



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 Fax: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

March 2, 2011  
12:00 P.M.  
Conference Room 308

**HOUSE BILL NO. 866 H.D. 1  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

House Bill 866 H.D. 1 proposes to amend Chapter 142 HRS by creating a new section to provide opportunity for beekeepers to voluntarily register with the department of agriculture and provide information that may assist the department in compiling accurate information on Hawaii's beekeeping industry. This information shall be kept confidential by the department. The measure further provides an appropriation out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$350,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2011 – 2012 and the same or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012-2013 to establish an apiary program, including permanent positions as follows:

1. One apiary specialist;
2. One apiary planner; and
3. Two apiary technicians.

With the recent introduction of the varroa mite and small hive beetle into Hawaii, bee keepers on the Islands of Oahu and Hawaii have collectively lost thousands of hives over the past two years. The pests, currently only on the islands of Oahu and Hawaii, pose a serious threat to honey bees and agricultural production statewide. The department is in critical need of an apiary specialist and staff to develop programs to contain and control these and other serious pest of the honey bees that threaten honey bees, honey production and agricultural production in Hawaii.

The department strongly supports this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.



NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR

BRIAN SCHATZ  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
**OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES**

NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT BUILDING  
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 107  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
Telephone: (808) 586-1400 FAX: (808) 586-1412  
E-MAIL: oip@hawaii.gov  
www.hawaii.gov/oip

CATHY L. TAKASE  
ACTING DIRECTOR

To: House Committee on Agriculture  
From: Cathy L. Takase, Acting Director  
Hearing: Wednesday, March 2, 2011, 12 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 308  
Re: Testimony on H.B. No. 866, H.D. 1  
Relating to Agriculture

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The purpose of this bill is to require beekeepers to register with the Department of Agriculture (DOA). The Office of Information Practices (OIP) takes no position on the bill's registration requirement but recommends that the bill's confidentiality provision be revised to enable the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to disclose statistics about the beekeeping industry

At OIP's recommendation, the House Committee on Agriculture had amended the bill to make the registered beekeepers' names and business addresses publicly available. However, the bill still requires all other registration information to be kept confidential while allowing the DOA to compile statistics on the information. Confidentiality of registration information under this bill would necessarily restrict DOA from publicly disclosing statistics about the beekeeping industry since the statistics will be derived from such confidential registration data.

Therefore, OIP recommends that the bill's confidentiality provision be amended in either of two ways. First, OIP suggests that the bill's confidentiality provision (page 2, lines 8 through 13) be amended to require DOA to keep confidential registration information to the extent that this information falls within an exception to disclosure under chapter 92F. Alternatively, OIP recommends that the bill be amended to make confidential registration information that is

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individually identifiable so that the DOA can still disclose statistics and other data about the beekeeping industry without identifying the specific subject registrants.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

# Kauai County Farm Bureau

*Affiliated with Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation*

P.O. Box 3895 • Lihue HI 96766

808-337-9944 (phone/fax) 808-652-3217 (cell)

[kcfb@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:kcfb@hawaiiantel.net)

***The Voice of Kauai's Agriculture***



March 1, 2011

ATTN: Committee on Finance  
Rep. Marcus R. Oshiro Chair  
Rep. Marilyn B. Lee, Vice Chair  
and Members of the Committee

RE: HB866 HD1 Relating to Bees, registration  
Testimony of Kauai County Farm Bureau in SUPPORT  
Roy Oyama, President

HEARING DATE: March 2, 2011, noon, Rm 308 – House Finance Committee

Kauai County Farm Bureau on behalf of our member farm and ranch families, and affiliated with Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, **requests your support of HB866 HD1.**

We support the Department of Agriculture's ability to have access to information on location of beehives so that they can respond in a timely way to emergencies that might devastate bee colonies around the State.

Honey bee problems are problems for all of us since many local crops are pollinated by bees. If we are unable to control pests and diseases that harm our honey bees, Hawaii may suffer lower production and quality in tomatoes, melons, and cucumbers as well as coffee, avocado, macadamia nuts, and citrus.

Tens of millions of dollars in food loss are at stake. We defer to DOA to determine the best way to protect the State's bees and hope that this bill will at least foster discussion in that direction. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

Please lend your support to HB866 HD1. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Roy Oyama  
President – Kauai County Farm Bureau  
[Oyama\\_farm@yahoo.com](mailto:Oyama_farm@yahoo.com)

CC: Melissa McFerrin  
Executive Administrator – Kauai County Farm Bureau  
[kcfb@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:kcfb@hawaiiantel.net)