

SB2454
TESTIMONY



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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2014
ROOM 229
3:20 P.M.

SENATE BILL NO. 2454
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairpersons Nishihara, Taniguchi, Hee, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill No. 2454 relating to agriculture. This bill establishes a task force to determine whether a state regulatory regime should be established to address agricultural use of genetically modified organisms. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) supports this bill.

The United States Food and Drug Administration rigorously tests all foods that are grown for human consumption and have not found any difference between the safety of genetically engineered foods and other foods. HDOA works closely with its federal partners and relies on their science-based conclusions to guide policy decisions.

HDOA looks forward to participating on a task force to further discuss this issue and come forward to the legislature with recommendations. HDOA would also defer to the University of Hawaii as to the costs such a task force would incur.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.





P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

[COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE](#)

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Senator Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair

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Senator Clayton Hee, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair

Thursday, January 30, 2014
3:20pm
Conference Room 229

SB 2454
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs and Committee members:

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 stands in strong support of SB 2454.

Hawaii Farm Bureau has been advocating for a biotechnology subject-matter Task Force comprised of the requisite stakeholders to examine scientific evidence in a deliberate and intelligent way. This Task Force creates an environment in which emotion and politics can be removed from the debate and a careful and comprehensive examination of the facts, issues and law surrounding biotechnology in our world may be examined, and sensible recommendations made. Hawaii Farm Bureau applauds the sponsors for their vision and initiative demonstrated by advancing this common-sense measure.

Since the bill relates to agriculture, we respectfully request that the Task Force be Chaired by the Chair of the Board of Agriculture.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure of great importance and for passing this bill.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Agriculture, Higher Education and Judiciary and Labor
Thursday, January 30, 2014 at 3:20pm

by
Dr. Vassilis Syrmos
Vice-President for Research and Innovation, University of Hawai'i

SB2454– RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairs Nishihara, Taniguchi and Hee, Vice Chairs Kouchi, Kahele and Shimabukuro and members of the committees:

The University of Hawai'i strongly supports the intent of SB2454 and the creation of a task force to explore the establishment of a state regulatory regime to address the agricultural use of genetically modified organisms. The University applauds your committees and the Senate for seeking expert guidance on this difficult issue. We do however request your consideration of two amendments.

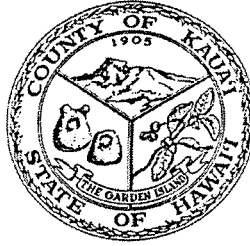
First, in Section 1.b.(1) we ask to replace the UH Mānoa Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources with the UH System Vice-President for Research and Innovation. As you know, UH has agricultural, chemical, medical, educational and sociological expertise throughout the state and the coordination of those UH resources through the office of the VPRI will bring the full capacity of UH expertise and knowledge to the task force.

Second we ask that the language of Section 1.c.(2) be amended so that it does not presuppose the outcomes of the analysis called for in Section 1.c.(1). Only if the task force, through its study of the benefits and drawbacks of establishing regulations for agricultural genetically modified organisms, determines that state regulations are needed, should it proceed with making recommendations on the structure of such a regulatory regime.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

COUNTY COUNCIL

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JoAnn A. Yukimura



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Fax (808) 241-6349
Email cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Līhu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

January 29, 2014

TESTIMONY OF GARY L. HOOSER
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUA'I COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
SB 2454, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE
Committee on Agriculture
Committee on Higher Education
Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Thursday, January 30, 2014
3:20 p.m.
Conference Room 229

Dear Chair Nishihara, Chair Taniguchi, Chair Hee, and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my comments regarding SB 2454, relating to the establishment of a task force that will evaluate and determine whether a state-established regulatory regime is essential to address agricultural use of genetically modified organisms (GMO). My testimony is submitted in my capacity as Chair of the Economic Development (Sustainability / Agriculture / Food / Energy) & Intergovernmental Relations Committee and Councilmember of the Kaua'i County Council.

