

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
Governor

**DOUGLAS S. CHIN**  
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 SENATE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SAFETY,  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL & MILITARY AFFAIRS AND AGRICULTURE &  
ENVIRONMENT**

**MARCH 14, 2018  
1:30 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2099 HD 1  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Nishihara, Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2099 HD1 that seeks to require the Department of Agriculture to conduct a feasibility study on “ag-tech” zones within residential and commercial areas of the City and County of Honolulu’s urban core. There is an appropriation. The purpose of an “ag-tech” zone is to promote technological innovation in agriculture to increase food production in a more effective and environmentally responsible way that also contributes to State revenues. The Department of Agriculture offers comments.

The Department is concerned about redirecting our very limited departmental resources away from current duties and responsibilities to undertake the tasks specified in this measure in a comprehensive manner. Additionally, this bill does not describe the feasibility study’s specific location. Should the bill seek to cover the entire City and County of Honolulu, substantial resources will be needed to carry out this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs  
and  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

By  
Nicholas Comerford  
Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
And  
Debora Halbert  
Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 2099 HD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairs Nishihara and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Wakai and Riviere, and members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs and Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 2099 HD1. We continue to be in full agreement with this revision, and that Hawai'i must entertain alternatives to its current agricultural operations. These alternatives should add to the diversity of current agricultural systems that operate in the state and not with an eye to supplant those systems. There is significant potential to grow food in an urban environment. The positive outcomes of successful urban operations are several. First, the food that is being grown in an urban environment is in the population centers where the food demand exists. In fact, this is one tool for addressing food deserts in urban areas. Second, because of the location, transportation costs may be minimized. Third, there are possibilities in increasing efficiencies. However, there are down sides as well with the energy consumption being the greatest. We agree that the feasibility plan needs to provide a critical economic evaluation of the start-up costs and maintenance costs of any urban agriculture plan. It should be noted that there will be significant start-up costs/investments in any program.

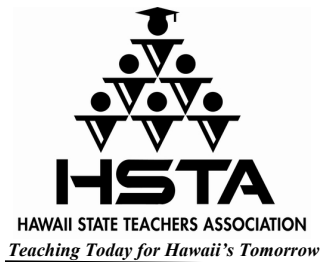
Vertical farming, the one option mentioned in the bill, is one component that fits into a general description of protective agriculture. Protected Ag, or “the modification of the natural environment to achieve optimal growth” is an approach that we feel is a potential future for Hawai'i.

Section 3. We continue to see value in all aspects of this section.

Section 4. We continue to see value in all aspects of this section

Section 5. The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is capable of participating given the appropriate resources to adequately meet the mission objectives. The phrase "cooperate and provide necessary resources as requested by the department of agriculture" should read "cooperate with the department of agriculture where necessary resources are provided by HB 2099 HD1".

We support HB 2099 HD1 with the caveat that it does not affect, and is in addition to, the UH budget request. We also support it if the funding is adequate to allow CTAHR to be engaged. We also defer to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) as per their ability to accomplish the mission objectives given the appropriated resources and their consideration of the DOA mission.



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Justin Hughey  
Vice President  
Amy Perruso  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Wilbert Holck  
Executive Director

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY,  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS AND THE COMMITTEE  
ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

RE: HB 2099 HD1 - RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2018

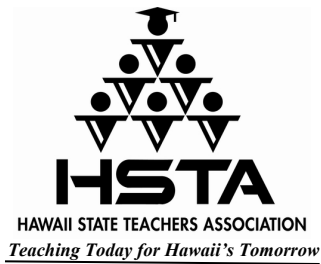
COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT  
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Nishihara, Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports HB 2099 HD1**, relating to agriculture.

This purpose of this Act would be to require the Department of Agriculture to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of ag-tech zones within the City and County of Honolulu and appropriates funds for conducting the feasibility study. It also would also protect and expand Hawaii's agricultural production for in-state consumption and export; create a new industry that recognizes and responds to the challenges of the future of food production in context of population growth, recruit and train Hawaii's youth for the new agricultural economy, and promote vertical farming techniques that reduce the use of water and pesticides. These goals are for our future. Our students are our future and exploring the feasibility of ag-tech in Hawaii will help us expand the agricultural careers in our state that will be available for our students when they become adults.

