



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

LATE TESTIMONY

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HEARING BEFORE
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE and
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, & OCEAN RESOURCES

TESTIMONY ON HR 144 & HCR 165

Room 325
10:15 AM

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Chair Chang, and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, the largest non-profit agriculture advocacy organization in the state with approximately 1,600 farm and ranch family members **strongly supports HR 144 and HCR 165**, which requests that the Department of Accounting and General Services allow community groups to use state-owned lands in Wahiawa to establish an open/farmers' markets.

Hawaii's agricultural industry is not only a vital resource to our State's economy, but it is also a critical component to Hawaii's sustainable future. Farmers' Markets play an invaluable role in the success of Hawaii's agricultural industry by providing Hawaii's farmers and ranchers a venue to direct market their locally grown and produced products to consumers. Farmers' Markets provide an alternative distribution method for farmers and ranchers that is economically advantageous to them. Instead of selling farm products to wholesalers or distributors at a relatively low price, farmers can sell directly to the consumer at a price that is more profitable.

Farmers' markets are also an opportune way to highlight and promote Hawaii's agricultural industry to consumers. They provide a convenient channel for farmers to engage directly with consumers. This direct one-on-one selling approach enhances the customers' appreciation for our local farmers' hard work and what they produce.

The Wahiawa community will greatly benefit from the establishment of a Farmers' Market. A Wahiawa Farmers' market will accomplish the following:

- Availability of farm fresh, healthier products for consumers
- Increase the value of agricultural products to the farmers
- Build connection between farmers and consumers and support local agriculture
- Social event that becomes a community building activity.

We appreciate this opportunity to provide our opinion on this matter and respectfully request your support for HR 144 and HCR 165.

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Testimony for HCR165/HR144

Pamela A. Torres

Background. The Wahiawa CBDO, a non-profit organization, is attempting to revive Wahiawa's agricultural heritage through a one-year microenterprise project to introduce our low-to-moderate-income residents to agricultural business opportunities. The CBDO will provide basic business training and ongoing technical training to equip our residents to start their own agricultural microenterprises.

An open market will provide these budding entrepreneurs with an outlet for their produce that is located right in the heart of Wahiawa. It will also provide the community with an opportunity to buy healthful and economical products close to home. This would be a small but vital step to increasing Wahiawa's sustainability. The benefits would flow to the community and to the state as a whole.

The state can provide a service to the Wahiawa community that virtually won't cost a penny of taxpayer money. Please support this resolution.