I support this measure in principle if representation on the task force includes members from each County and from small farmers that utilize conventional and organic methods, not just GMO technology. I believe including all affected parties is imperative and will constitute a more accurate and impartial outcome.

In addition, any statewide regulatory scheme must represent "a floor not a ceiling," and not preempt counties from enacting greater protection if circumstances specific to that county warrants such action.

In conclusion, I respectfully request the Committee amend SB 2454 with respect to my comments mentioned above. Again, thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

GARY L. HOOSER
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AB:mn



Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

Growing the Future of Worldwide Agriculture in Hawaii

Testimony by Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director

SB 2454 – Relating to Agriculture

The Senate Committees on Agriculture, Higher Education and Judiciary and Labor

Thursday, January 30, 2014

3:20 pm, Room 229

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Alan Takemoto

Past President

Fred Perlak

Executive Director

Alicia Maluafiti

Position: Support with Amendments

Aloha Chairs Nishihara, Taniguchi and Hee, and members of the Committees:

My name is Alicia Maluafiti, Executive Director of the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association, a nonprofit trade association representing Hawaii seed farmers and a proud member of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation and Hawaii Farmers and Ranchers Alliance. We support SB 2454 and ask for your consideration of amendments.

The controversy of genetically engineered (GE) crops continues to grow despite their ubiquitous presence in our food supply. Today – more than 17 million farmers grow GE crops because of their benefits to agriculture, the environment, and the world food supply. Year after year, farmers face onerous legislation and false accusations by people that know little about farming and even less about science.

We believe the task force could formally bring together various stakeholders and regulators to discuss the opportunities and challenges of agricultural biotechnology and the necessity of an oversight authority.

Amendment 1: Regulatory authorities including the FDA, USDA, and EPA, as well most credible scientific organizations and universities, refer to agricultural biotechnology or genetic engineering when discussing this subject matter. We ask that any reference to GMO be replaced with the more widely accepted and scholarly language of “genetically engineered crops” or “agricultural biotechnology” embraced by the scientific and regulatory community.

Amendment 2: We ask that the Presidents of the Hawaii Papaya Industry Association, Hawaii Floriculture Industry, and Hawaii Crop Improvement Association be added to the task force to allow farmers growing GE crops the opportunity to provide perspective on the work that they do.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with our allies in agriculture.

91-285 Fort Weaver Rd.

‘Ewa Beach, HI 96706

Tel: (808) 224-3648

director@hiaonline.com

www.hciaonline.com



46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Legislative Director

TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 2454, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

**Senate Committee on Agriculture
Hon. Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Hon. Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair**

**Senate Committee on Higher Education
Hon. Brian T. Taniguchi, Chair
Hon. Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair**

**Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Hon. Clayton Hee, Chair
Hon. Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair**

**Monday, January 27, 2014, 1:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

Honorable Chairs Nishihara, Taniguchi, Hee and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing the IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 175 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 2454, relating to agriculture.

GMO regulation is about one thing: freedom of choice for consumers. In the absence of federal regulation, it is incumbent upon states to ensure that food products containing genetically modified material are safe properly identified. Over 70 percent of processed foods contain at least one ingredient derived from genetically modified crops, according to the nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest. Other organizations, like the Grocery Manufacturers Association, put that number at closer to 80 percent. While we acknowledge that no credible scientific studies have shown GMO crops to be more harmful than non-GMO products, we believe that the introduction of genetic engineering into food consumption should be subject to the precautionary principle, which states that if an action or policy has a suspected risk of causing harm to the public or the environment, in the absence of scientific consensus that the action or policy is

harmful, then the burden of proof that it is *safe* falls on those taking an action, i.e. companies experimenting with genetic modification. We **urge policymakers to allow this principle to guide their decision-making on this vital issue, defer this bill, and instead pass legislation mandating GMO labeling or calling for a constitutional amendment to empower Hawaii's residents to decide this issue.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in opposition to this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Legislative Director



