the UHManoa College of Social Sciences as one of two Legislators-in-Residence to explore a significant public issue of mutual interest to the university and community, he worked on organizing and conducting meetings with community leaders across the state –from Lihue to Kona; from Hilo to Waianae -- to review the H2050 recommendations and discuss feasible implementation strategies. And his championing sustainability goals and principles did make a difference. Today, citizens and businesses as well as labor and government agencies have recognized and are acting to think long-term to sustain and preserve Hawaii's natural resources and assets. We have also begun to live more "sustainably" to meet the "triple bottom line" of balancing economic, environment, and community interests -- including growing and supporting our own local food and products.

Senator Kokubun understands the importance of a long-term vision. He kept reminding the task force and community members that we had to look to the distant 2050 – working on problems today was not enough; we had to plan for tomorrow and for our children's grandchildren. He will bring this kind of vision, collaborative and inclusive approach, and practical experience and background in farming to lead the Department of Agriculture to support our local agricultural community and industry. I am confident that he will continue to serve with distinction as he has in the Senate and as Hawaii County Deputy Planning Director, Chair of the Hawaii County Council, and Executive Assistant to the Mayor on projects such as the county general plan revisions for agricultural lands. He has proven his leadership in bringing together business, labor, community organizations, academe, and individual citizens to dream, hope, plan, and act together.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the State Senate to advise and consent on the nomination of Russell S. Kokubun as Chair of the Board of Agriculture.



February 9, 2011

TESTIMONY

RE: GM 504 Submitting for consideration and confirmation of the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2014.

My name is Rick Volner and I am the Vice President of Maui County Farm Bureau. Maui County Farm Bureau on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families and organizations strongly supports the nomination of Mr. Russell Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

I first met Mr. Kokubun in 2001 as part of a legislative shadowing experience through the Agricultural Leadership Foundation of Hawaii. I was impressed with his willingness to learn and his openness and honesty with me over the issues facing Hawaii. He was especially passionate about agriculture and its role in Hawaii.

Since then I have seen Mr. Kokubun take agricultural issues on with a passion embarking in directions not undertaken by those before him. First, he shepherded the passage of the Important Agricultural Lands legislation in the Senate. Since its enactment in 1978, prior attempts had failed but he listened to farmers and landowners and provided leadership to finally get the standards and criteria for designation passed as Act 183 in 2005.

In 2006, joined the agricultural industry in saying "ENOUGH!" to invasive species. He again provided leadership in the Senate to begin Hawaii Department of Agriculture's Biosecurity Plan. It provided an unprecedented picture of the number of invasive species entering the islands. Serious pests were stopped at our border. In subsequent years he continued to lead the effort to perfect the process ... the maritime industry that had in past years opposed defensive

measures came out in support and Hawaii's foothold to protect ourselves from invasive species which can threaten our agriculture was firmly established.

The past years have been difficult and we have seen some derailment of these efforts. However, it is not too late. With Mr. Kokubun's leadership and collaboration with the industry and other agencies, we hope to get back on track. Hawaii developed with agriculture as a driver of its' economic engine. With Mr. Kokubun's guidance, agriculture can again return to that critical role as an important component in our economy and society. This is important for our future, growing Hawaii for children and future generations.

MCFB respectfully requests your strong support in approving Mr. Kokubun as Hawaii Department of Agriculture Chair. Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this matter.



HAWAII PEST CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Century Square – 1188 Bishop St., Ste. 1003*Honolulu, HI 96813-3304
Telephone (808) 533-6404 • Fax (808) 533-2739

February 10, 2011

Testimony To: Senate Committee on Agriculture
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair

Presented By: Tim Lyons, CAE
Executive Director

Subject: GM 504 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

I am **Tim Lyons, Executive Director of the Hawaii Pest Control Association**. Our members fall under the Board of Agriculture as far as their application's of pesticides are concerned. We are particularly happy to see the proposed appointment of Russell Kokubun as Chair of the Board of Agriculture.

We have dealt with Mr. Kokubun over the years in his capacity as a state senator and have found him always to be even-handed, fair and willing to listen to the issues. We find that Mr. Kokubun would therefore be an excellent Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture and we hope that you will agree with us and **confirm him**.

Thank you.

nishihara5 - Randy

From: Doug MacCluer [norfolkldm@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 05, 2011 6:18 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: Warren Watanabe
Subject: testimony

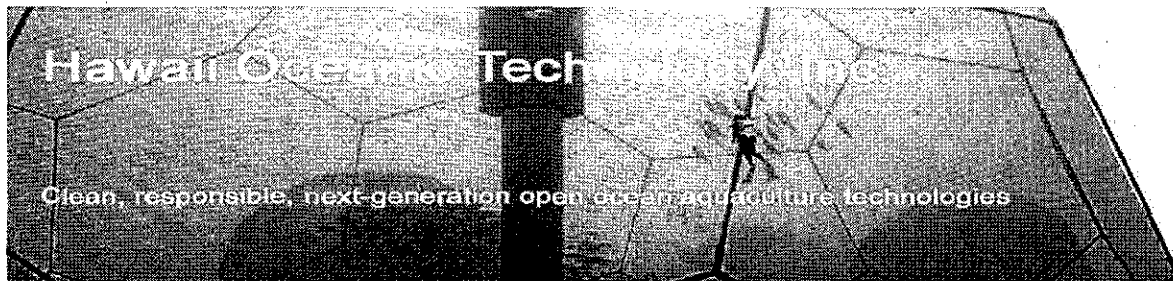
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I am **Doug MacCluer** and I serve on the Board of Ag. I have been a farmer on Maui for most of my life and are now serving as a Board Member of the Maui County Farm Bureau.

I have known Russell Kokubun for many years while he was a Legislator and **fully support** his move to the Department of Ag. Russell brings much experience to to Department and I think he will be a great leader.

Sincerely,

Doug MacCluer
360 Hoopalua Dr.
Pukalani, Hi., 96768
phone, 572-7336



February 9, 2010

TO: COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair, Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

RE: Testimony In Strong Support the Nomination of Russell S. Kokubun as Director of The Department of Agriculture – GM 504

Honorable Chair Nishihara and Vice Chair Kahele:

Please accept my testimony in **strong support** of the nomination of Russell S. Kokubun as Director of the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Kokubun has an excellent reputation in the community as a fair minded and thoughtful person. I have not had the opportunity to work with him directly, but know others who have worked with him and found him to be knowledgeable and a strong leader in the community.

I am confident that he can effectively lead the Department of Agriculture and be a careful steward of our lands while helping to achieve food sustainability and nurture the agriculture sector of the economy. With respect to open ocean mariculture, a form of agriculture that farms the ocean instead of the land, I am confident that he has taken time to understand the industry, its economic potential for the state of Hawaii and the true positive impact this industry has on our ocean resources. I am confident that he has studied the industry carefully and knows the facts and positive benefits about how a thriving mariculture industry will contribute to the economy and Hawaii's need for food sustainability and agriculture export revenues.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Russell S. Kokubun.

Sincerely,

/s/

Bill Spencer, President/CEO

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Thursday, February 10, 2011
2:45 pm

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
G.M. 504
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN

Chair Nishihara and committee members;

My name is Fred Perlak and I am a Vice President of Monsanto responsible for Research and Business Operations of our facilities here in Hawaii. I am also the current President of the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association. I am pleased to testify before you in support of Senator Russell Kokubun's nomination for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Senator Kokubun has demonstrated his integrity and dedication with his years of service in the legislature. He has been a pragmatic and involved Senator, concerned with the survival of agriculture in Hawaii. He has empathy for farmers and a love of agriculture that is apparent when discussing farm issues. I think he has the ability and the vision to lead agricultural policy in Hawaii, a role that is critical at this point in Hawaii's future. I think he will be a leader of Agriculture for all in Hawaii from small to large growers to part time farmers. I am confident that he will represent all in Hawaii with respect and understanding.

In conclusion, Senator Kokubun is an excellent choice for this position and has our full support.

