

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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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 AGRICULTURE**

**JANUARY 31, 2018  
8:30 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 312**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1883  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1883, which establishes a two-year agricultural theft and vandalism pilot project to examine the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural theft and agricultural vandalism in the county of Hawaii. The Department supports this bill provided it does not impact the Department's priorities listed in the Executive Budget.

The Department of Agriculture has entered into a one-year contract with the Hawaii County Prosecutor's Office for one investigator to conduct agricultural theft and agricultural vandalism investigations. This has been a valuable and productive project with the limited staff performing investigations and outreach with farmers, law enforcement, and farmers markets. We encourage the continuation of the joint efforts being done to pursue prosecution of agricultural related crimes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**Eileen O'Hara**  
Council Member  
Council District 4

**Chair:** Environmental  
Management Committee



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**Vice Chair:** Planning Committee and  
Agriculture, Water & Energy  
Sustainability Committee

## **County of Hawaii**

### **Hawaii County Council**

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 1402 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Representative Richard P. Creagan  
Chair, Committee on Agriculture  
Hawai'i State House of Representatives

January 29, 2018

**Re: In Support of House Bill 1883, from Hawai'i County Council District 4  
To be heard by AGR on Wednesday, 01-31-18 8:30AM in House conference room 312**

Aloha Chair Creagan and Committee Members:

I'm writing to express my support for House Bill 1883, which establishes and appropriates funds for a two-year agricultural theft and vandalism pilot project to examine the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural theft and agricultural vandalism in the County of Hawaii.

Agricultural theft and vandalism has become a serious problem on the Big Island, not only for large scale farms and ranches, but also for smaller, part-time or even household operations that also produce their own crops and livestock. Though the Big Island should be contributing a significant portion of our agricultural output, food production is crippled by theft, vandalism, and a lack of support from an understaffed police force. Depending solely on our Hawai'i Police Department has not been an effective strategy in combating this problem.

The loss in food production has also negatively impacted the income of agriculturalists and subsistence farmers. The widespread affect these crimes have on the state are harmful and discouraging. I strongly support the intent of this bill and hope you do as well, so that we can develop appropriate strategies to combat this problem. Please contact me if you have any questions about my support or knowledge of the subject.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eileen O'Hara".

Eileen O'Hara  
Council Member  
Council District 4

**HB-1883**

Submitted on: 1/26/2018 3:42:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2018 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John R. Gordines	Hawaii Floriculture & Nursery Ass.	Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers is in full support of this trial project. Agricultural theft has plagued small famers throughout my area of South Kona for as long as I can remember. Personally last year, thieves jumped the fence to steal mangos, guava and jackfruit. My neighbor coffee is stripped from the branches at night. My friends avocado tree has been stripped bare of fruit that should not have been harvested for another month. These unripe fruits wind up in farmers markets further giving an unpleasant experience to consumers for local fruit. Estimates from our more than 750 members state wide indicate that slightly over 40% have experienced some loss.

Again please consider this program as a way to insure the agriculture communities sustainability.

**HB-1883**

Submitted on: 1/28/2018 4:09:07 PM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2018 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ihilani Coffee	Ihilani Coffee Company	Support	No

Comments:

Agricultural theft is a huge problem, particularly in the Puna District which is underserved by HPD. Agricultural lot owners need to have recourse for theft of equipment, supplies, and crops.



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January 31, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1883**  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 312  
8:30 AM

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, 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 interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau strongly supports HB 1883**, which establishes a two-year agricultural theft and vandalism pilot project to examine the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural theft and agricultural vandalism in the county of Hawaii.

Agricultural theft and vandalism are persistent problems facing agriculture. Weather, drought, pests, weeds, disease, unstable markets, transportation and labor issues, and a changing climate all contribute to uncertainty for farmers and ranchers. Few businesses face such challenges, yet we are charged with producing food, fiber, fuel and flowers for the 99% of non-farmers. Add in the constant threat and impacts of trespass, theft and vandalism, and it's a wonder farms and ranches remain viable.

In working with our members, HDOA, and law enforcement, we have collectively concluded that dedicated enforcement officers housed in the county prosecutor's office would be a giant step forward in minimizing agricultural crimes and enhancing public safety. Too often a farmer or rancher has sweated, worried, and worked to the bone to produce a crop, only to wake up one morning to find that an opportunistic criminal has helped himself to the harvest. Farmers and ranchers are fed up with this activity and frankly, deserve better. We understand that law enforcement resources are often prioritized for public health and safety. Is the health, safety and livelihood of a farmer and his family any less important? We think not.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

**HB-1883**

Submitted on: 1/27/2018 11:40:50 AM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2018 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Javier Mendez-Alvarez		Support	No

Comments:



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
Wednesday, January 31, 2018 — 8:30 a.m. — Room 312

**Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports HB 1883, Relating to Agriculture**

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am General Partner of 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 produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and reduce waste. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

**Ulupono strongly supports HB 1883**, which establishes a two-year agricultural theft and vandalism pilot project on Hawai'i Island, because it aligns with our goal of creating more locally produced food.

In our conversations with farmers and ranchers, one issue that keeps coming up is agricultural theft and how there is little enforcement and punishment for offenders. Agricultural lots are a prime target for thieves as there are many open entry points, farms are often located in rural and isolated areas, and punishments are minor relative to other crimes. For farmers that can afford to, they have to spend money on security infrastructure, monitoring, and manpower to defend their agricultural operations. Profit margins for agricultural operations are already tight and if a business loses revenue from theft or vandalism and has to invest heavily in security, this could push more local farmers and ranchers out of the agricultural sector. Ultimately, this underrated issue is one that hurts our ability to increase locally grown food in our state.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become more complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate these committees' efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

We believe that by collaborating, we can help produce more local food and support an economically robust homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*





Respectfully,

Kyle Datta  
General Partner

**HB-1883**

Submitted on: 1/30/2018 9:16:29 PM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2018 8:30:00 AM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments: