



State of Hawaii  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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**LATE TESTIMONY**

TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

&

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2012

8:00 a.m.

Room 312

HOUSE BILL NO. 2301  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2301. The Department of Agriculture would like to express strong concerns with the proposed bill as it harbors similar concerns as in House Bill No. 2703.

This bill creates a new chapter in the Hawaii Revised Statutes, requiring the Department of Agriculture to:

- Establish an information base on local production and consumption of food, from which to gauge achievement of a food sustainability standard;
- Identify food commodities to be targeted for assistance so as to increase their local market share; and
- Propose penalties if the food sustainability standard is not met.

The food sustainability standard as proposed in this measure requires the collection and compilation of in-shipment data. This is necessary because imports and



exports from/to the U.S. mainland are not available from existing federal or state sources. Import and export data from/to other foreign destinations are available from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The Department of Agriculture previously collected and compiled in-shipment data for fresh fruits and vegetables (FFV). This in-shipment data, used in conjunction with local production data, give us reliable estimates of the proportion of locally grown FFV sold in the local market. Currently, no in-shipment data is available as all staff members in the program were directly affected by the 2009 reduction-in-force. The Department is working with the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to develop a collaborative system to gather and analyze relevant dates and to present findings to the community at large.

The prohibition section of this bill has the effect of severely diminishing the utility of county land use planning when it is held hostage to the ability of the DOA to ensure annual increases in food sustainability standards. Agricultural production is subject to many events such as inclement weather, diseases and pests, failure to be price competitive and lower consumption. To penalize planned land reclassifications because of these fluctuations is an unreasonable outcome, therefore this section should be deleted.

The Department is currently working on developing metrics to determine the current levels of agriculture within the State. We would recommend that the Department be allowed to complete these metrics as a necessary step prior to determining food sustainability standards.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

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**LATE TESTIMONY**

FEBRUARY 3, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION & BUSINESS

TESTIMONY ON HB 2301  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 312  
8:00 AM

Chair Tsuji, Chair McKelvey and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Chief Operating Officer and Government Affairs Liaison for the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFBF provides the following comments to HB 2301, requiring the Department of Agriculture to develop food sustainability standard to promote local food production.

This measure defines the sustainability standard as the volume of food sold that is grown in the State. There is no measure of economic viability of farms and ranches. Sustainability means for the long term. Measures at any one point in time cannot provide a full picture of sustainability. Major production without addressing issues such as the ability of the system to recover from downturns from pest and disease outbreaks as well as weather is not sustainable. People must realize all the barriers that confront agriculture on a daily basis, from being viable and sustainable, issues such as cost of land, water availability, labor costs as well as availability, transportation costs, invasive species...after all of this then we come to marketing. These issues must all be dealt with if we are to consider increasing sustainability. Measures of sustainability must take these matters into consideration.

HFBF has concerns with the prohibition section of this bill. We believe that HB 2301 ignores State and County land use planning and punishes landowners by penalizing planned land reclassifications if annual food sustainability standards are not met.

We do agree with the need for data. The Hawaii Agricultural Statistics Service has been the collector and repository of agricultural data and annually publishes the Hawaii Agricultural Statistics. Much of the data requested in this measure is already available. However, due to cutbacks, their ability to collect and analyze data has been severely curtailed. What is needed is a restoration of capacity for the Department to collect data ...not just food but all agricultural data. We understand some of the positions are being restored, however, County level data previously available may no longer be possible. This information is important as it guides access to funds and other critical matters for agriculture.

I can be reached at (808) 848-2074 if you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



# Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

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## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

February 3, 2012, 8:00 A.M.  
(Testimony is 2 pages long)

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2301

Aloha Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawaii Chapter, with 9000 dues paying members and supporters statewide, strongly *supports* HB 2301. This measure creates a vision of food self-sufficiency and sets metrics to ensure compliance over time. It further identifies and connects compliance and land use planning within the State.