Sincerely,

Frederick J. Perlak
Vice president, Monsanto Research and Operations-Hawaii



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

P O Box 437199 Kamuela HI 96743
Phone (808) 885-5599 • Fax (808) 887-1607
e-mail: HICattlemens@hawaii.rr.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Thursday February 10, 2011 2:45 pm Room 229

GM 504

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee,
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

My name is **Alan Gottlieb**, and I am a rancher and the **Government Affairs Chair for the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council**. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc. (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 130+ member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of approximately 25% of the State's total land mass.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **strongly supports** GM 504 nominating Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

I have known and worked with Russell Kokubun for the past several years, when he was your colleague in the Hawaii Senate. During that time I have always felt that Russell was intelligent, well spoken, and very knowledgeable of the issues which affect the agricultural industry, and of the highest integrity. Russell is well thought of and respected by members of the agricultural community in the State of Hawaii, and he will make an excellent chairperson.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in strong support of GM 504 nominating Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Thursday February 10, 2011 2:45 pm Room 229

GM 504

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee,
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

My name is **Alan Gottlieb**, and I have been involved in the agricultural industry in Hawaii, in a number of capacities for the past 30 years. I have served as the President of the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, and I have served on the Hawaii Board of Agriculture since 2004, which makes me the longest standing current member of the State Board of Agriculture.

I **strongly support** GM 504 nominating Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

I have known and worked with Russell Kokubun for the past several years, when he was your colleague in the Hawaii Senate. During that time I have always felt that Russell was intelligent, well spoken, and very knowledgeable of the issues which affect the agricultural industry, and of the highest integrity. Russell is well thought of and respected by members of the agricultural community in the State of Hawaii, and he will make an excellent chairperson.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in strong support of GM 504 nominating Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

Alan H. Gottlieb
P O Box 700489
Kapolei HI 96709
808-306-7769

GM 504

Appointment of Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of Board of Agriculture

This testimony is in support of Russell S. Kokubun.

I worked as a Legislative Aide for Senator Kokubun for 7 sessions, from 2003 to 2009. My primary responsibility was serving as his CIP Analyst. I also performed various other tasks, such as researching and analyzing issues, responding to constituent concerns, preparing for and attending hearings, drafting and tracking bills and writing certificates of recognition.

Senator Kokubun served with extraordinary dedication. He is a person of unquestioned integrity who will undoubtedly continue to serve with great passion in a life devoted to public service. His extensive experience not only in agriculture, but also in planning, food security, sustainability, water and land use will give the department the dynamic leadership it needs to meet the challenges of Hawaii's future. He is sensitive to the needs and concerns of the Hawaiian people. He is dedicated to the preservation of our precious *aina* and understands the serious threat posed by invasive species.

I believe that Senator Kokubun is the best choice to face serious problems in the state's agriculture industry. The budget cuts have had a serious impact on the department's ability to effectively carry out its mission. Senator Kokubun has the vision and drive to change the board's direction and move it forward.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on behalf of Senator Kokubun.

Ira I. Tagawa
98-1861 Piki Street
Aiea, HI 96701



Poamoho Organic Produce
PO Box 728
Waiialua HI 96791
808-637-4555
info@poamoho-organic.com
February 7, 2011

To: Senate Committee on Agriculture
Re: Hearings on February 10th, 10:00 am, Rm 229
Subject: Testimony regarding GM 504

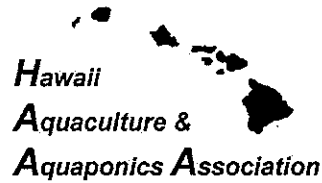
Aloha Committee Chair and Committee Members,

I am an organic farmer on the North Shore of Oahu and President of the Hawaii Center for Organic Farming. Please accept my testimony on the subject Bill.

I am happy to provide testimony **supporting** the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun as Chair of the Board of Agriculture. I remember him from the Senate where he served on the Committee for Agriculture; he was always engaged, astute, curious and willing to learn. He showed genuine interest in legislation that provided solutions and inclusion of our many and different farming cultures, even our most ignored - organic. I have also noticed his willingness to allow open communication and consideration of our emerging population of small family diversified farmers.

I may be one of the few that has actually read the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan and we all must commend his leadership in that task. Most importantly, I have already observed him as being action vs re-action oriented and believe his confirmation is one of the most important steps in reviving agriculture here in Hawai'i. Mahalo.

Al Santoro, Farmer



THE SENATE
THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2011

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, February 10, 2011
TIME: 2:45pm
PLACE: Conference Room 229, State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

RE: Testimony In **Strong Support** of GM 504 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire on December 13, 2014.

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and Committee Members,

The Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association strongly supports GM 504 which offers Gubernatorial Nominee RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN to be considered and confirmed as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture for a term to expire on December 13, 2014.

Mr. Kokubun has long supported the Hawaii agriculture and aquaculture industries on both the Big Island and statewide in his former capacity as State Senator and Committee Chair. He has a demonstrated history of listening to and working collaboratively with industry leaders and members. His Chairmanship of the Hawaii 2050 Plan well demonstrated his collaborative nature and visionary thinking for a preferred future for Hawaii.

The morale of the Hawaii agricultural and aquacultural industries and of the remaining and beleaguered HDOA staff has taken a positive upswing since the announcement of Mr. Kokubun's nomination. This is a clear indication of the high regard in which he is held by both industry and staff.

Given the above and more, the Hawaii Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association takes great pleasure in offering our full support to the consideration and confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

Respectfully submitted, **Ronald P. Weidenbach, HAAA President**

TESTIMONY OF BRIAN KAU

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY 10, 2011

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 504

RELATING TO THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message 504 regarding the consideration and confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun to the cabinet post of Chairperson, Board of Agriculture. I strongly support this nomination.

I have had the pleasure of working with Russell for several years while he was serving as the Senator for the South Hilo, Puna, and K'au districts. He has consistently proven to be a person of high moral value and strong integrity. He has also shown himself to be fair and even handed and I have no doubt that his character will serve the State well. Russell has an unbending commitment to the continued growth and success of agriculture and its role in creating a sustainable Hawaii. He has a firm grasp of the issues at hand and thoroughly understands the difficulties associated with modern agriculture in our State. I have no doubt whatsoever that Russell will lead the Department with class and distinction toward a better tomorrow.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Date: Thursday, February 10, 2011

Time: 2:45 P.M.

Place: Conference Room 229
State Capitol

REFERENCE GM504 - TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF MR. RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN FOR THE OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON FOR THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND DIRECTOR FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The Honorable Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I **support** the confirmation of Mr. Russell S. Kokubun for the Office of the Chairperson for the Board of Agriculture and Director for the Department of Agriculture. I strongly believe that Mr. Kokubun has demonstrated to an unusual degree the qualifications necessary to lead the industry and raise the Department's achievements to a new higher level.

Mr. Kokubun distinguished himself in public service which includes serving as a deputy planning director for the County of Hawaii, chairman of the Hawaii County Council, State House of Representatives, and State Senate. During his last term in elected office, Mr. Kokubun held the position of vice president of the Senate. Aside from public office, he served as a board member on the Board of Land and Natural Resources and numerous organizational boards.

I have known Mr. Kokubun throughout his public service career. His foremost priority has always been the preservation of agricultural land and to expand the agricultural industry commensurate with water development for agricultural use with the aim of Hawaii becoming self sufficient in agricultural products.

With his background in farming and agricultural pursuits, Mr. Kokubun is well versed on the problems and needs of the agricultural industry. His heart is in agriculture and public service.

It is without a doubt, Mr. Kokubun will be an asset to the State of Hawaii and I respectfully recommend your approval of Mr. Russell Kokubun for the Office of the Chairperson for the Board of Agriculture and Director for the Department of Agriculture.

I am grateful for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

George Yokoyama

nishihara5 - Randy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 07, 2011 7:41 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: karinguest@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for GM504 on 2/10/2011 2:45:00 PM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Testimony for AGL 2/10/2011 2:45:00 PM GM504

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Karin Guest
Organization: Kauai Cattlemen's Association
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: karinguest@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/7/2011

Comments:

KEAUKAHA PANA'EWA FARMERS
ASSOCIATION

P, O. BOX 6844
HILO, HI 96720-8935
TEL/FAX: 808-959-5026
EMAIL: KPFA@HAWAII.RR.COM

February 8, 2011

Sent by email: AGLTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

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2010-2011

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COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

TESTIMONY OF MELE SPENCER, PRESIDENT, KEAUKAHA PANA'EWA FARMERS ASSOCIATION
IN **SUPPORT** OF GM 504 BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
February 10, 2011, Conference Room 229, 2:45 p.m.

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture:

The Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association (KPFA) submits this support letter for Russell Kokubun to be confirmed as the State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture Director.

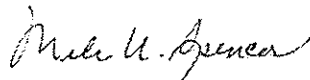
KPFA is an active working association of Hawaiian Homes lessees whose mission is:

"To support, motivate and educate Keaukaha Pana'ewa agricultural lessees to establish a viable, sustainable farm community; preserve Hawaiian culture; achieve self sufficiency; and strengthen pono management and respect for the 'aina."

KPFA had the privilege of working closely with Mr. Kokubun as he represented District 2 in the Hawaii State Senate as a respected elected official. Mr. Kokubun demonstrated honorable devotion to his constituents by engaging in and supporting community based economic and agriculture projects critical to Pana'ewa. His tireless work ethic and highest integrity standards have been an advantage through his years of public service as an elected official and member of community and business organizations. His intimate knowledge of issues from years of experience in the agriculture industry, including recognizing potential business opportunities, recognizing standard requirements and establishing policies and procedures in response to the requirements, responding to threats that endanger the critical and sensitive habitat of Hawai'i, make Mr. Kokubun's selection as Director ideal.

His nomination by Governor Neil Abercrombie as Director of the State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture, is an excellent choice and will be a natural fit; KPFA supports Mr. Kokubun's nomination. Mr. Kokubun will undoubtedly serve the State of Hawaii very well.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our support of Russell Kokubun to be confirmed as State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture Director.



Mele U. Spencer, President

"To support, motivate and educate Keaukaha Pana'ewa agricultural lessees to establish a viable, sustainable farm community; preserve Hawaiian culture; achieve self sufficiency; and strengthen pono management and respect for the 'aina."

nishihara5 - Randy

From: Peter Hain [peterhain@att.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 08, 2011 6:20 AM
To: AGL Testimony
Subject: Kokubun Confirmation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

GM 504
February 10, 2011
2:45 PM

I **strongly support** the confirmation of Russel Kokubun to Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. He has a strong background in agriculture issues. I am a former resident of the Big Island and corporate officer with Big Island Abalone Corp located at NELHA.

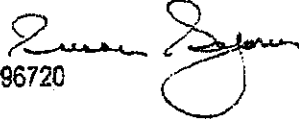
Thank you,

Peter Hain
PO Box 245
Tres Pinos, CA 95075

February 7, 2011

TO: ✓ Senator Clarence Nishihara, Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice-Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture

FROM: Susan Segawa
982 Ainaola Drive, Hilo, HI 96720
Phone No. 959-8938



SUBJECT: MR. RUSSELL KOKUBUN, NOMINEE FOR DIRECTOR OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Hearing: Thursday, 02/10/11

Dear Senators:

I support the confirmation of Mr. Russell Kokubun as Director of the Department of Agriculture.

As a farmer, Mr. Kokubun is well versed in the historical prominence, needs and challenges experienced by the agricultural community of Hawaii. This quality will significantly impact his effectiveness in this position. He is, and has always been, a hands-on and intimate member of that community which he will serve.

As a former State Senator, Mr. Kokubun served the State of Hawaii with utmost honor, integrity, dedication and faithfulness. His genuine regard for the people of District 2, as well as the entire state, earned him an abundance of respect, praise and admiration. He will be missed in the Hawaii State Legislature.

As the State of Hawaii moves forward toward our concerted goals of agricultural sustainability and the control of invasive species, the expansive leadership and collaborative skills of Mr. Kokubun are critical in attaining success. For these reasons, I support the confirmation of Mr. Russell Kokubun as Director of the Department of Agriculture.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

c: Mr. Russell Kokubun



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

CONFIRMATION OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
FOR
CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY 2011

DEAR CHAIRPERSON NISHIHARA and Members of the Committee:

VERY STRONG SUPPORT.

My name is Loren Mochida, Director of Agriculture Operations at W. H. Shipman, Limited in Keaau on the Big Island. We are a local land kamaaina-family owned management company that is engaged in Agriculture and Commercial/Industrial development and leasing. We currently lease lands to over 125 individually growers at W.H. Shipman, Ltd.

I am in very strong support of the confirmation of Mr. Russell S. Kokubun for the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. Along with his strong leadership skills, his organizational development has been exceptionally outstanding.

Mr. Kokubun's diversified experience has provided the agriculture industry for over 25 years first as a County Council Member here on the Big Island and as Senator at the Hawaii State Legislature. Mr. Kokubun's outstanding efforts and support in the agriculture industry is highly recognized. It is with personal confidence that Mr. Kokubun will be a dedicated agriculture person as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide support for the confirmation of Mr. Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.



**East Kauai
Water Users' Cooperative**

4334 Rice Street, Suite 202
Lihue, Kauai Hawaii 96766
Phone: 808-246-6962
Fax: 808-245-3277

TO: Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chairperson
Senate Committee on Agriculture

February 8, 2011

RE: **Testimony in Favor of Confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun**

Chairperson Nishihara:

My name is **Jerry Ornellas**. I am the president of the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative. I am testifying **in favor** of the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Department of Agriculture.

We have worked with Mr. Kokubun for many years during his tenure in the Senate. He has been a knowledgeable and sympathetic supporter of agriculture through out his terms. We believe he will do a fine job as chairperson.

I respectfully ask for your confirmation of Mr. Kokubun's appointment.

East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative

Jerry Ornellas, President

Testimony of **The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i**
Supporting GM 504 Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the
Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee Russell S. Kokubun
Senate Committee on Agriculture
Thursday, February 10, 2011, 2:45PM, Rm. 229

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawaii's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for native species in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 32,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.

The Nature Conservancy **supports** the confirmation of Russell Kokubun as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

We have worked with Mr. Kokubun for many years in his capacities as a legislator, a past member of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, and past member of DLNR's Forest Stewardship Committee. We have found that his combination of experience as a planner, farmer, legislator, and conservationist brings a very useful perspective to his work, particularly his appreciation for the interconnected nature of Hawaii's lands, waters, agriculture, economy, and quality of life. We believe Mr. Kokubun will bring this same diverse experience and perspective to leading the Department of Agriculture's multifaceted mandate—not the least of which is its role in protecting the Hawai'i from the threat of invasive pests and diseases. We also appreciate Mr. Kokubun's commitment to the enhancing the resilience and sustainability of Hawaii's economy, quality of life, and globally unique natural environment.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our views in support of Mr. Kokubun's confirmation.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Faye Watanabe Kurren Eiichiro Kuwana Duncan MacNaughton Bonnie P. McCloskey Bill D. Mills Wayne K. Minami Michael T. Pfeffer
James C. Polk H. Monty Richards Jean E. Rolles Scott C. Rolles Crystal K. Rose Nathan E. Smith Eric K. Yeaman

HAWAII FISH COMPANY, INC.
North Shore AquaFarm

P. O. Box 740
Waialua, HI 96791, USA
Contact: 808-429-3147, 429-3187
E-mail: hawaiiifish@gmail.com

City Bank 2000 TIGR Award
US SBA 2000 Tibbitts Award
US SBA 2001 Small Business Award
Special Congressional Recognition 2001

The Senate
The Twenty-Sixth Legislature
Regular Session of 2011

Committee on Agriculture
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

Date: Thursday, February 10
Time: 2:45 pm
Place: Conference Room 229, State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Re: Testimony in **Strong Support** of GM 504—submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairman of the Board of Agriculture Gubernatorial Nominee, Russell S. Kokubun, for term to expire on 12/13/2014

Hawaii Fish Company, Inc. is in strong support of Russell S. Kokubun as Chairman of the Board of Agriculture. We have been aware of and are very appreciative of his supportive role as a State Senator and Committee Chair towards aquaculture. Aquaculture will play an increasing important role in Hawaii's future and Chair nominee Kokubun has demonstrated the leadership capabilities and thoughtful insights that will serve well in addressing the issues and needs presently facing our industry. When he spoke at a recent Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation event, we were impressed with his knowledge and expertise, as well as his expressed openness and willingness to listen to the agricultural community's concerns. We are looking forward to working with Chair nominee Kokubun and believe his confirmation will help Hawaii's farmers move towards a more sustainable Hawaii.

