

SCR 134/ SR 71
Testimony

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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**TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2012
2:45 PM
ROOM 229**

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO 134/SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 71
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO IMPLEMENT AN INCENTIVE
PROGRAM TO PROMOTE THE PURCHASE OF HAWAII-GROWN AGRICULTURAL
COMMODITIES**

Chairperson Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 134/Senate Resolution No. 71. The purpose of this resolution is to request the Department of Agriculture to implement an incentive program to promote the purchase of Hawaii-grown agricultural commodities. The Department supports the intent of this resolution as it supports the efforts the Department has been making in this endeavor.

The Agricultural Development Division has been promoting its "*Buy Local, It Matters*" campaign with the aim of encouraging residents to support Hawaii farmers by making conscious decisions to purchase locally grown produce.

Furthermore, during the intersession, the Department collaborated with various governmental, nonprofit and private entities in response to HCR No. 167 from the 2011 Legislative Session. One of the goals as set forth by the resolution was to identify ways to assist local farms to become more competitive in the procurement process. Over the course of multiple discussions it was agreed that one solution to increase the amount of local product purchased by state institutions would be to reinstate the exemption for



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fresh meats and produce that would allow public schools, hospitals and prisons to procure these commodities from local producers as exempt from the procurement process. As a result, the Department proposed legislation in the form of House Bill No. 2432. While this bill has not survived the legislative process, we look forward to finding other avenues to promote the purchase of local agricultural commodities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Hawaii Farm Bureau
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March 27, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON SCR 134/SR 71
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO IMPLEMENT AN
INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO PROMOTE THE PURCHASE OF HAWAII GROWN
AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

Room 229
2:45 PM

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele 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 SCR 134/SR 71 which supports 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.

We respectfully request your strong support of these resolutions.

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

nishihara1 - Danille

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:32 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: gottlieb@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for SCR134 on 3/27/2012 2:45:00 PM

Testimony for AGL 3/27/2012 2:45:00 PM SCR134

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Alan Gottlieb
Organization: Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
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Submitted on: 3/22/2012

Comments: