

SB595

Testimony

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Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB595 on Jan 29, 2013 14:45PM*
Date: Monday, January 28, 2013 10:01:16 PM

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SB595

Submitted on: 1/28/2013

Testimony for AGL on Jan 29, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser	Mikilua Poultry Farm Inc	Support	No

Comments:

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Email: communications@uluponoinitiative.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Tuesday, January 29, 2013 — 2:45 p.m. — Room 229

Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports SB 595, Relating to Agriculture

Dear Senator Nishihara, Vice Chair Kouchi and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am General Partner of the Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally grown food, increase renewable energy, and reduce/recycle waste. Ulupono invests in projects that have the potential to create large-scale, innovative change.

Ulupono strongly supports SB 595, which adds to the definition of agricultural commodities exempt from the General Excise Tax (GET). This would reduce the cost for milk, eggs, poultry and farm-raised seafood to be consumed in the state by exempting these activities from the GET.

The Legislature earlier exempted agricultural commodities from the GET and this bill would amend that definition (which already includes fruits and vegetables) so that livestock and meat produced in the state to be consumed locally, including aquaculture and aquaponic products, will be eligible for the GET exemption. We also would favor the addition of other livestock meat and carcasses, including beef, sheep, goats, and lamb to the agricultural commodities definition. Ulupono is also concerned that the GET multiplies along the food supply chain, increasing the price which makes local food less competitive than imports. These actions would support homegrown poultry, livestock and farm-raised seafood.

Ulupono has joined with a diverse group of organizations who have come together for the first time as the Local Food Coalition to support proposals designed to help grow more local food. The coalition brings together farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations. The idea is that putting more local food on local plates can best be accomplished by bringing people and organizations together who can work on the entire food value chain in a systematic way.

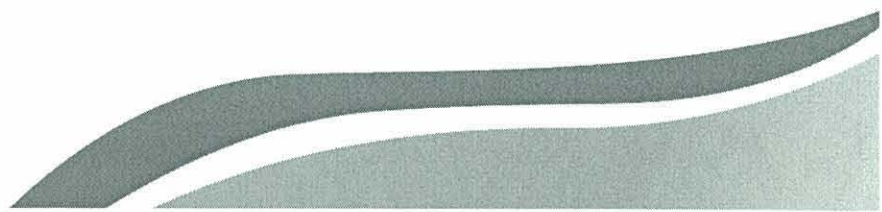
We believe that working together we can help produce more local food, support an economically strong homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kyle Datta
General Partner

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January 29, 2013

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON SB 595
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 229
2:45 PM

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kouchi, 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 1,950 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 supports of SB 595 which adds milk, poultry eggs, poultry carcass, poultry meat, and aquaculture and aquaponic products to the definition of "Agricultural Commodity" exempt from the GET for loading, transporting, and unloading of agricultural commodities under Section 247-24.3 (1), Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Currently, Section 147-1, Hawaii Revised Statues, defines "agricultural commodity" as fresh fruits and fresh vegetables of every kind and character, whether or not frozen or packed in ice, whether produced in the State or imported, nuts, and coffee, whether cherry or parchment, or green beans, which have been produced in the State, and raw unprocessed honey, whether produced in the State or imported.

HFBF believes that milk, poultry eggs, poultry carcass, poultry meat, and aquaculture and aquaponic products are also agricultural commodities and should added to the definition in Section 147-1 so that these agricultural commodities receiving the exemption provided in Section 247-24.3 (1)

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