Estralita Pasalo Weidenbach
Vice President



Hawaii Agriculture Research Center

Administration: P.O. Box 100, Kunia, HI 96759

Ph: 808-621-1350/Fax: 808-621-1359

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

GM 504

**Confirmation of the Board of Agriculture Chairperson
Russell S. Kokubun**

February 10, 2011

Chairman Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

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 and our research and support staff.

HARC **strongly supports** the Confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Russell has long been a strong supporter of the agriculture community both for the district he represented on the Big Island as senator and for the success of agriculture statewide.

HARC is especially appreciative of his vision and support for preserving agriculture land. It was through his efforts and those of the prior senator, Colleen Hanabusa and through their foresight that a perpetual agricultural easement became a reality on 108 acres of prime agricultural land in Central Oahu.

Russell's vision for supporting and preserving agriculture in the state shines through the Sustainability Plan 2050 that he continues to champion.

There is no doubt that Russell Kokubun will provide the necessary leadership and vision to improve agriculture's contribution to the state's economy as well as to help in maintaining the beauty of its landscapes through productive agriculture operations. Russell has shown his commitment and perseverance to the growth and viability of agricultural in Hawaii even through some of the most trying times.

Please confirm Russell S. Kokubun's appointment as Chairperson for the Board of Agriculture.

TESTIMONY OF JERI KAHANA

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
February 10, 2011
2:45 P.M.

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 504
RELATING TO CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO
THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN

Chairperson Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message 504 relating to the confirmation and consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, Russell Kokubun. My name is Jeri Kahana, the Commodities Branch Manager in the Department of Agriculture.

I strongly support the confirmation of Russell Kokubun as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. Working with Mr. Kokubun these past five weeks, he has displayed his deep concern and commitment to the department and to the agricultural industries, from working with Kona coffee industry on combatting the Coffee Berry borer to dealing with restoring critical positions within the Department of Agriculture which were lost due the reduction-in-force.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify.

NALO FARMS, INC.
41-574 Makakalo Street
Waimanalo, Hawaii 96795
(b) 259-7698

February 10, 2011
2:45 pm

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
GM 504
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN

Chair Nishihara and committee members:

My name is **Dean Okimoto**, President and Owner of Nalo Farms, Inc..

I am pleased to submit written testimony in **strong support** of Russell Kokubun's nomination for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. I apologize that I am unable to attend this hearing as I am currently in the mainland on company business.

Russell Kokubun's years of public service as a State Senator has proven to be one of dedication and integrity. In all of his efforts, he has been a very balanced and fair legislator on all issues. In particular, his passion for the agricultural industry shows that he truly cares for the success of all farmers and ranchers in Hawaii. As the former President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau and working closely with Mr. Kokubun on many agricultural issues, I know he will be the best advocate for the entire agricultural industry.

I strongly urge the committee to approve the passage of Mr. Kokubun's nomination as our next Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Sincerely,

Dean J. Okimoto
President

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Thursday February 10, 2011 2:45 pm Room 229

GM 504

Submitting for consideration and conformation to the Chairperson of the Board of
Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee,

RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

My Name is **Alex Franco**; I manage Kaupo Ranch Ltd. and Maui Cattle Company.

I **strongly support** GM 504 nominating Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii
Department of Agriculture.

I met Senator Kokubun a couple of years ago at Kualoa Ranch and had a chance to visit
with him concerning agriculture, I was very much pleased with our visit and found him to
have a lot of passion for our industry. He is also highly respected with in the agriculture
community and I feel he will make an excellent Chairperson for the Department of
Agriculture.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to send in this written testimony.

Alex Franco
Kaupo Ranch
Maui Cattle Company

McCandless Ranch

2/8/2011

Senate Committee on Agriculture

Thursday February 10, 2011 2:45 pm Room 229

GM 504

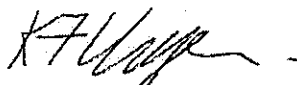
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, **Russell S. Kokubun**, for a term to expire December 31, 2014

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

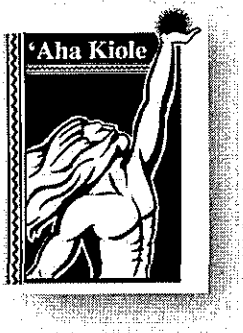
My name is **Keith Unger** and I am the General Manager for McCandless Ranch and the Land Issues Chair for the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council.

I **strongly support** Russell Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. In his previous position as Hawaii State Senator, Mr. Kokubun was always accessible and extremely knowledgeable in regard to the cattle industry as well as agricultural issues in general.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of nominating Russell Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.



Keith F. Unger
McCandless Ranch



Aha Kiole Advisory Committee

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

**OF THE CONFIRMATION TO THE
CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF
AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE.**

RUSSELL KOKUBUN

Submitted to: Hearing of the Committee on Agriculture, Chairperson Clarence Nishihara

Hearing Date: February 10, 2011, 2:45 p.m.

Submitted by: **Vanda Hanakahi**, Kiole Moloka'i (Chair), on behalf of the other Members of the Aha Kiole Advisory Committee and the 43 moku from each island they represent: Leslie Kuloloio, Kiole Kahoolawe, (Vice-Chair) Timmy Bailey, Maui; Winifred Basques, Lana'i; Pi'ilani Ka'awaloa, (Po'o) Hawai'i; Charles Kapua, O'ahu; Sharon Pomroy, Kaua'i; Keith Robinson, (Konohiki) Ni'ihau.

Aloha Chair Nishihara and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of Mr. Russell Kokubun, Gubernatorial Candidate for the Hawaii State Department of Agriculture. Words cannot convey the respect and admiration of the Native Hawaiian resource practitioners in the State of Hawaii for Mr. Kokubun. A true keiki o ka 'aina, Mr. Kokubun has consistently been accessible, shown deep interest and been available to the Native Hawaiian farmers and *mahiai* who have been immersed in agriculture for generations. He understands that each island and every moku (district) of that island is different in geography and natural resources. He understands that what happens on the land affects the ocean and vice-versa. He understands that to be self-sustaining, we have to be able to feed ourselves and our families. That understanding is critical to the success of sustainability in our State.

Mr. Kokubun has shown great respect and extended his vast knowledge and expertise to kupuna and the *mahiai* of the eight main Hawaiian Islands who are so greatly concerned for the welfare of our land, crops, and farming. Please know that Native Hawaiian resource practitioners of the 43 moku who have gleaned thousands of years of resource expertise are ready to work and share knowledge and traditional expertise with Mr. Kokubun. He is trusted to use this generational knowledge much of which has never before become public because he has earned it. He has integrity, intelligence and honor. Mr. Kokubun has the ability to bring people together in a

positive way that will benefit all residents of Hawaii. We believe with his leadership, Hawai'i will become self-sustaining in natural resources and in agriculture.

We urge this committee to confirm Mr. Russell Kokubun as the Director of Agriculture in the State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui loa,

Vanda Hanakahi, Chair

Aha Kiole Advisory Committee

P.O. Box 507

Ho'olehua, HI 96729

Phone: 808-336-6184

Email: kaiwilauula@yahoo.com

Testimony of **Leimana DaMate**

Of the Confirmation to the Chairperson of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, Russell Kokubun.

Submitted to: Committee on Agriculture, Chairperson Clarence Nishihara

Hearing Date: February 10, 2011, 2:45p.m., Room 229

Submitted by: Leimana DaMate

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee of Agriculture,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of Russell Kokubun as Chair of the Hawaii State Department of Agriculture.

I live in the ahupua'a of Kahuku, Moku of Ka'u, and Mokupuni Moku O Keawe. My father and husband are *mahiai*, or subsistence farmers in Ka'u on a small family plot that subsidizes our daily diet with fresh vegetables and taro. Like most of the residents in Hawai'i, my family depends on fresh food to exist. Fresh fish from the sea, and fresh staples from the land. We are not alone. There are many families, Native Hawaiians and others who depend on the land to feed their families. However, over the years, it has become apparent that government has become over-burdened with economic issues and may have lost touch with the local communities. I believe that Mr. Kokubun can rectify that.

Mr. Kokubun took a courageous step years back when, as the Senator of the Ka'u District on the Island of Hawai'i; he authored and championed the Aha Moku Bill which became Act 212 in 2007. That Act brought forth the Aha Moku System – a framework for natural resource sustainability that has been proven to work in Hawaii for centuries. It is a true community consultation process through which communities can work with government to better sustain their resources in site-specific districts. Mr. Kokubun understood that it was time for the local communities to become more involved in, and responsible for their resources, including agricultural lands. He has a gift in bringing people together. Mr. Kokubun is not of Hawaiian blood. He is Hawaiian in every other sense of the word and has been accepted by the *mahiai* of Hawai'i as such. He is a local like the rest of us, yet he can lead comfortably and confidently.

On behalf of my 'ohana, my children and grandchildren, I support Russell Kokubun in every way, and urge that he be confirmed as the Chair for the Hawaii State Department of Agriculture.

Mahalo nui loa,

Leimana DaMate

P.O. Box 6573, Oceanview, HI 96737

Phone: 808-497-0800, email: Leimana@fastnethi.com



Meadow Gold Dairies



Testimony by: **Glenn Muranaka**
GM 504, Russell Kokubun, Chair, Board of Agriculture
Sen AGL, Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011 – 2:45 pm
Room 229
Position: Support

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Senate AGL Committee:

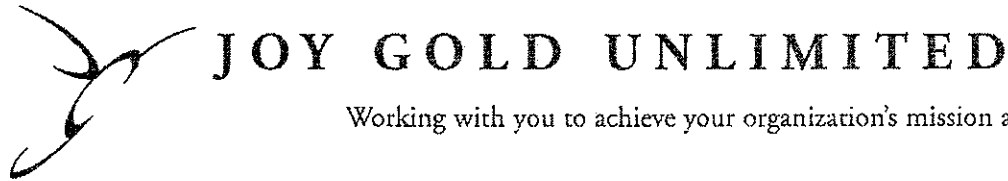
My name is Glenn Muranaka, President and General Manager of Meadow Gold Dairies. Our company has been in Hawaii since 1897—114 years, providing Hawaii consumers with a variety of milk products and juices. Meadow Gold's long history has not come without effort. We continually adapt to our customers' and consumers' ever-changing needs, and we constantly evolve along with our industry, our community and our market. Over the years, this has required that we struggle, tighten our belts, innovate and work extremely hard, making us a better company in the process. The foundation of this work rests with the 350 employees that are committed to providing superior quality products.

We **strongly support** the confirmation of Russell Kokubun as the Chair of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. Over the years, Mr. Kokubun has demonstrated a willingness to meet and discuss agricultural concerns in an objective and open manner. He brings to the table a perspective that few have, coming from service in the State Legislature, Hawaii County Council and as Executive Assistant to the former Hawaii Island Mayor Stephen Yamashiro.

The culmination of these experiences provides Hawaii's Board of Agriculture with a Chair that has a 360 degree perspective on how to work collaboratively to resolve the challenges that face agriculture today.

We urge your support of Russell Kokubun's confirmation to lead the Board of Agriculture.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. If you have any questions, please contact me at 944-5911.



Working with you to achieve your organization's mission and public policy goals

Confirmation Hearing for Russell Kokubun
Interim Chair, Board of Agriculture
Senate AGL Hearing
Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011 – 2:45 pm
Room 229

Position: **Support**

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Senate Agriculture Committee:

I am **Joy Gold**, owner and President of Joy Gold Unlimited, which provides government relations services as well as services to nonprofit organizations such as new member board orientation, project management and report writing.

In my capacity as lobbyist for various agriculture-related clients, I have appreciated Mr. Kokubun's willingness to meet, his interest and discussion on issues. While we may not always agree, there is opportunity for discussion and it is cordial.

His family farm and experiences on the Hawaii Island County Council as well as his service in the State Senate bring a rich foundation to lead the Board of Agriculture at a very critical time in Hawaii's agriculture history.

Your support of his confirmation is appreciated. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Union Plaza
1136 Union Mall, Ste. 403
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

P.O. Box 88555
Honolulu, Hawaii
96830-8555

Phone: 808-526-3770
Fax: 808-540-0415
Email: joy@joygoldunlimited.com

Visit www.joygoldunlimited.com



Hawaii Floriculture & Nursery Association

Testimony for the Twenty Sixth Legislature, 2011
State of Hawai'i

Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Thursday, February 10, 2011 2:45 P.M.

GM504 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Senate Committee on Agriculture
Honorable Chairperson Senator Clarence K. Nishihara,
Honorable Vice Chairperson Senator Gilbert Kahele
And
Committee Members

Supporting confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

My name is Eric S. Tanouye and I am the pro-tem president for the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association. HFNA is a statewide umbrella organization with approximately 300 members. Our membership is made up with breeders, hybridizers, propagators, growers, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, educators, and the allied industry, which supports our efforts in agriculture.

We would like to declare our support for the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. His back ground in both farming/business and public service makes him an ideal candidate for the position of Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. With his past record we believe he will administer the duties and responsibilities of Chairperson with the utmost of ability, demonstrating leadership, critical thinking, problem solving and with the openness to listen.

If you have any other questions at this time, I would be happy to discuss them and can be reached by phone at 808-959-3535 ext 22, cell 960-1433 and email eric@greenpointnursery.com.

Supporting Agriculture and Hawaii,

Eric S. Tanouye
Pro-Tem President
Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association

Senate Committee on Agriculture
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

Date: Thursday, February 10, 2011
Time: 2:45 pm
Place: Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Subject: GM 504 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, gubernatorial nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Chair Nishihara and Chair Kahele and Committee Members, my name is Michael Buchal and I wish to offer my strong support for the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun to Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

I was formerly President of Big Island Abalone Corporation, an aquaculture company located at the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority (NELHA), from 1999 to 2007. Since 2007, I have continued to work in aquaculture as a consultant, initially with tenants of NELHA, and more recently with mainland companies. In 2010, I was appointed by the Governor to the NELHA Board of Directors to serve a term expiring in 2014.

While an active tenant at NELHA, I had several occasions to interface with Mr. Kokubun on issues facing NELHA and companies engaging in aquaculture. In meetings with tenants he impressed me with his willingness to both listen and engage in substantive dialog. His knowledge of issues facing companies engaged in agriculture and a genuine appreciation and compassion for the challenges, made him an effective leader of discussions, mediator of disputes and problem solver. I believe that these strengths will serve the State well in a Chairperson of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Kokubun has shown dedication and leadership on a larger scale for agriculture in his sustained efforts to represent his constituents in the Senate and excellent work as Chair of the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Task Force. As Chair, he showed his ability to lead a diverse committee composed of members from the State government, County governments, private consultants, academics, and business leaders, and engage diverse public viewpoints consolidating them into the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan.

Mr. Kokubun has a comprehensive understanding and holistic view of the evolution of the State of Hawaii and a long-term vision for the role that agriculture must play for the State. This vision combined with his leadership skills and open, inclusive communication style makes him an excellent candidate. I urge your confirmation of Mr. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Department of Agriculture. Thank you for the opportunity to make these comments on GM 504.

Michael Buchal, M.Sc.
PO Box 7046
Kamuela, HI 96743

nishihara5 - Randy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 08, 2011 10:02 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: jacinthow001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for GM504 on 2/10/2011 2:45:00 PM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Testimony for AGL 2/10/2011 2:45:00 PM GM504

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: William G. Jacintho
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jacinthow001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/8/2011

Comments:

Strongly support Ressel Kokubun for GM 504, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee. He is very knowledgeable and supportive of the Agriculture Industry, and can and will represent very well. Thank you, William

THE SENATE
The Twenty-sixth Legislature

Committee on Agriculture

Date: Thursday, February 10, 2011
Time: 2:45 PM
Place: Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Re: GM 504 Consideration and Confirmation Nominee Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture for a term to expire December 31, 2014

My name is John Corbin and I want to express my strong support of Russell Kokubun as Chair of the Board of Agriculture (BOA).

