

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

**TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2013
CONFERENCE ROOM 308**

**SENATE BIL 993, SD2, HD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL LOANS**

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB993, SD2, HD2. The Department strongly supports this bill.

This bill will create a low interest loan program to assist the livestock and poultry industry renovate their existing structures or construct new infrastructure to ensure they are bio-secure and meet new Federal requirements. The improved bio-secure infrastructures will result in a safer food supply and prevent the spread of livestock and zoonotic diseases amongst wild animals, the herd and humans while helping to ensure that fresh eggs, beef and pork remain available to Hawaii's citizens.

The bill also enhances the new farmer loan program by including farm innovation loans to encourage development of new crops and use of technology and new growing techniques to keep Hawaii's farmers viable with growing worldwide competition. The bill also broadens the program to include graduates from farm trainee programs and reduces the equity contribution required in order to encourage young entrepreneurs to enter the agricultural field. The lowered contribution amount of 5% will make it easier for these recent graduates to qualify for an agricultural loan and start their own operations.

The bill broadens the agricultural loan program to assist segments of the farming community by providing access to capital at favorable interest rates and terms.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Hawaii Farm Bureau
F E D E R A T I O N

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March 28, 2013

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 993, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL LOANS

Room 308
2:00 PM

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Johanson, 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 respectfully requests your support of SB 993, SD2, HD1, which expands the Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Loan Program by adding farm innovation and biosecurity loans and expanding the definition of a new farmer.

The cost of establishing new agricultural operations in Hawaii is very difficult if not impossible. Operating capital is not easy to obtain with the traditional methods of financing. As our farmers and ranchers are aging, we need to assist those that are able to successfully operate an agricultural operation such as college graduates or trainees that have graduated from a certified program. The loan program will help whether it is for new operations or the succession of an existing operation. Providing financing for innovative technologies as well as biosecurity measures for our poultry and livestock industry is critical as we must be efficient to remain competitive in a global market. We must be able to utilize and adapt the latest technological advances available to be viable. Supporting this modification of the loan program should have a positive effect in creating successful enterprises into Hawaii's future.

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

SB993

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Simon Russell	Hawaii Farmer's Union United	Support	No

Comments: Honorable Representatives, Thank you for scheduling this bill, it will help farmers get back on the land to start producing healthy food for our population.

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.

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Email: communications@uluponoinitiative.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Thursday, March 28, 2013 — 2 p.m. — Room 308

Ulupono Initiative Supports SB 993 SD 2 HD1, Relating to Agricultural Loans

Chair Luke, Vice Chairs 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 supports SB 993 SD2 HD1, which modifies the new farmer loan program to allow for agricultural loans to assist new farmers, new farm enterprises and new farm innovation.

This program would help grow the next generation of farmers: from farm trainees and interns, through recent college graduates and entrepreneurs working on innovative technology by assisting with much-needed start-up capital.

As investors, we see this as an investment in future farmers by providing the financial boost needed to gain a foothold and help sustain careers in agriculture.

Ulupono is happy to support this proposal requested by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture as another way to help our community grow more fresh, healthy local food. Ulupono sees 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. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kyle Datta
General Partner



SB993

Submitted on: 3/27/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Harriet Witt	Individual	Support	No

Comments: We need this measure to help us declare our independence of mainland food.

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SB993

Submitted on: 3/27/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lyn Howe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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SB993

Submitted on: 3/27/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mr Rob Tarver	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I Support the the Department of Agriculture's agricultural loan program proposal to add farm innovation and biosecurity loans and to expand the definition of a new farmer. This is good for our farms.

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SB993

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tanja Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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SB993

Submitted on: 3/27/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laureen Elizabeth	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support this measure to aid farmers who grow our food locally.

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SB993

Submitted on: 3/27/2013

Testimony for FIN on Mar 28, 2013 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hugh Starr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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