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February 13, 2014

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2293  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 211  
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

I am Christopher Manfredi, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,832 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 SB 2293** which provides funds to allow qualified beef cattle, dairy, hog, poultry, goat, sheep, fish, and crustacean farms to apply for funds for their farm's feed expenses.

Hawaii's livestock industry faces numerous challenges. One of their biggest challenges is the rising cost of feed for livestock production. These costs have been a contributing factor to the decline of the state's livestock industry.

In 2007, there were 5 dairies and 6 egg farms in Hawaii. Since then, 3 of those dairies and 4 off those egg farms have gone out of business. The remaining egg farms and another dairy are currently threatened with closure, due to rising production costs, primarily due to feed costs.

SB 2293 seeks to revitalize Hawaii's livestock industries by reimbursing qualified livestock producers up to sixty percent of their farm's feed expenses. This bill will help keep fresh, locally produced milk, eggs, beef, pork, poultry, sheep, lamb, fish and crustaceans available to the residents of Hawaii and will help to revitalize our dwindling livestock industry. A decrease or absence of livestock production increases the State's reliance on the importation of food and threatens the State's food security.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.