



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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2012
9:00 A.M.
ROOM 312

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 75/ HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 103
EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S EFFORTS TO
STIMULATE THE STATE'S AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY, INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY
AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT, AND PROMOTE FOOD SECURITY.

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on House Resolution No. 75/House Concurrent Resolution No. 103. The purpose of this resolution is to express support for the Department's efforts to stimulate the State's Agriculture industry, increase and diversify agricultural output, and promote food security. We are very grateful for your strong support of our new Agricultural Development and Food Security program and strongly support this resolution.

The goal of the Agricultural Development and Food Security program is to integrate programs in order to develop Hawaii's agriculture and food security. Hawaii's agriculture has transformed from sugar and pineapple to diversified agriculture and now faces such complexities as diversified export markets, increased pest pressure, global competitiveness, sustainability, food safety, food security and self-sufficiency.



To move the agriculture industry forward and meet the needs of the industry, will take a coordinated effort with the agricultural, transportation, and business industries, research organizations, and other federal and state agencies. Although the objectives appear simple and straightforward, the complexities can only be solved with cooperation and cohesive industry strategies and planning.

This program takes a holistic approach from farm-to-market, including subsystems which are not necessarily under the Department of Agriculture's (Department) purview, but critical to the development of agriculture. The overall concept overseen by the Department includes subsystems or subprograms such as but not limited to farm inputs, labor, infrastructure, biosecurity, food safety, sustainability, market development, and research and development.

Industry plays a prominent role in defining priorities; however, it is vital during this time of limited resources that the Department of Agriculture, the agriculture industries, the research institutions, and federal, state, county and private partnerships combine their resources and expertise due to the multitude of needs and complexity of issues. And yet, despite these complexities, all of our farmers and producers share these basic needs beyond infrastructure (land & water) and labor.

- Distinguish "Hawaii grown" in both local and export markets.
- Increase availability of improved cultivars to farmers.
- Assistance in pest management.
- Increase access to local, domestic, and international markets by removing trade barriers and improving access to quarantine treatments and resolving transportation issues.

We look forward to reporting on the progress of our initiatives.

Thank you for allowing us to testify on this measure.



Hawaii Farm Bureau
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LATE TESTIMONY

March 21, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY ON HR73/HCR101
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO IMPLEMENT AN
INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO PROMOTE THE PURCHASE OF HAWAII GROWN
AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

HR74/HCR102
CONVENING AN AGRICULTURE POLICY TASK FORCE TO REVIEW AGRICULTURAL
POLICIES FROM OTHER STATES IN PROVIDING FOR HAWAII'S AGRICULTURE
INDUSTRY

HR75/HCR103
EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S EFFORTS
TO STIMULATE THE STATE'S AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY, INCREASE AND
DIVERSIFY AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT, AND PROMOTE FOOD SECURITY

Room 312
9:00 AM

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

I am Dean Okimoto, President of 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 is **in strong support** of this package of resolutions providing a framework for policy support of the agricultural industry.

Hawaii's State Constitution, State Policies as defined in HRS 226, various County General Plans and most recently the Governor's Platform of a New Day all speak to the importance of agriculture to Hawaii's future.

At the same time, efforts are often disconnected, with many pointing to the Department of Agriculture to carry out this mission. There may have been a time during abundant resources that such an order may have been reasonable. However, times have

changed and the demands on the Department expanded. Hawaii's support of agriculture cannot just lie in the Department's hands or that of the legislature but needs to be a collaborative public private partnership. Developing the relationships and commitments will be a significant first step to solidifying the foundation for Hawaii's agricultural future and therefore our level of self sufficiency and sustainability.

Discussions by the parties identified in HR74/HCR102 to craft a comprehensive plan that has a broad foundation, supported by the individual department budgets and goals and legislative priorities in 2013-2014 will be a major breakthrough in providing actual support to implementing the various policies speaking to supporting agriculture in the State.

We respectfully request your strong support of these resolutions.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this important matter.