

HB 280, HD 1

Late
Testimony

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2012 9:16 AM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: bdavison@wik.com
Subject: Testimony for HB280 on 3/13/2012 2:50:00 PM

Testimony for AGL 3/13/2012 2:50:00 PM HB280

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Brandon Davidson
Organization: Individual
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Submitted on: 3/13/2012

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Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB 280 which eliminates Mandatory Certification of Hawaiian coffee grading while strengthening Mandatory Documentation of the coffees Origin in the Ag Department Rules. The current State grading program does little or nothing to guarantee that the origin of the coffee is authentic and has little penalty for cheaters. In the past two years certification of coffee grade has become cumbersome and problematic. Budget cuts to the Department of Agriculture have lead to furloughs and employee head count cuts. There just are not enough certification agents to get the job done. This past season the Big Island had only one inspector to certify all coffee on the Big Island. The wait for certification finalization was over four weeks during the peak of the season. We feel that the Department of Agriculture manpower resources would be better used to enforce the current rules rather that just inspecting coffee. The current grading certification program was brought about by a Kona Coffee Counterfeiting operation which took place on the Mainland USA. What was needed at the time was a strong program in Hawaii which would document the origin of Hawaiian Coffee. Instead we got a program that went too far and required state certification of grading standards to control quality. The program has been costly to Hawaii tax payers and has not produced what was needed (strong mandatory origin documentation). The proposed change making Grade Certification voluntary and origin documentation mandatory will save money for the State of Hawaii and provide better protection for Hawaiian Coffee.