



Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii

Testimony By: Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director

HB 865 HD 1 - Relating to Inspection Fees

The House Committee on Finance

Thursday, February 24, 2011

Room 308, 12:00 a.m.

LATE

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Position: Strong Support

Aloha Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and members of the Committee:

My name is Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director of the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association, a nonprofit trade association representing the seed industry in Hawaii. HCIA strongly supports HB 865 HD 1 relating to inspection fees.

HCIA believes that HB 865 is an important and necessary initiative to address the cutbacks to the Dept. of Agriculture as a result of Hawaii's fiscal crisis and the department's reliance on the general fund to support the ag inspector positions. The agricultural industry including the seed industry's whose shipments require inspection by the HDOA risk their long term economic viability when they cannot get their products through the inspection process in a timely manner.

We support many of these legislative efforts including fee increases to restore the Dept. of Agriculture positions, minimize the adverse impact of the budget crisis on their department, and ensure the HDOA's ability to support, promote and enhance Hawaii's agricultural industry. However, we hope that the legislature and the HDOA continue to balance this fiscal responsibility with other stakeholders that share a commitment to supporting the inspection, quarantine and eradication of invasive species coming into the state.

We believe HB 865 HD 1 is an important and necessary step in the right direction. Mahalo for the opportunity to comment.