

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

JAMES J. NAKATANI
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

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

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2011
9:00 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 312**

**SENATE BILL NO. 1337, SD2
RELATING TO LIVESTOCK**

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill No. 1337, SD2 relating to livestock.

The Department of Agriculture supports the overall intent of the bill to provide assistance to the Hawaii Livestock Cooperative. The Department prefers SB249, SD2 which provides funds for the department to purchase Hawaii Livestock's equipment and capital improvements to the leasehold property. Complying with Chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes may delay financial assistance to the Hawaii Livestock Cooperative, thereby jeopardizing its continued operation. SB249, SD2 would also allow the Department to make capital improvements to the facility making it more efficient and reduce costs to ensure that the operation is sustainable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819
PH: (808)848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
E-mail info@hfbf.org
www.hfbf.org

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Rep. Clift Tsuji, Chair
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 16, 2011
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 312

SB 1337 SD2

RELATING TO LIVESTOCK

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

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation **supports the intent of this bill** for the following reasons:

- We understand that the Oahu facility is in financial distress.
- For island food sustainability and food security reasons, the Oahu facility **should remain open** to supply meat to the population.
- Most of the population of the islands reside on Oahu and most of these people and our island visitors are not vegetarians; they do eat meat.
- Even if meat shipments from the mainland are available to the islands, **this facility supports local livestock farmers/ranchers.**
- Many in the local community prefer fresh meat to that coming in from the mainland.
- Our understanding is that at the present time, the facility is used mainly for pork processing but that it may also be useful for beef processing in the future.

We hope that this bill will at least further discussion on the situation and its potential resolution.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to offer comments.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

P O Box 437199 Kamuela HI 96743
Phone (808) 885-5599 • Fax (808) 887-1607
e-mail: HICattlemens@hawaii.rr.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Wednesday March 16, 2011 9:00 a.m. Room 312

SB 1337 SD2 RELATING TO LIVESTOCK.

Provides a grant pursuant to chapter 42F, HRS, to the Hawaii Livestock Cooperative to enable the cooperative's slaughter facility to stabilize their operations.

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

My name is Alan Gottlieb, and I am a rancher and the Government Affairs Chair for the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc. (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 130+ member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of approximately 25% of the State's total land mass.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports** SB 1337 SD2.

As we understand it, the Oahu slaughterhouse operated by The Hawaii Livestock Coop in The Campbell Industrial Park has been in financial difficulty for several years. Their mortgage with Central Pacific Bank (CPB) for about \$1.4 million was close to being foreclosed upon, but was guaranteed by the USDA, and last year USDA paid off CPB, and now the US Treasury wants to recoup its \$1.4 Million. The slaughterhouse primarily slaughters hogs, as there are very limited cattle on Oahu for slaughter. Even if ALL of the Oahu cattle were kept in State, there would still be a fairly small amount of cattle for this facility. Nevertheless, we see the value in protecting this important resource.

We believe every Island should have a slaughterhouse to serve the needs of its livestock farmers and also for the food security of Hawaii's residents. We do feel that before State monies are expended, that the operators provide proof of a sustainable business plan, to protect the taxpayer's money, and that if they have a sustainable business plan, this would be a great investment for the State in supporting Hawaii agriculture.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in favor of this very important issue.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2011 12:17 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc:
Subject: Testimony for SB1337 on 3/16/2011 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/16/2011 9:00:00 AM SB1337

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Leilani Farm Sanctuary
Organization:
Address:
Phone:
E-mail:
Submitted on: 3/15/2011

Comments:
March 15, 2011

Dear Senators,

The State of Hawaii is in no economic position to bail out Hawaii Livestock Cooperative by appropriating \$1 million for the purchase of the slaughterhouse on Oahu.

Governor Neil Abercrombie emphasized in his State of the State Address that Hawaii not only has "an \$844 million fiscal deficit through the next biennium" but "that there is a severe operational deficit in government".

Hawaii Livestock Cooperative, the current owner of the slaughterhouse, has been unable to sustain itself independent of government assistance. It is already \$100,000 in arrears on a loan to the State. A further subsidy by taxpayers should be completely out of the question!

The slaughterhouse is located in an environmentally-sensitive area and poses a serious threat to the environment because it discharges its waste into a "lagoon" located just yards from the ocean. This creates the potential for ground water contamination and ocean pollution.

With so many public services (including education) getting nixed due to the budget shortfall, the last place we should be directing our funds is toward a slaughterhouse.

Sincerely,
Laurelee Blanchard, Director
Leilani Farm Sanctuary
260 E. Kuiaha Road
Haiku, HI 96708

From:
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2011 11:47 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Subject: SB1337; AGR; 3/16/2011; 9AM, Rm312

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

SB1337, SD2, Slaughter House
House Agriculture; Chair, Rep Tsuji

PLEASE KILL THIS BILL, MAKE-DIE-DEAD!

In a session that will be devoted to finding ways to cut our deficit, this may be one of the strangest bills to be heard. How could the State possibly appropriate monies to give to a company that is behind some \$100,000 in the money they owe the state? Plus, why in the world would the state even want to spend its own money when the processing of meat products is in the province of private companies. This part of the bill just does not pass the common sense, "sniff" test.

Furthermore, almost all of our beef comes from the Big Island; what possible reason is there to build a slaughterhouse on O`ahu? none!

NEW LANGUAGE: Doesn't the term "slaughterhouse" sound like an awful business for the state to be paying for? That is because the slaughter of animals is simply a grisly, morally questionable endeavor. Instead of this bill, I recommend it be gutted and new language inserted that will govern slaughterhouses and all animal management practices to make them more humane. I have some guidelines that are used by Whole Foods to rate animal facilities as to their animal welfare practices. I would be happy to meet with any Rep. interested in improving animal welfare practices in Hawai`i and/or to send them these guidelines.

Thank you.

Aloha, joel

Dr. Joel Fischer, ACSW
Professor (Ret.)
University of Hawai'i, School of Social Work
Henke Hall
Honolulu, HI 96822

"It is reasonable that everyone who asks justice should DO justice."
Thomas Jefferson

"There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one's conscience tells one that it is right."
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Never, never, never quit."

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2011 8:04 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: |
Subject: Testimony for SB1337 on 3/16/2011 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 3/16/2011 9:00:00 AM SB1337

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: William Harris, M.D.
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail:
Submitted on: 3/14/2011

Comments:

Comments:

Once again the Hawaii legislature chooses to give a monetary bail out to the animal food industry, when virtually every health authority in the US is recommending the consumption of more fruits and vegetables.

That will only come about when taxpayer subsidies are eliminated, thus putting animal ag on the free market where it belongs.

Why recommend that people eat healthy foods and then give monetary support only to the unhealthy ones?

The text says "pork provides essential nutrients..." So it does, but all those nutrients were synthesized by plants and come second hand to the humans who eat it, thus introducing the inevitable thermodynamic loss inherent in all animal agriculture.

Percent Protein:Calorie losses: Eggs 78:82, Milk 75:85,Chicken 77:88, Pork 86:86, Beef 96:97, Lamb 97:98 Scientific American ISBN 0-7167-0183-9 p 35.

For this reason animal agriculture in Hawaii and the rest of the US will always be on the dole, and if you bail 'em out this year they'll be back at the trough next year.

Every nutritional authority in the world is recommending the consumption of more pigmented fruits and vegetables; none are recommending the consumption of more animal foods.

Why then does the Hawaii legislature feel obliged to once again support an endeavor that has never, and will never, be able to hold its own on the free market?

William Harris, M.D.