

LATE

SB 286

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 KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

LATE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
January 27, 2011
2:45 P.M.

SENATE BILL NO. 286
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 286. This bill proposes to require the Board of Agriculture to designate private agents to inspect or classify agricultural commodities and adopt rules to implement the designation, certification and administration of private agents to assist farmers in underserved remote areas.

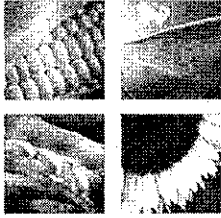
The Department opposes this bill. The Department is presently entered into cooperative agreements with various federal agencies such as, the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of Commerce to provide unbiased, third-party inspection grading for quality and condition of various fresh and processed agricultural commodities and seafood to ensure the proper quality of the commodity. These cooperative agreements do not allow the department to designate private agents outside of the Department to provide inspection services.

The Department is concerned that this bill will place an undue burden to provide training of designated agents, which may take up to six months to one year. Providing training would take time away from the existing staff's busy schedule in fulfilling inspections in a timely manner. It will be difficult to ensure the quality and consistency of the independent agent's work performance that inspections are conducted properly.



In addition, the Department established the coffee quality verification program, which is a voluntary self-certification program that allows a coffee miller to self-certify their green coffee for grade. Under this program, participating coffee millers must meet the requirements set forth in section 4-143-10, Hawaii Administrative Rules. The department conducts periodic audits to verify the accuracy of the miller's ability to grade green coffee. This is a preferred solution to meet the needs of the coffee industry located in remote areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii

Testimony By: Alicia Maluafiti
SB 286 - Relating to Agriculture
The Senate Committee on Agriculture
Thursday, January 27, 2011
Room 229, 2:45 p.m.

LATE

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Alicia Maluafiti

Position: Strongly Support

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele and members of the Committee:

My name is Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director of the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association, a nonprofit trade association representing the seed industry in Hawaii. HCIA strongly supports Senate Bill 286.

In recent years, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture has taken a disproportionate share of budget cuts in comparison to other departments - especially with respect to the inspectors. Clearly, our farmers in the more rural areas of the state are going to suffer the greatest. Delays in certification and inspection not only risk the farmer's ability to get their products to market in a timely manner, but it contributes to many of the competitive challenges facing Hawaii's agricultural industry.

Third party certification - if properly regulated - could provide the HDOA and our farmers with a flexible and affordable alternative to meeting the inspection needs of the state. We have supported those options within the seed industry and would support additional opportunities across other commodities.

HCIA not only supports this bill, but we strongly support restoring funding to the HDOA and ensuring that an adequate number of inspectors are available to service all farmers on all islands. If the state is sincerely concerned about the future of agriculture, then we need to collectively commit to the supporting the department and the people that are integral to its success.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment.

nishihara1 - Dale

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 26, 2011 10:39 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: bryan@andayalaw.com
Subject: Testimony for SB286 on 1/27/2011 2:45:00 PM
Attachments: HB286 (2011).doc

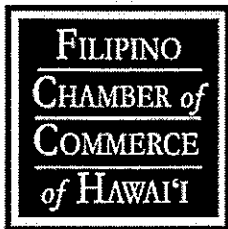
Testimony for AGL 1/27/2011 2:45:00 PM SB286

LATE

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: BRYAN ANDAYA
Organization: Filipino Chamber of Commerce
Address: 94-1068 Puloku St. Waipahu, HI 96797
Phone: 808-542-9511
E-mail: bryan@andayalaw.com
Submitted on: 1/26/2011

Comments:

The Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii STRONGLY supports SB 286 to give equal opportunity to farmers rural areas where many Filipinos pursue their entrepreneurial dreams and earn a living.



FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF HAWAII

Promoting Hawaii's Business Community since 1954

January 26, 2011

JAMESNER A. DUMLAO
President

HARRY ALONSO
President Elect

BRYAN P. ANDAYA
Chair
Government Affairs

RE: Testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB 286

Dear Chairman Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and members of the Committee on Agriculture:

The Filipino Chamber of Commerce hereby expresses **strong support** of SB 286. Rural communities, where many in the Filipino community pursue their dreams and earn a living, have been historically underserved by HDOA commodity inspectors. Lengthy delays and additional costs place a disproportionate burden on rural farmers, placing them at a competitive disadvantage, sometimes resulting in the waste of good local farm goods that has taken significant resources to produce.

Enabling the HDOA to train and license 3rd party commodity inspectors would not only make it easier and less costly to comply with certification laws, but would reduce the strain placed on the Department's limited budget and personnel. Farmers could help defray the cost by instituting a fee-for-service arrangement.