The Hawaii State Constitution, article XI, section, is explicit about the need to “conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase self-sufficiency,” and the obligation to “assure the availability of agricultural suitable lands.” Despite this rather clear directive, Hawai'i has moved in the wrong direction. We import approximately ninety per cent of our food. Currently, Hawaii has a fresh supply of produce for no more than ten days. Ninety per cent of the beef, sixty-seven per cent of fresh vegetables, sixty-five per cent of fresh fruits, and seventy per cent of all milk consumed in the state are imported.

Further, over the past 50 years, approximately 53% of Class A and B lands have been reclassified to urban use. On Oahu alone, almost 4,000 acres of prime farmland have been reclassified in the past 20 years.

Our current strategy for increasing diversified agriculture and promoting self-sufficiency plainly isn't working. The definition of stupidity is doing the same thing over again and expecting different results. Plainly Hawai'i needs to look at new solutions.

HB 2301 sets a new vision. It creates a specific targets and requires annual reporting. A similar concept helped pump prime Hawai'i's clean energy industry. Hawai'i's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards were a key part in starting the clean energy movement. Tangible goals with metrics that define success effectively brought previously bickering parties together to solve Hawai'i's dangerous dependence on foreign oil.

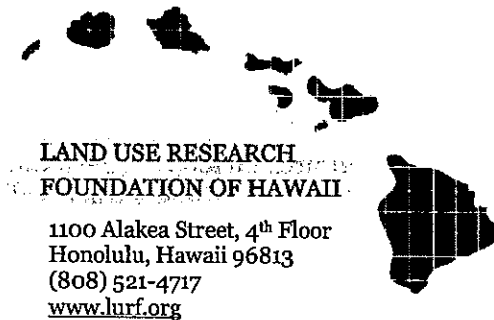
Just fifty years ago half our food was produced locally. We can aspire a return to that level of self-sufficiency through self-enforcing standards that encourage collaboration between landowners, farmers, and the State.

Relying on DOA estimates, this concept could generate a billion dollars in new sales for our businesses, stimulate \$300 million in new household earnings, create more than 14,000 new jobs with living wages, and pump \$39 million in new tax revenues into our state coffers.

Enforceability of the Food Sustainability Standards is necessary. For example, Hawai'i adopted a goal of reducing its waste production by 50% by the year 2000 (a goal that has been essentially ignored). Without enforcement, stakeholders will not have a reason to treat the standards with the level of seriousness necessary to ensure compliance. Enforcement, particularly tied to one of the problems hamstringing food production, is a means to bring everyone to the table for positive solutions.

HB 2301 is an opportunity to create a self-sustaining vision of Hawai'i's future. We hope this Committee will allow it to proceed.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



LATE TESTIMONY

February 1, 2012

Representative Clift Tsuji, Chair  
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Agriculture

**Opposition to HB 2301, Relating to Agriculture. (Requires the Department of Agriculture to develop a food sustainability standard and imposes a land use moratorium if standard is not met.)**

**Friday, February 3, 2012, 8:00 a.m., in CR 312**

My name is Dave Arakawa, and I am the Executive Director of the Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF), a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to provide its position **in opposition to HB 2301** and offers encouragement to the various agricultural stakeholder groups who rightfully defend the goals of viable agricultural operations, and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands (IAL) in Hawaii.

**HB 2301.** This bill proposes the creation of a new chapter in the Hawaii Revised Statutes requiring the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to develop a food sustainability standard (FSS) purportedly to promote local food production in order to help diversify the local economy. Notwithstanding the IAL law or any other law to the contrary, HB 2301 also includes a land use moratorium which provides that after December 31, 2019, discretionary approvals shall not be granted by the State or the counties for proposed reclassification of any agricultural or conservation district boundary of lands greater than twenty-five acres, in the event the DOA determines that in any particular year, the food sustainability standard has not been achieved.

