

# SCR 198 /

# SR 150

## Testimony

Measure Title: REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO TO CONDUCT AN OUTREACH PROGRAM, PERFORM A NEEDS ASSESSMENT, AND ESTABLISH A HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNING CENTER IN THE DISTRICT OF PUNA ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAII.

Report Title: Agriculture; Higher Education Learning Center; Puna

Description:

Companion:

Package: None

Current Referral: HRE/AGL, WAM

Introducer(s): RUDERMAN, Espero, Nishihara, Slom, Taniguchi, Tokuda

**Greggor Ilagan**  
Council Member  
District 4 – Puna Makai



Office: (808) 965-2712  
Fax: (808) 965-2707  
Email: [gilagan@hawaiicounty.gov](mailto:gilagan@hawaiicounty.gov)

**HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL**  
25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawaii 96720

March 28, 2013, 2:45 p.m., Room # 414

To: Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

Re: SR150 REQUESTING OUTREACH, ESTABLISHMENT OF LEARNING CENTER IN PUNA

Good afternoon Higher Education Committee Members. My name is Greggor Ilagan, and I support educational outreach and establishment of a learning center in the Puna area. I am a long-time resident of Puna, and serve as Hawaii County's Council Member of District 4. I've grown up through challenging socio-economic circumstances and see the indigent and poverty stricken population struggle for basic necessities on a daily basis. The need for outreach, infrastructure, training, education and jobs in the Puna/Pahoa area cannot be overstated.

The Puna area is just slightly smaller than the entire island of Kauai. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there are approximately 45,236 individuals who try to subsist in the Puna area alone, with limited access to potable water, sewage and electricity. The norm for many residents might include buying bottled water to prepare bottled nourishment for their babies. Catchment tanks sit and run dry during times of draught. Welfare continues to be the Band-Aid like effort to the ever voluminous and voluble cries for basics like food and shelter.

In 2005, Governor Linda Lingle via Act 183 made agriculture a priority; it provides framework for agricultural development and incentivises farming endeavors. Approximately 56% of the district's land area lies within the State Agricultural District. This community needs to take advantage of, and cultivate its agriculture rich environment; but we can't do it alone. With assistance from the University of Hawaii at Hilo, the district of Puna can raise itself up, serve as a model for other communities, increase self-sustainable practices and begin to work on thriving in a difficult budgetary framework that seems to promote short-sighted "fixes" to problems that will only grow exponentially over time.

By utilizing the supplementary poverty measure, the State of Hawaii is ranked with the 7<sup>th</sup> highest poverty rate in the nation. According to the 2010 U.S. Census American Survey (ACS), Hawaii County is ranked first in poverty levels within the state. In this county, one in five residents survives at or below, 200% of Federal Poverty Level. More specifically, Puna is one of the districts named as the most poverty stricken. We need education, jobs, and food in the bellies of children that go to school hungry.

I would appreciate your support and careful consideration on this issue. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo,  
Greggor Ilagan, Hawaii County Council Member–District 4

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# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
and  
Senate Committee on Agriculture  
March 28, 2013 at 2:45 p.m.  
by  
Donald O. Straney, Ph.D.  
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i at Hilo

SCR198/SR150

REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO CONDUCT AN OUTREACH PROGRAM, PERFORM A NEEDS ASSESSMENT, AND ESTABLISH A HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNING CENTER IN THE DISTRICT OF PUNA ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAII.

Chairs Taniguchi and Nishihara, Vice Chairs Kahele and Kouchi and Members of the Committees:

My name is Donald Straney, Chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. We support SCR198/SR150 to conduct an outreach program, perform a needs assessment and establish a Higher Education Learning Center Project in the District of Puna.

Agriculture is a promising career choice for a new generation of innovative and responsible leaders who will contribute to the future needs of our island economy. There is a critical need to strengthen rural outreach, education and economic development. We propose to use the funds to establish an outreach program under our College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management (CAFNRM). CAFNRM will hire personnel and provide outreach services and short training courses on farm management, sustainable crop production, value-added food products, etc. Furthermore, the outreach personnel will conduct an assessment of community educational and training needs for agricultural development and to increase community engagement and participation in agricultural education, workforce development and economic opportunities for the people of Puna.

We support SCR198/SR150 provided its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities in our BOR approved budget.



UNIVERSITY  
of HAWAII  
HILO

From the Desk of: *Bruce W Mathews*  
Bruce W. Mathews  
Interim Dean & Professor of Soils and Agronomy  
College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource  
Management (CAFNRM)  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Thursday, March 28, 2013 at 2:45 p.m.

by

Dr. Bruce Mathews  
Interim Dean and Professor of Soil Science  
College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

#### SCR 198 – RELATING HIGHER EDUCATION

Chair Taniguchi, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bruce Mathews and I am Interim Dean and Professor of Soil Science & Agronomy in the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resource Management (CAFNRM) at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. CAFNRM strongly supports SCR 198 to conduct a "boots on the ground" outreach program, perform a needs assessment, and establish a Higher Education Learning Center in the District of Puna, Hawai'i. This being said CAFNRM presently faces severe capacity challenges in terms of staffing and funding to commence a significant outreach program and establish an effective learning center. The needs assessment portion of SCR 198 can be initiated without additional resources and will assist in identifying necessary educational training and existing and required future resources in Puna that can strongly contribute to the rural region's economic revitalization efforts. With the eventual addition of adequate resources CAFNRM envisions a much more active role in supporting small-farm sustainable agricultural production in Puna and value-added product development outreach for local markets coupled with a business incubator approach. This effort should also lead to increased enrollment in the agricultural programs offered by the University of Hawai'i System, more entrepreneurial farmers, improved cooperation among agricultural organizations, a new generation of innovative and responsible agricultural leaders, and could serve as an eventual model for other regions of Hawai'i facing similar challenges.

