



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

February 10, 2011
2:00pm
Conference Room 309

HB 1496, RELATING TO AGRIBUSINESS

Purpose of the bill: Requiring the University of Hawai'i to convene a task force to study whether an agribusiness cooperative program should be established in Hawai'i.

Chair Nishimoto and Members of the Committee,

Hawai'i Farmers Union strongly supports this bill for the reasons described below.

Hawai'i Farmers Union strongly supports the development of agricultural cooperatives. As stated in the National Farmers Union (NFU) Policy, "Farmer-owned cooperatives are an effective institution through which the farmer can reduce costs of production, maintain a reliable source of inputs, and effectively market and process farm products." (NFU Policy 2010, p. 49)

The formation and successful operation of farmer-owned cooperatives throughout Hawai'i will enable increased collaboration among farmers as well as access to larger markets, including our state public school and university systems.

Furthermore, our policy asserts that "Government policies and programs should help to better develop, protect, advance and promote farmer cooperatives' role in assembling, processing, selling, marketing and distributing farm commodities." (NFU Policy 2010, p. 49)

This task force to study the development of an agribusiness cooperative program is a very important step in the right direction toward a vibrant agriculture in Hawai'i.

In building our capacity to achieve greater food security and self-sufficiency we must also address our **pressing need for locally sourced and produced livestock feed**. The cost of imported feed has been a major factor in the decline of Hawai'i's livestock industries, as stated by the University of Hawai'i:

- [Chicken] "Poultry broiler production in Hawai'i declined 30 percent in the past 10 years, a reduction and trend largely due to high production costs associated with land, housing,

and imported feeds.” (Pastured poultry production. April 1999. University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.)

- [Beef and Dairy] “High input costs in the state have been the major contributor to the decline of Hawai‘i’s market share. Feed in particular, has become relatively expensive for local producers as the cost of imported grain to finish cattle has increased.” (An assessment of economic feasibility for energy-enhanced roughage as cattle feed. July 2003. University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.)
- NOTE: While HFU supports the production of locally sourced and produced livestock feed, we do not support the perpetuation of mono-cropped annual systems (such as grain) which have systematically caused the depletion of minerals and biological life from our island soils. Instead we support the development of perennial cropping systems that are properly managed to support and enhance the health of our ecosystems.

The development of cooperatively-managed feed mills that utilize locally available and sustainably produced ingredients to supply feed for local livestock industries is directly in line with our state’s goals for true economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

The Hawai‘i Farmers Union is committed to our role in this task force and we thank you for affirming the diversity of voices that exist within Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector. We ask you to please support this bill on behalf of Hawai‘i’s farmers and the development of vibrant local food systems for our state.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Wayne Axelson
Vice President

www.hawaiifarmersunion.org
www.nfu.org

Hawai‘i Farmers Union is a branch of the National Farmers Union – America’s oldest and most distinguished farming organization, representing over 180,000 members nationwide and advocating for family farmers, ranchers, fishers and rural communities since 1902. The mission of Hawai‘i Farmers Union is to advance the rights of farmers to create vibrant and prosperous agricultural communities for the benefit of all through cooperation, legislation, and education.

Testimony for HB1496 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 3:34 PM

To: HEDtestimony

Cc: damiansempio@yahoo.com

Testimony for HED 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB1496

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Damian Sempio

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone:

E-mail: damiansempio@yahoo.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:



Testimony for HB1496 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 12:02 PM

To: HEDtestimony

Cc: moanasua@gmail.com

Testimony for HED 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB1496

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: moana sua

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone: 808-292-2227

E-mail: moanasua@gmail.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

we need affordable long term leases, so local people can afford to buy local products!!



Testimony for HB1496 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 11:51 AM

To: HEDtestimony

Cc: simoneswanson@hawaii.rr.com

Testimony for HED 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB1496

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: simone swanson

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone:

E-mail: simoneswanson@hawaii.rr.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

Testimony for HB1496 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 9:24 AM

To: HEDtestimony

Cc: fatiyamasaki@rocketmail.com

Testimony for HED 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB1496

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Fati Yamasaki

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone:

E-mail: fatiyamasaki@rocketmail.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

Testimony for HB1496 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 9:05 AM

To: HEDtestimony

Cc: flipside@usa.com

Testimony for HED 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB1496

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Merites pascasio

Organization: Individual

Address: 743 Ahukini Street Honolulu, HI

Phone: 8087413620

E-mail: flipside@usa.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

Please support this bill for food security in Hawaii

Testimony for HB1496 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 8:20 AM

To: HEDtestimony

Cc: emartinez@hawaii.rr.com

Testimony for HED 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB1496

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Elizabeth Martinez

Organization: Individual

Address: 41-1140 Waikupanaha St. Waimanalo, HI

Phone: 808-496-1275

E-mail: emartinez@hawaii.rr.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

Aloha, This is a brilliant, creative measure that could leverage economic benefit to the State and be pivotal in moving toward food sustainability in Hawaii by providing opportunities for local farms. My husband, Glenn Martinez is the president of the Hawaii Farmers Union, a local chapter of the National Farmers Union which represents small family farms. My husband is in the Philippines on an agricultural mission at the moment and cannot be present at the hearing, but he would like to convey that the HFU is supportive of this bill moving forward.

Thank you!

Testimony for HB1496 on 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 4:23 PM

To: HEDtestimony

Cc: jramos858@yahoo.com

Testimony for HED 2/10/2011 2:00:00 PM HB1496

Conference room: 309

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Jeanette Ramos

Organization: Individual

Address: 224 Quail Crest Drive Arlington, TX

Phone: 4694507014

E-mail: jramos858@yahoo.com

Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments: