



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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**LATE**

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 10:30 a.m.

By

Nicholas Comerford

Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
And

Michael Bruno

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University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1968 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1968 HD1 SD1 which appropriates funds for fiscal year 2018-2019 to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) Cooperative Extension Service (CES) for four full-time ornamental plant extension agents—one each for the City and County of Honolulu, eastern portion of the County of Hawai'i, County of Maui, and County of Kaua'i.

As indicated in the bill, the CTAHR CES has experienced a significant decrease in personnel. The CTAHR CES is unique in that it is the branch of the University that works throughout the state with its citizens to provide solutions to their lives. The CES translates research into actionable programs with the expectation of helping growers become more efficient and more economically viable. Given the high wholesale value of the ornamental plant industry in Hawai'i (approximately \$70 million and 12,000 jobs), the industry has identified a need for agents. Significant problems face the industry including new pests and diseases, water relations, and climate change. Extension agents, being the bridge between research and action on the ground, will help the industry address these challenges. It is imperative that these four full-time ornamental plant extension agent positions be permanent positions to maintain service throughout the state.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 1968 HD1 SD1, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Supplemental Budget Request.



The Senate  
Committee on Ways and Means  
April 4, 2018  
10:30 a.m., Conference Room 211  
State Capitol

### Testimony in Support of HB 1968 HD1, SD1

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) **is in support of HB 1968 HD1, SD1** *Relating to the UH CTAHR Cooperative Extension Service*. The aim of this measure is to provide funds for four Extension Agents focused on ornamental plants.

As the state's Land Grant University, UH CTAHR is mandated to provide cooperative agricultural (and home economic) extension to the public. Agriculture Extension Agents develop, teach, and demonstrate to the public the practical applications of research knowledge, and provide demonstrations of existing or improved practices or technologies in agriculture. In addition, Extension Agents are major part of every state's communication network between agencies and the public.

From a biosecurity perspective, UH CTAHR Agriculture Extension Agents are an important connection between the public, producers of agricultural and forestry products, and state and federal agencies. Many times, Extension Agents are the first individuals consulted when new pests are encountered, and they are also the individuals that can carry pest prevention and control information back to the producers and public. UH CTAHR Extension Forester Dr. J.B. Friday is a great example of the role that Extension plays. From his Extension work on Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death, to his research and outreach work on the best, non-invasive and native hardwood crops, Dr. Friday shows us the value of the Extension Service. The ornamental plant industry is worth tens of millions of dollars to Hawaii's economy, yet this industry has not had a designated Extension Agent for several years. The Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan highlights the need for additional Extension Agents for a variety of agricultural sectors, and we ask that you please consider supporting this bill. Mahalo!

Aloha,  
Christy Martin  
CGAPS

I SUPPORT HB 1968, HD1, SD1.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Mahalo!

Melvin Kunitake

**LATE**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support HB 1968, HD1, SD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources cooperative extension service for four full-time ornamental plant extension agents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Mahalo!

Philippe Visintainer