Application of a training and licensure program, rather than hiring full-time employees for this purpose would adequately serve this part-time function without burdening the budget and personnel of the HDOA; allowing the Department's finite resources to be better applied elsewhere.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 286.

Aloha and Mabuhay,

THE FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
By: Bryan P. Andaya

1125 North King Street
Suite 302
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Tel.: (808) 843-8838

Fax: (808) 843-8868

Email:

filipinochamberhi@gmail.com

Website:

www.filipinochamber.org

nishihara1 - Dale

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, January 27, 2011 8:08 AM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: lfplan@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for SB286 on 1/27/2011 2:45:00 PM

Testimony for AGL 1/27/2011 2:45:00 PM SB286

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Conference room: 229
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Megan Collins
Organization: Individual
Address: South Point Road Na'alehu, Hawaii
Phone: 808 929-9148
E-mail: lfplan@aol.com
Submitted on: 1/27/2011

Comments:

As a Ka'u Farmer and Director of the Ka'u County Farm Bureau, I support passage of SB286.
Megan Collins
Paradise Meadows Orchard and Bee Farm

**Efren P. Abellera
Kehau's Coffee Farm
P.O. Box 928
Pahala, Hawaii 96777
(808) 928-6247**

LATE

January 26, 2011

RE: Testimony in support of SB 286

Dear Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and members of the committee of Agriculture,

Please accept my testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB 286.

As the Vice President of Ka'u Coffee Growers Cooperative, a member of the Ka'u Farm Bureau and owner/farmer of Kehau's Coffee Farm in Ka'u, I would like to thank all of you, for showing interest in SB 286..

With Ka'u Coffee being highly recognized, not just locally, but worldwide, in the past 3 years, I strongly recommend that you approve a 3rd party certifier in our district. I know our state is going through some tough times, with budget cuts and all. However, that puts us in a bind to move our coffee with no one available to certify our coffee, accept someone in Kona.

As you all know, with the Coffee Cherry Borer infestation in Kona, plus quarantine regulations that we need to follow, it will also put a risk for the Ka'u District to be infested, due to transportation between Ka'u & Kona. All that transporting back & forth, equals to, too much time being wasted, plus loss of revenue on our part. To me, it's a win-win situation if we assigned a 3rd party Certifier in our area.

I ask for your support today for SB 286.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of SB 286.

Aloha & Mahalo,



Efren P. Abellera

Loreto Obra
Rusty's Hawaiian Coffee LLC
P.O. Box 845
Pahala, Hawaii 96777

LATE

January 26, 2011

RE: Testimony in support of SB 286

Dear Chairman Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and members of the Committee on Agriculture. Please accept my testimony in support of SB 286.

my co
To represent
~~Name: Loreto Obra, Pres of KCCOC & owner of Rusty's Hawaiian Coffee~~
As President of Ka'u Coffee Growers Cooperative and owner/operator of Rusty's Hawaiian Coffee in the Ka'u District, I thank Senator Kahele, his staff, the introducers and supporting members of Agriculture Committee for introducing and hearing SB 286. *I'm testifying on behalf of Kau Coffee growers Coop & Rusty's Hawaiian, my own company.*

For years, us coffee growers in Ka'u district have been hampered in our progress due to lack of affordable access to commodity inspectors. Additional burden of expense in terms of cost and time were making our district un-competitive in a very competitive market.

Economic challenges ~~piled on top of~~ *and* natural challenges such as vog and drought have caused to slow down ~~the growth of our emerging coffee industry in Ka'u.~~ *Pahala* presence of Borer in ~~Kau~~ *Kau*. We bring our coffee to Kona for processing & ~~the~~ *Also the presence of coffee borer and we are subjected to fumigation & this another cost to Kau growers* Enabling the HDOA to train and license a 3rd party commodity inspectors would make it easier and less costly to comply with certification laws. It will also reduce the strain placed on the Department's budget and personnel. *struggling*

Utilizing knowledgeable members within our community to certify coffee would make compliance with the law affordable and easily accessible to growers/producers.

In conclusion, I believe that SB 286 is vital for the continued growth of the coffee industry in the Ka'u district. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Loreto Obra

Signature

Rusty's Hawaiian 100% Ka'u Coffee
&
Ka'u Coffee Growers Cooperative

Currently
one other thing
We don't have coffee borer in Pahala. When we bring our coffee to Kona for processing, we will be subjected to fumigation and this is an enormous added cost to us struggling farmers in Kauai.