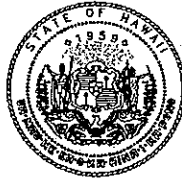


NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



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

RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Deputy to the Chairperson

LATE TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

MARCH 14, 2012
10:00 A.M.
ROOM 312

SENATE BILL NO. 2646, S.D. 1
RELATING TO BUILDING PERMITS

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2646, S.D. 1. The purpose of this bill is to exempt from county building permits buildings or structures located on commercial farms or ranches used for general agricultural or aquacultural operations. The department offers comments regarding this bill.

The department recognizes that structures are an integral part of conducting agricultural business. We also recognize that the county permit process creates a minimum standard that potential structures must meet for safety as well as public health reasons. We believe this version of the bill allows both landlords and tenants to work together to create a successful agricultural operation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

LATE TESTIMONY



SB2646 SD1

STRONG SUPPORT

One amendment suggestion:

Sec 2 (1) and is two or more contiguous acres in area, or

This should struck out.

Why remove the AG lot Size? BECAUSE about 85% of the farms in Hawaii are under 2 acres!

There is a 10 foot set back on the sides and 15 foot in the front already, so building cannot be built close to the property line.

Secondly.....we cannot find an incident in America where an un-permitted building was a fire hazard or problem.

Support the small farmer....Pass this bill without the minimum lot size.

Thank you,

Glenn Martinez
President

**Ka'u Farm Bureau
PO Box 1109
Naalehu Hawaii 96772
808-929-9550**

LATE TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY ON SB2646 SD1

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

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

Wednesday, March 14, 2012
10:00am
Conference Room 312

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

Ka'u Farm Bureau strongly supports SB2646 SD1.

SB2646 SD1 represents precisely the sort of welcome legislation that is targeted toward making it easier and less costly to conduct business in Hawaii. Overregulation is choking businesses and entrepreneurs. Non-residential structures designed for agricultural uses pose a risk to no one, but often their permits are stalled in understaffed building and planning departments that have suffered budget cuts. It's typical for such applications to languish for many months in these departments.

Agricultural businesses in Hawaii operate on an unlevel playing field when compared to their mainland counterparts. The excessive cost for shipping and labor contribute to a lack of competitiveness for locally produced food. Every dollar that's saved helps our local businesses be more competitive.

I'm extremely supportive of the introducers and supporters of this bill. It shows that they are listening to the community and being responsive to their needs. It demonstrates a commitment to food security and sustainability and an understanding of the importance of investing in our local economies.

Please approve this measure.

Thank you!

Chris Manfredi
President

hashem3 - Casey

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2012 12:15 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: PSGMikilua@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2646 on 3/14/2012 10:00:00 AM

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for AGR 3/14/2012 10:00:00 AM SB2646

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Phyllis Shimabukuro-geiser
Organization: Mikilua Farm Bureau Center
E-mail: PSGMikilua@aol.com
Submitted on: 3/14/2012

Comments:

LATE TESTIMONY

Primavera Aquaponics LLC
P.O. Box 342052
Kailua, HI 96734
March 12, 2012

Representative Clift Tsuji, Chair
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture
State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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

Please allow me to express my **strong support for SB 2646 SD1**, "Relating to Building Permits." This bill would help remove a major impediment to the establishment of aquaponic farming in Hawaii.

Aquaponics is a sustainable food production system that combines raising fish in tanks with cultivating plants in water. The effluent of the fish culture system provides nutrients for rapid plant growth, and the plants in turn help to clean the water, which is recycled back to the fish. Aquaponics is highly efficient in its use of water, nutrients, and growing space, making it ideal for producing food in Hawaii, where land and water are limited and expensive. During the last few years, aquaponics has become popular locally with backyard gardeners, and commercial farms in Hawaii are beginning to establish larger-scale facilities. In order to contain the fish, plants, and water, aquaponics requires infrastructure such as tanks, troughs, raceways, net covers, pumps, and pipes. These items do not pose much of a risk to the public, but are treated the same as residential and commercial buildings under existing county building permit rules. This requirement adds greatly to the time and cost needed to build agricultural and aquaponic facilities legally, and is liable to discourage farmers from installing aquaponic systems on their farms.

I therefore urge you to pass SB 2646 SD1, which would exempt most agricultural structures from county building permit requirements, and would clear the way for this new and efficient food production technology to help meet Hawaii's goal of greater food self-sufficiency.

Sincerely,



Louis Primavera, Ph.D.
President, Primavera Aquaponics LLC