We need to restore the balance in our public educational system in Hawaii. Hawaii's Career and Technical Education programs need to be expanded to provide greater opportunity to prepare young people to design their own futures. The agriculture workforce needs have changed over time, and expanding our ag-tech industry that



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incorporates sustainability in agriculture will help Hawaii. According to the Hawaii Agriculture Skill Panel Report from the Workforce Development Council, the average age of Hawaii's commercial farmers is over 60 years old. Interest in agriculture is waning in our youth and this is worrisome to the industry and to the economy and self-sustainability of our state.

There is a common misconception that farming is a low-paying, low-skilled trade. Our youth need to understand that there are a variety of careers within the agricultural industry that need to be filled. They need more workers that are not only technical in nature, but also those who will help to solve the problems listed in the report such as developing new technology and developing ideas for innovation that are critical components to the growth and expansion of the agricultural industry in Hawaii, especially in the areas of sustainability.

Passage of this bill would help provide our youth with opportunities to gain the knowledge they need to promote ag-tech career paths as a possible career choice.

Hawaii, like most states, is working toward the goal of getting their students 'college-and career-ready,' but CTE experts are concerned that what we mean by 'career-ready' is not always clear, and the supply of quality career-technical education programs has not kept pace with demand. Students must have several options available to them in order to explore a variety of career options, one of them being in innovation in agriculture. This bill supports these efforts.

According to a national study, *The Shocking Truth About The Skills Gap* (2015), only 25 percent of polled job seekers reported receiving career path in high school, and 41 percent said they wished they had received more guidance.

Because a robust education involves developing all aspects of learning for our ever-changing world including the changes in agriculture, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.

**HB-2099-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2018 1:12:07 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/14/2018 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

RE: Testimony in Support of **HB2099 HD1**, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

To the Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair; the Honorable Glenn Wakai, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs:

To the Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair; the Honorable Gil Riviere, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Good afternoon. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **HB2099 HD1**, regarding a Feasibility Study; Ag-Tech Zones; and the Department of Agriculture.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of **HB2099 HD1** and support its passage.

**HB2099 HD1** is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it requires the Department of Agriculture to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of ag-tech zones within the City and County of Honolulu and appropriates funds for conducting the feasibility study.

Specifically, the DPH Platform provides that "[a]griculture in our state must be preserved and its future strengthened. Sufficient prime agricultural lands must be maintained for the health, economic well-being and sustenance of the people. We believe in an integrated approach to agricultural innovation and sustainability.

This approach includes, but is not limited to, the adoption of the native Hawaiian concept of ahupua'a, an integrated approach to land management. This could also include the development of economic, land and ocean use policies that foster sustainable crops both for local consumption and for export, policies to foster agriculture-related infrastructure at shipping points, and increased inspection to protect against invasive species and to encourage reduced holding times.

As an island state, securing affordable food for all is a priority. We support healthy, sustainable, and diversified local food production, and “Buy Local” strategies to assure greater food security and food safety.” (Platform of the DPH, P. 2, Lines 76-78, 82-86, 97-99 (2016)).

Given that **HB2099 HD1** requires the Department of Agriculture to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of ag-tech zones within the City and County of Honolulu and appropriates funds for conducting the feasibility study, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com, Text/Tel.: (808) 258-8889

**LATE**

THE SENATE  
THE TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2018

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair

Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, March 14, 2018

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 224

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL NO. 2099, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

To the Honorable Sen. Nishihara, Chair; the Honorable Sen. Wakai, Vice Chair;

To the Honorable Sen. Gabbard, Chair; the Honorable Sen. Riviere, Vice Chair;

and

Members of the Committee(s):

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill No. 2099 I am strongly in favor of House Bill No. 2099.

Hawaii needs to look for more innovative ways toward food production without forgetting about our long history of protecting agricultural workers from decisions that provide benefits in the short term only to heap cost on the future. I feel this bill moves in the right direction striking a balance between integrating technology while supporting current and future agricultural workers.

This bill also addresses the need for Hawai'i to protect its food production since the onset of Rat Lung Worm Disease and other outside influences which have the potential to damage the reputation of Hawaii produced goods as well as diminish our domestic food supply.

Furthermore, this bill will seek to bring in the youth to see working in agriculture as a viable career pathway for youth that would like to pursue careers that are CTE (Career Technical Education) oriented through the innovative ways of using technology toward agricultural development.



In closing one of the most powerful reason to support this bill is its potential to massively increase food production in urban Honolulu. This is right step toward building up our state's food reliance and, possibly grow an export market which highlight made in Hawaii goods in which a new industry can be created.

Mahalo,

Ken Farm

Member At-Large  
Neighborhood Board No. 15  
Kalihi-Palama

**LATE**