



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

TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2014
9:40 A.M.
Auditorium

HOUSE BILL NO. 2646
RELATING TO A SCHOOL FARM COMPLEX

Chairperson Wooley and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2646. This bill would create a School Farm Complex Task Force to determine the feasibility of a school farm complex pilot project on Oahu. The Department supports the intent of this measure.

With the gradual graying of the agricultural workforce, the Department agrees that education is a vital component to growing new farmers. Hands-on agricultural experiences such as those provided by agricultural classes at high schools across the State and through FFA, enable students to reconnect with their food and rekindle their interest in becoming farmers and ranchers.

The Department would defer to the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources as to the resources that would be needed to carry out the task force.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide our testimony on this measure.



Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture
Monday, February 3, 2014; 9:40 am

By

J. Kenneth Grace

HB 2646 RELATING TO A SCHOOL FARM COMPLEX

Chair Wooley, Vice Chair Onish, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2646, which establishes a School Farm Complex Task Force to determine the feasibility of a school farm complex pilot project on Oahu.

My name is J. Kenneth Grace, and I am employed as the Interim Associate Dean and Associate Director for Research in the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am providing personal testimony today on HB 2646.

School garden programs are an important means of agricultural education. Thus, I certainly support the intent of HB 2646, and believe that its introduction may provide a vehicle for discussion of the most effective and efficient methods to implement such programs.

However, I am not entirely convinced of the need for a large, state-level task force at this time to explore the concept of a centralized school farm as a pilot project in a single school complex. Speaking as an academic who developed and directed a curriculum project in Hawaii's public schools for 10 years, such a pilot project might be more effectively explored by discussions among representatives of the department of education within that school complex, representatives of the School Garden Networks, who are very active in development of school gardens and are likely active within the target school complex, and representatives of the owner(s) of the land(s) where such a project might occur.

I also have reservations concerning the practicality of a centralized school farm due to both the time and costs of transportation of the students during the school day, and my observation that a common facility that relies on volunteers may become nobody's facility. Maintenance, theft and vandalism have been issues with the Community Garden programs, for example.

Consideration of such a program at the State-level may also be a bit premature, since HB 1988, adopted by this committee and to be heard on February 5, 2014, by the House Committee on Education, would establish an office for coordination of K-12 agricultural education within the department of agriculture, and programs such as this would seem to fall under the purview of such an office.

I offer these as comments on HB 2646, since although I hold reservations that these efforts may be a bit premature and better explored first at a local level within the school complex, I realize that the committee members may take a larger view and feel that the State should be proactive in exploring them. If that is the case, then I believe that the Department of Education should chair this Task Force, since these activities fall under their authority, and preferably an administrator within the department familiar with agricultural education rather than a public member of the Board of Education; and that representatives of both the School Garden Networks and of the Facilities department of UH West Oahu should be included.

onishi2-Micah-Seth

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2014 6:16 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: jbedient@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB2646 on Feb 3, 2014 09:40AM

HB2646

Submitted on: 2/1/2014

Testimony for AGR on Feb 3, 2014 09:40AM in Conference Room Auditorium

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James Bedient	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I oppose this measure until all existing schools are air-conditioned, the backlog of repairs at existing schools is completely caught up, and new schools needed are built.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov