

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



KATHRYN S. MATAYOSHI  
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/16/2016  
**Time:** 10:00 AM  
**Location:** 309  
**Committee:** House Labor & Public  
Employment

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 1997 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

**Purpose of Bill:** Implements the recommendation of the Hawaii agriculture workforce advisory board to create an agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative to conduct training on all islands for teachers and school administrators in agricultural self-sufficiency.

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education supports the intent of HB 1997 to establish a K-12 agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative to guide training for teachers and school administrators in agricultural self-sufficiency, but defers to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations for any administrative or budgetary implementation concerns.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



LINDA CHU TAKAYAMA  
DIRECTOR

LEONARD HOSHJO  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 321  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
[www.labor.hawaii.gov](http://www.labor.hawaii.gov)  
Phone: (808) 586-8844 / Fax: (808) 586-9099  
Email: [dlir.director@hawaii.gov](mailto:dlir.director@hawaii.gov)

February 12, 2016

TO: The Honorable Mark M. Nakashima, Chair,  
The Honorable Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the House Committee on Labor

Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2016  
Time: 10:00 a.m.  
Place: Conference Room 309, State Capitol

From: Linda Chu Takayama, Director  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: H.B. No. 1997 Relating to Agriculture**

**I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

HB 1997 proposes to add a new section to chapter 371, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), which establishes within the department a K-12 agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative to conduct training on all islands for teachers and school administrators regarding agricultural self-sufficiency. The bill includes establishment of a coordinator position and workforce development specialist in the department to carry out this initiative.

The department supports this bill provided its passage does not replace or adversely affect priorities identified in the Governor's Supplemental Budget request.

**II. CURRENT LAW**

Section 371-19, HRS, established the Hawaii Agricultural Workforce Advisory Board to advise the department on developing the next generation of agricultural workers; developing a mission, objectives, and goals of the Board; developing partnerships to further goals of the Board; supporting local chapters of Future Farmers of America; and recommending projects that expand the agricultural workforce in Hawaii.

### **III. COMMENTS ON THE HOUSE BILL**

The Agricultural Workforce Advisory Board was an outgrowth from a series of Agricultural Skill Panels convened in all counties in 2013<sup>1</sup>. Over 600 stakeholders collectively identified issues regarding expansion of the agricultural workforce and developed recommendations.

The Board reviewed the Agricultural Skill Panel recommendations and recommended the language reflected in this proposal. The Board focused on widening the pipeline of students to the agricultural workforce through the biggest potential pool of agricultural workers: Hawaii's youth. .

Interest in agriculture is waning among Hawaii youth because they have an inaccurate perception of farming as a low-paying, low-skilled trade and are not aware of the increasingly technical nature of jobs in the industry. To update teachers and school administrators about the current state of agricultural jobs, this bill proposes to provide them training, with exposure to real-life settings for students and teachers. The intended result is to generate interest and excitement for jobs in agriculture that can be passed on to students and promote expansion of the agricultural workforce.

DLIR supports this bill as a potential, important method to increase the agricultural workforce provided sufficient funds are appropriated and its passage does not replace or adversely affect priorities identified in the Governor's Supplemental Budget request.

<sup>1</sup> [http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/files/2013/06/AgSkillPanelReport\\_web.pdf](http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/files/2013/06/AgSkillPanelReport_web.pdf)

<http://dlir.state.hi.us/labor/sesp/pages/agriculture.cfm>

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT**

February 16, 2016  
10:00 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 309

HOUSE BILL NO. 1997  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1997. This bill establishes a K-12 agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative in the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) to conduct trainings for teachers and school administrators in agricultural self-sufficiency. The Department supports this bill but would defer to the DLIR.

The Department has been participating in the Agriculture Workforce Advisory Board that was created by Act 99, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013. Along with the DLIR, Department of Education, University of Hawaii, Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, and a representative from the farming community, discussions have been held to find ways to increase our current agricultural workforce. Recent numbers from the 2012 US Agricultural Census has found the average age of farmers in Hawaii is over 63 years old. It is the Department's goal to reverse this trend and we look forward to continued collaboration with our brother and sister agencies and the public to achieve this goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Written Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Labor & Public Employment  
Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.

By

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor

And

Maria Gallo, Dean

And

J. Kenneth Grace, Associate Dean

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 1997 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and members of the House Committee on Labor & Public Employment, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1997, which implements the recommendation of the Hawai'i agriculture workforce advisory board to create an agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative to conduct training on all islands for teachers and school administrators in agricultural self-sufficiency.

HB 1997 will implement the recommendation of the Hawai'i agriculture workforce advisory board, of which the Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, is a member. Although we defer to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations on the fiscal and management implications of HB 1997, we believe that implementation of this recommendation will greatly assist in the development of an educated and well-trained agricultural workforce in Hawai'i, and complements such related efforts as Future Farmers of America, 4-H, and Farm to School programming.

Should HB 1997 be considered a viable approach by the legislature and the referenced departments, we will be glad to continue to work, as our resources permit, with all the parties concerned to promote agricultural workforce development and further the goal of agricultural self-sufficiency in Hawai'i.



February 12, 2016

Representative Mark M. Nakashima, Chair  
Representative Jarrett Keohokalole, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Labor and Public Employment

**Comments in Support of HB 1997 Relating to Agriculture (Implements the recommendation of the Hawaii agriculture workforce advisory board to create an agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative to conduct training on all islands for teachers and school administrators in agricultural self-sufficiency.)**

**Tuesday, February 16, 2016, 10:00 a.m., in Conference Room 309**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. LURF’s mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii’s significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 1997** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands (IAL) in Hawaii. The bill conveys the need for collaboration amongst diverse sectors of the community - business, government, educational institutions, and agricultural stakeholders - and the importance for them to work together cooperatively to improve the economic viability of the State’s agricultural industry.

**HB 1997.** The purpose of this bill is to implement the recommendation of the Hawaii agriculture workforce advisory board (the “Board”) that the State establish an agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative (the “Initiative”) to conduct training in agricultural self-sufficiency on all islands for teachers and school administrators.

**LURF’s Position.** LURF believes that the proposed establishment of the Initiative by the Board in HB 1997 is consistent with the underlying intent and objectives of the IAL laws (Hawaii Revised Statutes [HRS], Sections 205-41 to 52), which were enacted to fulfill the mandate in Article XI, Section 3 of the Hawaii State Constitution, “to conserve

and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands.” As noted in HRS Section 205-41, the intent of Act 183 (2005) was to develop agricultural incentive programs to promote agricultural viability, sustained growth of the agricultural industry, and the long-term use and protection of important agricultural lands for agricultural use.

Passage of the long-awaited IAL legislation would be pointless without implementation of these programs, incentives and inducements which require the cooperation and support of agricultural, business, and educational organizations, as well as government agencies, which this bill is intended to cultivate and promote.

LURF members include private property owners, farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider programs such as this Initiative significant to the continued conduct of their operations and to help sustain and preserve their businesses into the future. Regrettably, interest in agriculture continues to decline due to misguided assumptions of the trade as entailing hard work for low pay, and requiring little, if any appreciable skills.

LURF believes efforts like the Initiative and the appropriation of funds for its implementation would greatly assist in the perpetuation of the agricultural industry in this State by identifying workforce needs; assisting the industry with training to help farmers and ranchers comply with onerous regulatory requirements; providing knowledge and inspiring interest in agriculture; as well as educating youth about the importance of increasing Hawaii’s long-term resilience and sustainability.

As the establishment of the Initiative significantly helps to promote economically viable agriculture and food self-sufficiency in Hawaii, LURF is in **support of HB 1997**.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of this measure.



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

February 16, 2016

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

TESTIMONY ON HB 1997  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 309  
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and Members of the Committee:

I am Randy Cabral, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 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.

**HFB strongly supports HB 1997**, which implements the recommendation of the Hawaii agriculture workforce advisory board to create an agriculture workforce development pipeline initiative to conduct training on all islands for teachers and school administrators in agricultural self-sufficiency.

Hawaii's commercial farmers' average age is over 60 years. To maintain and expand production levels, it's clear that we need a new generation of farmers and ranchers equipped to assume the task of growing crops and livestock. This is critical to achieving Hawaii's goal of increased self-sufficiency and sustainability. Two years ago DLIR in conjunction with HDOA conducted a series of meetings in all Counties to identify workforce needs of the industry. We expect that this measure is a follow up of these sessions and we applaud this effort.

The activities enabled by passage of this legislation will lead to implemented strategies yielding favorable outcomes for the state's economy, particularly the agricultural sector.

Additionally, farmers and ranchers endure numerous regulatory requirements. Among them, labor laws are among the most problematic; with significant differences between Federal and State requirements. Training to meet these and other requirements is vital. Farmers and ranchers have been inspected and cited by Federal DOL on Oahu, Big Island and Maui for infractions that they did not realize were in non-compliance. The 2013 Legislature passed into law training provisions for agriculture that was left unfunded. We ask for your support of funding requests to implement this measure as requested by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.