I was previously Manager of the State Aquaculture Development Program in the Department of Agriculture(DOA), and saw former Senator Kokubun in action numerous times supporting ideas and issues that were extremely important to the survival, expansion and diversification of aquaculture and agriculture in our state. Mr. Kokubun clearly understands the challenges faced by these essential food production companies in an island setting; challenges that seem to grow larger and more complex every year. In addition to his extensive government and legislative experience, he brings to the job important hands-on experience as a farmer.

Since retiring from State government, I had the opportunity to participate in the development of the Hawaii 2050 Plan, an effort led by Mr. Kokubun. Bringing the diverse interests in our community together to craft a reasonable and encouraging, long-term vision for our Island society took great skill, patience and energy. I look forward to him applying these same much sought after qualities to the huge challenges facing our aquaculture and agriculture industries, so that each may reach its full potential.

I urge you to confirm Mr. Kokubun as Chair of DOA. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

John S. Corbin MS, CFP, AICP
President
Aquaculture Planning & Advocacy LLC
47-215 Iuiu Street
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744
Phone: 239-8316

nishihara5 - Randy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 08, 2011 10:33 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: jacinthow001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for GM504 on 2/10/2011 2:45:00 PM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Testimony for AGL 2/10/2011 2:45:00 PM GM504

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Maui Cattlemen's Association
Organization: Maui Cattlemen's Association
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jacinthow001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 2/8/2011

Comments:

The Maui Cattlemen's Association is a non-profit organization representing small and large livestock producers in Maui County. We **STRONGLY SUPPORT** Russell Kokubun for GM 504, Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial nominee. Mr. Kokubun has been a strong supporter of the Agriculture industry, and we believe he will continue to do so, and represent very well. In addition, he comes from an agriculture background, and understands what Ag is about. Thank you for the opportunity to provide support for Mr. Russell Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

William G. Jacintho
Maui Cattlemen's Association, President

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF EARL YAMAMOTO

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY 10, 2011

2:45 P.M.

ROOM 229

CONFIRMATION OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

My name is Earl Yamamoto. As a former farmer, it is with great pleasure that I offer my strong support for the confirmation of Mr. Russell S. Kokubun as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

I am also a 29-year employee of the Department of Agriculture and have directly served under four Ag Chairs. In the past six weeks as interim Chairperson, Mr. Kokubun has immediately demonstrated a very high level of skill, knowledge, courage, compassion, and wisdom that without a doubt, comes from his experience as a former farmer, planner, county councilman, and State legislator. I am highly confident that under his leadership, substantial progress will be made to protect and promote the agricultural resources necessary to achieve the State's food security initiatives.

As importantly, Mr. Kokubun brings a sense of hope. He has made it clear that achievement of goals for agriculture would require the restoration of lost employment positions and improving the morale of the Department's most underappreciated asset, its dedicated employees, whose numbers were inexplicably reduced by over one-third during the reduction-in-force two years ago.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



THE GAS COMPANY

P.O. Box 3000
Honolulu, Hawaii 96802-3000
www.hawaiigas.com

February 8, 2011

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Agriculture

**GM 504 SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION
TO THE DIRECTOR OF DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of Russell Kokubun's appointment to serve as the Director of the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture.

My name is **Stephanie Ackerman** and I serve as Vice President of Public Policy & Communications for The Gas Company.

After returning to Hawai'i to farm zucchini in Volcano, Mr. Kokubun pursued a career in public service that has lasted more than 20 years. Serving on the Hawai'i County Council from 1984 to 1992 led to appointments as executive assistant to the mayor and later, county deputy planning director. From 2000 to 2010, he served in the Hawai'i State Senate, where he chaired the Water and Land Committee and held the position of Senate Vice President.

One of Mr. Kokubun's most notable distinctions was chairing the sustainability task force which developed the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan. The planning process involved input from communities in envisioning Hawai'i preferred future—economically, socially, and environmentally. The 2050 Plan serves as a blueprint for Hawai'i, and articulates goals, strategic actions and indicators for the state that reach 40 years into the future.

A farmer, a public servant, a visionary leader, Mr. Kokubun provides the kind experience and leadership we need at the Department of Agriculture.

Please confirm Mr. Kokubun's appointment.



**STEPHANIE C. ACKERMAN
VICE PRESIDENT PUBLIC POLICY & COMMUNICATIONS**

Testimony

Date: Thursday, February 10, 2011

Time: 2:45 PM

Place: Conference Room 229

State Capitol

415 South Beretania

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair

Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

GM 504

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Position: **Support**

Aloha:

Chairman Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and fellow committee member's mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is **Adolph Helm** Molokai Hawaiian Homesteader and former Chairman of the Molokai Irrigation System (MIS). I strongly support the confirmation of RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Russell has always been a strong advocate and supporter of agriculture. During his time as a public servant, State Senator and member of the Senate Agriculture Committee Russell was very engaged with helping to find resolution to improve the Department of Agriculture's irrigation system a critical resources Hawaii farmers rely on. As an example, Russell took the time from his busy schedule to come to Molokai and tour the MIS. This helped Russell to better understand how the system works including the challenges and mitigating efforts to improve the efficiency and management of the MIS.

Russell has also led a significant legislation and community initiative to develop a Hawaii 2050 sustainability plan, a plan that sets the course and direction for Hawaii's future in agriculture. Russell works well with people is an outstanding individual and brings a skill set needed to improve and move the Department of Agriculture in the right direction. I highly recommend your consideration to confirm RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Yours truly,

Adolph Helm

PO Box 36, Kahuku, Hawaii 96731
Telephone: 808 293-9450



Facsimile: 808 293-0263
Email: info@kahukebrand.com

TESTIMONY OF **MELVIN MATSUDA**
FARMER
KAHUKU FARMERS, INC

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SENATOR CLARENCE K. NISHIHARA, CHAIR
SENATOR GILBERT KAHELE, VICE CHAIR

Thursday, February 10, 2011
2:45 PM
Conference Rm. 229

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 504
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS
CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE December 31, 2014.

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

My name is Melvin Matsuda of Kahuku Farmers, Inc.
We grow tropical fruits and vegetables on the Northshore of Oahu.

I **support** the confirmation of Russell Kokubun as chair of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Kokubun has helped us with numerous issues that we face such as:
long term agricultural land leases and water rights for irrigation systems.

With my daughter Kylie joining the family business, it is very important to have these
concerns addressed for the perpetuity of farming in Hawaii.

I ask that you confirm Russell Kokubun to serve as Chair of the
Department of Agriculture.

Thank you.

Respectively submitted,
Melvin Matsuda
Kahuku Farmers, Inc
PO Box 36
Kahuku, Hawaii 96731

P.O. Box 36, Kahuku, Hawaii 96731
Telephone: 808 293-9450



Facsimile: 800 293-8263
Email: info@kahukubrand.com

TESTIMONY OF **CLYDE FUKUYAMA**
FARMER
MATSUDA FUKUYAMA FARMS

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SENATOR CLARENCE K. NISHIHARA, CHAIR
SENATOR GILBERT KAHELE, VICE CHAIR

Thursday, February 10, 2011

2:45 PM

Conference Rm.229

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 504

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS
CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-31-14.

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

My name is Clyde Fukuyama of Matsuda Fukuyama Farms.
I am a 3rd generation farmer from the Northshore of Oahu.

I am in **strong support** for the confirmation of Russell Kokubun as chairperson of the
Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Kokubun has helped us on agriculture issues such as: preserving important
agriculture lands and the restoration of irrigation systems.
These concerns are imperative in order for us to stay in business.

Mr. Kokubun is very much in tune with the all of the issues we face as farmers here in
Hawaii. He is very proactive in dealing with the concerns that come up in our
agricultural community.

I ask that you confirm Russell Kokubun to serve as Chair of the Department of
Agriculture.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectively submitted,
Clyde Fukuyama
Matsuda Fukuyama Farms
PO Box 36
Kahuku, Hawaii 96731



COORDINATING GROUP ON
ALIEN PEST SPECIES

The Senate
Committee on Agriculture
Thursday, February 10, 2011
2:45 p.m., Conference Room 229
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of GM 504 - Russell S. Kokubun, Gubernatorial Nominee

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the multi-agency/NGO partnership CGAPS (Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species), I respectfully request for your **support** of Gubernatorial Nominee Russell Kokubun for the Chair of the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture. Mr. Kokubun's legislative work with us on invasive species issues has shown that he has an impressive knowledge of agriculture issues, challenges, and opportunities. His early initiatives during this interim appointment have already shown that he is more than suited for the job. Mr. Kokubun also has a refreshing, open style of communication, just one of the many traits that make him a respected team leader.