We appreciate the support of the legislature to strengthen rural outreach, economic development, and agricultural education while facilitating progress toward enhanced food security for Hawai'i. There is a critical need to strengthen the outreach capacity of CAFNRM as there is heavy demand relative to existing teaching faculty resources and their present duties. Despite record enrollment CAFNRM has lost 25% of its faculty and support staff positions during the past five years due to lack of funding to hire replacements. It also should be noted that educational outreach is not a formal part of the USDA Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center's mission and they are presently facing a challenging federal budget situation.

200 W. Kawili Street  
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-4091  
Telephone: (808) 974-7393  
Fax: (808) 974-7674  
[www.hilo.hawaii.edu](http://www.hilo.hawaii.edu)

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 25, 2013 3:39 PM  
**To:** HRETestimony  
**Cc:** hourandahalf@icloud.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SCR198 on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM\*

**SCR198**

Submitted on: 3/25/2013

Testimony for HRE/AGL on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 414

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rosemarie Patronette	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 25, 2013 8:03 PM  
**To:** HRETestimony  
**Cc:** jtt.hew@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR198 on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM

**SCR198**

Submitted on: 3/25/2013

Testimony for HRE/AGL on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 414

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Janeel Hew	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Greetings, Thank you for your time and consideration regarding SCR198/SR150. May it go on record that I support SCR198/SR150. This resolution brings to the table an opportunity to show our State that you care about our future generations. There are many students that graduate high school and are still lost when it comes to a career field. There are not enough opportunities that will help prepare them and build their confidence to go out and become productive citizens. Some feel that their only options are to join the military, or become a career student for as long as loans and/or grants last. Job Corps. has limited space and is based on acceptance requirements. The more we can offer; the more people will find hope for their future. And you all have the power to supply the benefit of education to help build that hope. It is my sincere hope that you pass SCR198/SR150. Thank you Janeel Hew

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 26, 2013 9:19 AM  
**To:** HRETestimony  
**Cc:** nancyredfeather@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SR150 on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM\*

**SR150**

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for HRE/AGL on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 414

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 26, 2013 10:06 AM  
**To:** HRETestimony  
**Cc:** malamaopuna@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR198 on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM

**SCR198**

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for HRE/AGL on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rene Siracusa	Malama O Puna	Support	No

Comments: Malama O Puna is a Hawaii nonprofit environmental organization with a membership base of more than 1,350 households. Our exempt purpose is 'protecting Hawaii's precious natural heritage'; we do this through environmental education programs, hands-on projects and advocacy/watchdogging, as well as land trusting. We are in support of SCR198 and the creation of and funding for a learning center in Puna. Puna has been experiencing the fastest growth rate in the state (24.5% since the last Census) and is predominantly agricultural in nature. In terms of infrastructure, we are about 30 years behind. Puna is also the 'breadbasket' of Hawaii County. Yet farmers, home gardeners, orchardists, and livestock breeders are not getting the full benefit of having a land grant college on our island. Much of the reason is under-funding, which prevents the kind of outreach programs we need. A talk-story session last week, hosted by our councilman Ilagan and featuring the dean of CTAHR, was very well attended (indicating the degree of interest) and the questions and testimony given by the public were all strongly in favor of increased outreach to our community. Just one example: There is only one large animal vet on the island - in Waimea. That's a 3 hour drive from Puna makai. Yet many Puna residents raise horses, cows, sheep, goats, pigs, rabbits and fowl. When these animals need vet attention, the distance and the cost of trailering to Waimea become prohibitive. Many animals suffer and die as a result of the lack of a farm animal veterinary clinic in our area. Hilo CTAHR has an animal husbandry course and a veterinary track, but does not have a means to go out to the community, provide its students with a wide range of experience, prevent animal suffering and protect the investment that farmers have in their livestock. The way that the land grant funds are allocated favor O'ahu, so that the neighbor islands do not receive what we need. Passage of SCR198 will help farmers and gardeners on the Big Island to create food sustainability for the entire state by filling an urgent need. Please enact it. Mahalo.

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COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair  
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

March 26, 2013

[http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2013/Bills/SCR198\\_.pdf](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2013/Bills/SCR198_.pdf)

Testimony on SCR198/ SR150 IN FAVOR

Dear Senators,

I strongly support SCR198 / SR150 requesting the University of Hawai'i at Hilo to conduct an outreach program, perform a needs assessment, and establish a higher education learning center in the district of Puna. I have lived and owned a small business in Puna. I see a great deal of talent in the community, and, unfortunately, see few opportunities for an expression of this talent. The expression of that talent can lead to the accomplishment of food and energy production in the community. This resolution can prove invaluable for Puna and the state of Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Justin Avery

Justin Avery  
1314 Kumukoa St.  
Hilo, HI 96720  
(808) 937-4342  
[justinavery@gmail.com](mailto:justinavery@gmail.com)

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 26, 2013 7:26 PM  
**To:** HRETestimony  
**Cc:** lynhowe1946@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SCR198 on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM

**SCR198**

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for HRE/AGL on Mar 28, 2013 14:45PM in Conference Room 414

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lyn Howe	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This would be a badly needed boon to the Puna area.

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