



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

## LATE TESTIMONY

### TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, February 1, 2012  
8:00 A.M.  
ROOM 229

HOUSE BILL NO. 2431  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2431. This bill proposes to amend Hawaii Revised Statutes 226-7 to make a strong and clear policy statement to support the purchase and consumption of locally grown products.

There has been a growing disconnect between people and the understanding of where their food comes from that has resulted in an increase in health problems and a decline in food security. Moving towards increasing the purchase of locally grown agricultural products will have the effect of increasing access to fresh agricultural commodities and also supporting our local agricultural industry and ensure we are moving toward a more food secure way of living. The proposed amendments to the Hawaii State Planning Act reflect the desire of the Department of Agriculture to emphasize the importance of supporting local agriculture in the movement towards greater food safety, food security, and self-sustainability.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.





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

2343 Rose Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819  
Phone: (808) 848-2074 • Neighbor-Islands: (800) 482-1272  
Fax: (808) 848-1921 • Email: [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org)  
[www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

LATE  
TESTIMONY

February 1, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 2431  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Room 312  
8:00 AM

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

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 supports the intent and provides the following comments on HB 2431, amending the Hawaii State Planning Act to include statements regarding purchase of Hawaii-grown foods.

Numerous studies and statements about the importance of local agriculture have been conducted over time. They all require resources. The current Hawaii State Planning Act contains many policy statements supporting agriculture. Despite these policy statements that supposedly support agriculture, agriculture continues to struggle to be recognized as a critical industry for long term sustainability. Farmers and ranchers need to grow and raise sufficient agricultural products in a reliable and affordable manner to change purchase practices.

Section 226-1, defining the purpose of this chapter states:

"...identify the goals, objectives, policies, and priorities for the State; provide a basis for determining priorities and allocating limited resources, such as public funds, services, human resources, land, energy, water, and other resources; improve coordination of federal, state, and county plans, policies, programs, projects, and regulatory activities; and to establish a system for plan formulation and program coordination to provide for an integration of all major state, and county activities."

These statements imply that the policies play a role in administrative and legislative decision making.

This year, the Hawaii Farm Bureau has introduced a package of measures addressing the real needs of our farmers and ranchers. Infrastructure, agricultural crime, permitting, regulatory assistance -- all topics contained within the existing Plan. Yet, we know we will struggle to have the measures passed and may face vetoes, as competing interests challenge our measures. What role do the existing plans play in this decision making process? We need deliverables that will help our farmers and ranchers today. The needs are known. We need to be pragmatic and address these needs rather than "plan" and not deliver what is already in the plan.

We do not disagree with the proposed language in the Plan. However, we are realistic in recognizing that plans do not necessarily deliver the desired outcome without commitment to deliver the implementation measures.