**LURF's Position.** Over the years, LURF has strongly supported agriculture, agriculture development, the IAL law and water for agriculture. LURF also supports food security and food self-sufficiency; however, we must **oppose the current form of HB 2301**, based on the reasons set forth below. In lieu of this bill, LURF **strongly supports HB 2430** (proposed by the DOA and the Governor's package) because it is a measure that emphasizes cooperation and cohesive industry strategies and planning; a holistic approach from farm to market; active participation from all of the stakeholders in the agricultural industry, transportation, the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, public and private research entities, and other Federal and State agencies; and the implementation of existing and

future programs to develop Hawaii's agriculture and food security, rather than setting standards and imposing moratoriums that unfairly punish landowners when such standards are not met.

LURF opposes HB 2301 and supports HB 2430, based on the following:

1. **Trust the experts on Food Security and Sustainability.** DOA drafted HB 2430; and DOA has experience in agriculture. We are not sure who drafted HB 2301, and whether they have any experience in agriculture and agricultural operations.
2. **Purposes of measures:**
  - It appears that the main purpose and desired outcome of HB 2301 is to collect data to create a FSS, and then impose a moratorium to prohibit reclassification of lands if the FSS are not met. It does not include support for any agricultural programs, or encourage collaboration amongst agricultural stakeholders.
  - Purpose of DOA's HB 2430 is to create and implement a very broad agricultural development and food security program to grow and expand the farm to market concept and increase interrelationships between private and public sectors to develop and improve agriculture in the state.
3. **Differing strategies to achieve food security and sustainability:**
  - HB 2301 is premised on the baseless belief that all that needs to be done to achieve Ag sustainability is to set a FSS, and then unreasonably punish landowners if that FSS is not met.
  - DOA's HB 2430 has a multi-faceted strategy, because it understands successful agriculture is very complex and involves many issues (agricultural infrastructure, labor, biosecurity, food safety, market development, research and development, agricultural lands, water and water treatment, pest management, food safety, etc.).
4. **Differing Approaches:**
  - HB 2301 is exclusionary and punitive. LURF understands that the major agricultural landowners were not even consulted in the drafting of HB 2301. Rather than advocating a collaborative process amongst all agricultural stakeholders, this bill proposes to unjustifiably blame and punish large land owners if certain FSS are not met. We understand that proponents of the bill refer to it as "hitting them with a stick!"
  - HB 2430 calls for collaboration and understands that in Hawaii, all stakeholders must work together for the success of agriculture. DOA understands that to achieve food security, all stakeholders must work together to make agriculture viable and successful (similar to the collaborative effort that led to the passage of the IAL law).
5. **Other issues:**
  - HB 2301 is contrary to the IAL law and unfair to landowners who designated their lands as IAL.
  - There is no logical nexus between the intent/substance of the bill and the consequence suffered by landowners in the event the FSS is not met. For example, if natural causes such as flooding, drought, storms, or pests happen to be responsible for the State's to failure to meet the FSS, landowners are nevertheless precluded from receiving discretionary approvals for proposed land reclassifications.
  - HB 2301 ignores and disregards careful State and County land use planning.



House Committee on Agriculture  
February 1, 2012  
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Based on the above, LURF **opposes HB 2301**, and respectfully requests that this bill be held in this Committee. LURF however, **strongly supports HB 2430**, and respectfully urges that this Committee favorably consider and pass HB 2430.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding this measure.

**Anthony Aalto**  
**3946 Lurline Drive • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96816**  
**808.732.5960**

February 02, 2012

To: House Agriculture Committee  
Re: Hearing on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012, 8:00 am, Rm #312  
Subject: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB2301

Aloha Chair Tsuji and members of the committee

My name is Anthony Aalto. I am a resident of Honolulu, a taxpayer and a voter, and I thank you for this opportunity to testify.

I strongly support this bill and I urge you to do the same.

The latest numbers from the US Department of Agriculture show that Hawai'i grows just 8% to 10% of all the food that we consume.

In the event of a natural disaster we have enough food stockpiled at any one time to last about a week.

This situation leaves us dangerously vulnerable to supply disruptions and is unsustainable.

The Abercrombie administration has committed to boosting the amount of food we grow, but has so far done nothing practical to advance such an agenda. And, even as this committee considers a food sustainability standard, the Land Use Commission is considering development proposals that would plant houses on the two most productive food farms in the state – the Hono'uli'uli farmlands threatened by billionaire Donald Horton's so called Ho'opili scheme and the Mililani makai farmlands threatened by billionaire David Murdock's so called Koa Ridge scheme. Between them these two farms produce some 40% of all the fresh produce currently grown in the state. To allow them to be developed would be absolute lunacy, but without further direction from the Legislature to make food production a priority, there seems to be no way to stop the LUC from giving these egregious developments a green light.

According to the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawaii, in the last 50 years we have already paved more than 53% of our prime A and B farmlands. The development model that has sprawled across our best farmlands has made H1 and H2 the second most congested freeways in the nation at rush hour, causing families of moderate means to lose money on wasted gas and, more importantly, to lose precious family time together.

The model has also sharply increased our contribution to the global warming that makes us more vulnerable to sea level rise than any other state in the nation. And it has started to impact our biggest industry – complaints about suburban sprawl are now the number one complaint of tourists.

As imports have replaced locally grown fresh produce, our diet has come to rely increasingly on processed foods. This has, in turn, sparked an epidemic of diet related disease such as diabetes and obesity, which has placed enormous strains on our health system.

This bill seeks to create a framework in which to begin to address these multiple, over-lapping problems. The target of doubling food production by 2020 was arrived at after consultations with experts at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, with the Hawai'i Farmers Union United, which has more than 500 members, with the owner of our largest organic farm, with officials at our largest organic food retailer, with members of the Hawai'i Food Policy Council, and with experts at the Kokua Hawai'i Foundation which has been so instrumental in establishing our successful farm to school program. They all agree that doubling our food production by 2020 is an ambitious goal, but an achievable goal.

However, no such goal is meaningful without some sort of consequence if we fail to meet the target. To vote for this bill while stripping the threat of a development moratorium would be as easy, and no more significant than voting for mom and apple pie. The proposed consequence is a halt to all major land reclassifications from agriculture to urban. This not only makes sense in policy terms, it is a down-payment on the constitutional obligations laid out in Article XIII.

The reason this issue is tied to land use patterns is simple: if you ask the produce purchasers at Foodland supermarkets, Whole Foods supermarkets, Costco, Kyo-ya hotels, even Subway fast food franchises, they will all tell you that they want to buy more locally grown produce but are unable to do so, and when they ask the farmers who are their suppliers why they do not grow more, the number one answer is always the same: lack of land.

Our biggest landholders persist in pursuing a failed development model of vast suburban estates sprawling across our best farmland. As long as they are allowed to continue on this path, in defiance of the constitution, our food supply will continue to become ever more vulnerable.

This bill is not a magic bullet. It is not a panacea. It will do nothing in immediate, direct terms to solve a single problem that farmers face. However it will lay down a marker. It will commit the state, by statute, to make this issue a priority and it will provide the context for a range of measures, regulations and new bills to start to make food self-sufficiency a reality.

Once again, I urge you to pass this measure.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, February 03, 2012 8:05 AM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** farmfreshhawaii@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB2301 on 2/3/2012 8:00:00 AM

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Testimony for AGR 2/3/2012 8:00:00 AM HB2301

Conference room: 312  
Testifier position: Support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Juanita Kawamoto Brown  
Organization: Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hi  
E-mail: [farmfreshhawaii@gmail.com](mailto:farmfreshhawaii@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 2/3/2012

Comments:  
written testimony will be provided later today