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Committee on Higher
Education, and Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Thursday, January 30, 2014 at 3:20 P.M.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol**

RE: SENATE BILL 2454 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairs Nishihara, Taniguchi, and Hee, Vice Chairs Kouchi, Kahele, and Shimabukuro, and members of the Committees:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii **supports** SB 2454 Relating to Agriculture, **with amendments**.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing more than 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the “Voice of Business” in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of its members, which employ more than 200,000 individuals, to improve the state’s economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

SB 2454 seeks to establish a task force that would shed light on the controversial subject of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The task force would reveal pertinent information regarding the production of GMOs and its effects in our food supply. There has been much confusion and animosity towards GMO crops from individuals who are not familiar with agriculture.

The controversy of genetically engineered (GE) crops continues to grow despite their ubiquitous presence in our food supply. Today – more than 17 million farmers grow GE crops because of their benefits to agriculture, the environment, and the world food supply. Year after year, farmers face onerous legislation and false accusations by people that know little about farming and even less about science.

We believe the task force could formally bring together various stakeholders and regulators to discuss the opportunities and challenges of agricultural biotechnology and the necessity of an oversight authority.

We ask that the committee consider this bill with some amendments. Regulatory authorities including the FDA, USDA, and EPA, as well as most credible scientific organizations and universities, refer to agricultural biotechnology or genetic engineering when discussing this subject matter. We ask that any reference to GMO be replaced with the more widely accepted

and scholarly language of “genetically engineered crops” or “agricultural biotechnology” embraced by the scientific and regulatory community.

Second, we ask that the Presidents of the Hawaii Papaya Industry Association, Hawaii Floriculture Industry, and Hawaii Crop Improvement Association be added to the task force to allow farmers growing GE crops the opportunity to provide perspective on the work they do. We would also like to add our input and have an opportunity to serve on the task force.

The Chamber understands consumer information is important. We believe that jurisdiction for these matters are generally handled by the Food and Drug Administration and are in line with generally accepted scientific principles. The American Medical Association (AMA), World Health Organization, National Academy of Sciences, and the European Union have thoroughly examined the evidence and found that consuming genetically engineered foods are no riskier than consuming conventionally grown foods.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our views.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [AGL Testimony](#)
Cc: mauibrad@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2454 on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM*
Date: Monday, January 27, 2014 4:51:39 PM

SB2454

Submitted on: 1/27/2014

Testimony for AGL/HRE/JDL on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brad Parsons	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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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Cc: OccupyHiloMedia@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2454 on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM*
Date: Monday, January 27, 2014 5:19:15 PM

SB2454

Submitted on: 1/27/2014

Testimony for AGL/HRE/JDL on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kerri Marks	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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To: [AGL Testimony](#)
Cc: shannonkona@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2454 on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM
Date: Monday, January 27, 2014 8:30:21 PM

SB2454

Submitted on: 1/27/2014

Testimony for AGL/HRE/JDL on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Oppose.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [AGL Testimony](#)
Cc: lynhowe1946@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2454 on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 9:02:40 AM

SB2454

Submitted on: 1/28/2014

Testimony for AGL/HRE/JDL on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM in Conference Room 229

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

Comments: I absolutely oppose this - it is pre-emption of our county rights to home rule and the state has done a very poor job of taking care of our health, environment and well being on almost every level. Each county has its own challenges and we must meet them individually!

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Cc: ja@malu-aina.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2454 on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 10:16:27 AM

SB2454

Submitted on: 1/28/2014

Testimony for AGL/HRE/JDL on Jan 30, 2014 15:20PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jim Albertini	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: As a Big island farmer of 34 years, and part of an organization that grows food to share with people in need, I oppose this bill as part of the pre-emption efforts to offset bill 2491 passed by Kauai on pesticide regulation and our island bill 113. Mahalo. Jim Albertini

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