I firmly believe that Mr. Kokubun is the best choice to lead the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, and that under his leadership, our state will move leaps and bounds towards a sustainable Hawai'i. I ask that you please confirm Mr. Kokubun to the Chair. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Aloha,

Christy Martin

Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS)
Ph: (808) 722-0995

Testimony

Date: Thursday, February 10, 2011

Time: 2:45 PM

Place: Conference Room 229

State Capitol

415 South Beretania

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair

Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

GM 504

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Position: **Support**

Aloha:

Chairman Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and fellow committee member's thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is David Gilliland, a resident of Molokai and a professional with over 25 years experience in agriculture. I strongly support the confirmation of RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

This support is based on my belief that Russell will be a strong advocate for all agriculture in the State of Hawaii. During his tenure as a State Senator and member of the Senate Agriculture Committee Russell was proactively engaged in supporting agricultural infrastructure projects, notably those related to the Molokai Irrigation System (MIS). Although not part of his home constituency Russell invested his time to physically review the system and to understand the issues surrounding the system's management. His subsequent approach to MIS issues has been balanced and fair.

This balanced and fair approach has been further evident in Russell's leadership in developing the Hawaii 2050 sustainability plan, as well as in his work and input into Important Agricultural Lands legislation. Russell works well with people in trying to achieve a win-win result, and to gain a positive outcome in the best interest of Agriculture in Hawaii. I highly recommend your consideration to confirm RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Yours truly,

David Gilliland

R. Brian Tsujimura

745 Fort Street, 17th Floor

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

rtsujimura@imanakakudo.com

February 9, 2011

The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Chair
The Honorable Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture

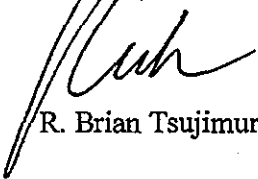
Re: Testimony in **Support** of GM 504: Consideration and Confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 1, 2014

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture:

I am writing in support of Russell Kokubun for Chairman of the Board of Agriculture. I have known Russell for many years from the time he served in the County Council to his service as a state senator.

I have always found him to be open and willing to listen and to be fair. We have not always agreed but our relationship is not built on agreement, it is based on mutual respect. I can only envision good things happening at the department with Russell's leadership and I encourage you and your committee to affirm his nomination.

Sincerely,



R. Brian Tsujimura

RBT:ay

February 9, 2011

TO: The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture
The Honorable Gilbert Kahele, Vice-Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture

FROM: *DMW* Pete Mac Donald, Warden, Hawaii Community Correctional Center
60 Punahale Street
Hilo, Hawaii 96720
Telephone: (808) 933-0595

SUBJECT: **MR. RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, NOMINEE FOR THE DIRECTOR OF BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

This is a letter of **support** for Mr. Russell Kokubun for the executive position of Director of Agriculture, State of Hawaii.

I have known Mr. Kokubun for approximately five years as a Senator representing for District 2, Island of Hawaii. He has been a steadfast supporter of public interest and an effective advocate for community projects. Most notably in my professional area, he was and is a fervent supporter for maintaining Kulani as a correctional facility. In so doing, he strongly stood for retaining jobs on the Big Island and ensuring that inmates were provided the most appropriate treatment for successful resocialization.

Mr. Kokubun is truly a man of the people. He is sincere, humble, hardworking and extremely conscientious. For me and my colleagues, he expeditiously returned our phone calls and was always ready to provide us with excellent resolutions to our concerns. Mr. Kokubun is well-rounded and open-minded. It takes him little time to understand a situation and grasp pertinent details that might have relevance.

In closing, Mr. Kokubun would be an excellent executive for any department. However, his interest, background and home has tilted him towards the directorship of Agriculture. If confirmed in that role, the benefit to Hawaii and Hawaii's people will be obvious and unsurpassed.

Scott E. Enright
PO Box 42
Ookala, HI 96774

February 8, 2011

Hawai'i State Senate Committee on Agriculture
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

RE: GM 504, Confirmation to the Director of the Department of Agriculture,
Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN.

HEARING: Thursday, Feb. 10, 2011, 2:45 P.M., Conference Room 229, State Capitol
415 South Beretania St.

Dear Chairman Nishihara and Committee Members:

Please allow me to express my **strong support** for the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun for the position of Director of Agriculture.

I have been involved with the island of Hawai'i's agricultural community starting with my tenure as cultivation and irrigation superintendent at Hamakua Sugar, and Mr. Kokubun has always been held in high regard in our community. In my current capacity as co-chair of the Agriculture Committee for the Hamakua Community Development Plan's Steering Committee, we have been surveying the Hamakua farmers and ranchers; preliminary feedback from our meetings and surveys indicates Mr. Kokubun enjoys the full support of our agricultural community.

I believe the citizens of our state will be well served by Mr. Kokubun's wealth of relevant experience and knowledge in agricultural issues. His years serving on the Senate Agriculture Committee, coupled with his experience in running his own farm, provide him with strong real-world agricultural experience and a perspective that will allow him to work effectively with the legislature in addressing one of Hawai'i's most important issues: food security.

Mr. Kokubun's leadership style is characterized by his positive attitude that motivates those around him. Further, he has always demonstrated that he understands the need to communicate and cooperate with all stakeholders on an issue. In sum, Russell Kokubun's even-handed and skilled leadership is exactly what is required from our Director of Agriculture in these difficult economic times.

Sincerely,



Scott E. Enright

Alan T. Takemoto

94-317 Mahinahou Street
Mililani, Hawaii 96789
(h) 626-5177

February 10, 2011
2:45 pm

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
GM 504
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN

Chair Nishihara and committee members:

My name is Alan Takemoto. I am testifying as an individual private citizen in **strong support** for the nomination of Russell Kokubun for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

I have had the honor and opportunity of working with Russell Kokubun since he became a State Senator over 10 years ago on many agricultural issues. I am very impressed on how much he has dedicated to Hawaii's agricultural industry. More than anyone can imagine. His wealth of knowledge and vision will allow him to hit the ground running that we all are looking forward to. I am confident in Russell Kokubun's abilities in being the best candidate and leader for this position as Chair of the Board of Agriculture. I know Russell Kokubun will continue to be a strong advocate for the agricultural industry.

I strongly urge the committee to approve the passage of Mr. Kokubun's nomination as our next Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Sincerely,

Alan Takemoto

February 8, 2011

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**Honorable Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Honorable Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair
And Members of the Committee on Agriculture**

RE: GM 504 – Russell S. Kokubun

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice-Chair Kahele and members of the Committee on Agriculture.

My name is **Josiah "Black" Ho`ohuli Sr.** of Nānākuli. I submit my testimony today in **strong support** for GM 504, Russell S. Kokubun.

I had the privilege of knowing Russell Kokubun while his term as Senator in the Hawaii State Legislature, I had the opportunity to sit in on some of his hearings that he conducted in the Hawaii State Legislature, but it was his leadership of spearheading the task force on the State of Hawaii's Sustainability 2010, that has me writing this testimony in his favor.

The Board of Agriculture has a big responsibility to the people of Hawaii. Russell Kokubun has the knowledge, expertise and strong leadership needed in this department and I believe he will in ensure that this department does its best to serve the people of Hawaii.

Sustainability in agriculture needs to be a priority for the State of Hawaii, and no one knows this better than Russell Kokubun. We need to stop relying on the outside for aid and start relying on our natural resources we have here.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to submit my testimony.

Aloha Ah Hui Hou, Malamapono

Josiah "Black" Ho`ohuli Sr.

**Ka'u Farm Bureau
PO Box 1109
Naalehu Hawaii 96772
808-929-9550**

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 10, 2011
2:45 PM
Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Re: GM 504; Testimony in Support of the confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee:

Ka'u Farm Bureau **strongly supports** Governor Abercrombie's nomination of Mr. Kokubun and **strongly supports his confirmation.**

Ka'u Farm Bureau has enjoyed a long and favorable relationship with Mr. Kokubun in his role as a Senator. In some ways his nomination is bittersweet. We will miss him as our Senator. But we are proud to share him with the rest of the state in his newly appointed position as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Mr. Kokubun has demonstrated an innovative and proactive approach to issues facing agriculture in our community, and has proven to be an effective leader and problem solver. Mr. Kokubun has a long history of proactive participation in issues that face agriculture in our district. From drought to VOG to irrigation and expanding markets, Mr. Kokubun has been a leader in helping to solve the problems that face our industries.

Ka'u Farm Bureau can think of no better candidate for this critically important position. Our members look forward to a productive and collaborative relationship with our former Senator.

We wish him the best of success in his new position and we applaud Governor Abercrombie for his nomination.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support such a strong candidate.



Chris Manfredi
President
Ka'u Farm Bureau



802 Mapunapuna Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
| Phone: (808) 538-7051 | Fax: (808) 523-7646 |

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2011 AT 2:45 P.M.

**GM 504- SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE
CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN**

CHAIR NISHIHARA AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to offer testimony on behalf of the Honorable Russell Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

For many years, Mr. Kokubun has served the people of Hawaii in a number of capacities, first as a member of the Hawaii County Council for eight years. During that time, he also served as the Chair of the Council for four years. He then served as Administrative Assistant to the Mayor of the Big Island and as Deputy Planning Director. At the State level, he served as the Hawaii Island member of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, where he was involved in land use decisions throughout the State.

From the year 2000, Mr. Kokubun served as a State Senator, representing Hilo, Volcano and Ka'u areas. He served as chair of the Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs committee as well as Chair of Commerce, Consumer Protection and Housing. He served as Vice Chair of Ways and Means and Chaired the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Task Force.

With all his public/government experience, what makes Russell most suited for the position of Agriculture Director is that he was a farmer for over a decade on the Big Island growing zucchini and has experienced the sometimes frustrating realities of farming for himself. What is encouraging is that he is still an advocate and concerned about agriculture and its future in Hawaii.

I feel that with his background and abilities, Russell Kokubun will serve the agricultural industry and the state of Hawaii well in his capacity as Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Thank you very much.

Mark Teruya
Chairman & CEO

Brian Miyamoto
1942 S. Beretania Street #5
Honolulu, HI 96826

FEBRUARY 10, 2011
HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON GM 504
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of
Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and Committee Members:

My name is Brian Miyamoto and I am writing in **strong support** for the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Mr. Kokubun has an extensive background and understanding of Hawaii's agricultural industry resulting from his experience as a farmer and as a State Senator where he held numerous leadership positions including as Senate Vice President, Chair of the Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee, and Chair of the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Task Force.

Mr. Kokubun's first hand experience and familiarity with local farming practices and record of public service makes him a perfect candidate for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. I am pleased to support the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson to the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. I hope that you will give Mr. Kokubun's confirmation to this position serious consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

**FEBRUARY 10, 2011
HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

TESTIMONY ON GM 504

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of
Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN

Submitted by: **Grant Hamachi**
41-744 Kumuhau St.
Waimanalo, HI 96795

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and Committee Members:

My name is Grant Hamachi and I am writing in **strong support** of the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Being a third generation local farmer, I have much respect for Mr. Kokubun and his extensive background and understanding of Hawaii's agricultural industry. As a farmer and a State Senator himself, Mr. Kokubun's leadership positions including Senate Vice President, Chair of the Water, Land, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee, and Chair of the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Task Force proves to me that he is well equipped for the position.

Mr. Kokubun's first hand experience and familiarity with local farming practices and record of public service makes him an ideal candidate for Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. I wish to extend my support to the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson to the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. Mahalo for the consideration and for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

**MIKILUA POULTRY FARM INC
1612-A KILOHI STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96819**

**The Senate
Committee on Agriculture**

February 10, 2011

**TESTIMONY
GM 504**

Chairperson Nishihara and members of the Committee on Agriculture:

My name is **Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser**, President of Mikilua Poultry Farm Inc, a family owned egg farm founded in 1947. We produce Island Fresh eggs for the entire State of Hawaii. We **strongly support** the confirmation of Russell S. Kokubun to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

I first met with Russell Kokubun in 2007 with the Hawaii Farm Bureau to gain his support of the 2007 Livestock Revitalization Feed Grant. I was very impressed with his knowledge and support of Hawaiian agriculture as Senate Chair for the Agriculture committee. He was very generous with his time to discuss the plight of the endangered livestock industry. His passion for sustainability and compassion for farmers were impressive and sincere.

Under his leadership and his collaboration with Representative Clift Tsuji, the feed grant program of 2007 passed and was a great aid to our farm. We were able to maintain our egg production; acquire new equipment; make infrastructural improvements; and most importantly purchase feed to sustain our flock. I believe Russell Kokubun's support of this important legislation for Hawaii's livestock industry at its time of need played an important part to our survival.

I respectfully ask for your confirmation of Russell Kokubun as Chairperson to the Board of Agriculture. I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



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

2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819

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COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair

Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 10, 2011

2:45 PM

Conference Room 229

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Re: GM 504; Testimony in Support of the confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, on behalf of our commercial farm and ranch families and organizations, offers our **strong support** for Governor Abercrombie's appointment of Mr. Kokubun and **strongly supports his confirmation.**

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation cannot imagine a stronger candidate for this position. Mr. Kokubun's combined experience in farming and public service is unparalleled. His ability to grasp issues, examine all sides and invariably reach the right decision is welcome in today's discourse. He has demonstrated an innovative and proactive approach to issues facing agriculture in our island state, and has proven to be an effective leader and problem solver.

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation can think of no better candidate for this critically important position. Our members from across the state look forward to a productive and collaborative relationship with the former Senator.

We wish him the best of success in his new position and we applaud Governor Abercrombie for his nomination.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support such a strong candidate.

Myrone Murakami

President

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation

**GM 504
CONSIDERATION OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

MEREDITH J. CHING
SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT
ALEXANDER & BALDWIN, INC.

FEBRUARY 10, 2011

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture:

I am Meredith Ching, submitting written testimony on behalf of Alexander & Baldwin, Inc. (A&B) and our agricultural companies, Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company (a division of A&B) and Kauai Coffee Company (a subsidiary of A&B), on GM 504, to consider Russell S. Kokubun as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture. We sincerely appreciate this opportunity to testify in **support** of this nominee.

I have had the opportunity to work with Mr. Kokubun on numerous occasions in his capacity as a member of the State Senate. As Chairperson of the Senate Water, Land & Agriculture Committee, Mr. Kokubun diligently worked to support Hawaii's agricultural industry. He played a key role in the enactment of the long awaited Important Agricultural Lands Law as well as numerous other measures to assist farmers and agricultural businesses throughout the State of Hawaii. He is very knowledgeable of the issues and challenges facing Hawaii's farmers and possesses the patience and collaborative skills necessary to work effectively with the many diverse entities and interests that comprise Hawaii's agricultural industry.

As Vice President of the Hawaii State Senate, Mr. Kokubun contributed greatly towards guiding the Senate to collaboratively work with the House in weathering the

global economic downturn and to steer the State towards economic recovery. We believe that Mr. Kokubun's administrative skills, broad experience as an elected representative of the community, and his commitment to hard work are attributes that will greatly contribute to his success as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

It is based on these observations that I support Mr. Kokubun's confirmation as the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

P O Box 437199 Kamuela HI 96743
Phone (808) 885-5599 • Fax (808) 887-1607
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SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Thursday February 10, 2011 2:45 pm Room 229

GM 504

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee,
RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN, for a term to expire December 31, 2014.

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and Members of the Committee:

My name is **Herbert M "Tim" Richards III**, I am a rancher, veterinarian, and the current President of the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc. (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 130+ member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of approximately 25% of the State's total land mass.

As an individual and on behalf of the members of the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, we **strongly supports** GM 504 nominating Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

I have known and worked with Russell Kokubun for the past many years. It first started with his being on the county council on the Big Island; then through his career in the state legislature. During his tenure, Russell has always been well spoken and very knowledgeable of the issues which affect agricultural industries. He is well thought of and respected by members of the agricultural community in the State of Hawaii, and will make an excellent chairperson.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in strong support of GM 504 nominating Russell S. Kokubun as Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.