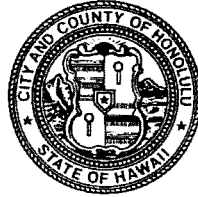


DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR



KATHY K. SOKUGAWA
ACTING DIRECTOR

TIMOTHY F. T. HIJ
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 10, 2017

The Honorable Richard P. Creagan, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Agriculture
Hawaii House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Creagan and Committee Members:

Subject: House Bill No. 715
Relating to Urban Agriculture

The Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) **opposes** House Bill No. 715, which would require the counties to incorporate urban agriculture principles and policies in land use planning and to allow urban agriculture as a residential use in a residentially designated zone. This Bill is unnecessary, overly broad, and detrimental to homerule and community well-being.

It would have been helpful for the Bill to explicitly include a purpose section. Perhaps the intent is to promote the production of food near consumers in residential neighborhoods. However, this measure may actually harm the neighborhoods. It would create havoc to the stability and health of neighborhoods, as it would not allow counties to consider agricultural uses on a case-by-case basis, or set minimum standards. Perhaps it is envisioned that residents would be able to walk to a roadside stand and buy fresh organic strawberries grown in a backyard. But what the Bill would also allow is a pineapple canning operation. Moreover, uses that may be acceptable in Waimea, such as cattle-raising, would be unacceptable in Makiki. By allowing agriculture as a permitted use in residential neighborhoods, the Right to Farm Act would be invoked making it even more difficult to co-exist.

There is a reason many urban zoning codes do not allow agricultural uses in residential neighborhoods. Until 1986, the City did allow crop production as a permitted use in residential districts, but we received frequent complaints from residents. Even the seemingly benign operation of pikake farms drew regular complaints. Consequently, crop production is no longer allowed in residential districts.

The Honorable Richard P. Creagan, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Agriculture
Hawaii House of Representatives
House Bill No. 715
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Page 2

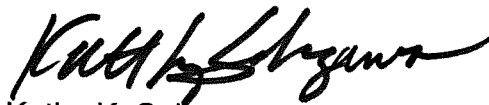
In short, we have the following concerns:

- The definition of “urban agriculture” is overly broad, and would include pig farms, aviaries and processing plants
- The counties are prohibited from applying conditions to the uses to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses
- This Bill overrides counties’ ability to regulate land uses under zoning codes, and ignores county home rule
- This Bill does not allow for community input
- This measure fails to recognize that residential neighborhoods are different in character, function and needs

We ask that this Bill be deferred.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Very truly yours,



Kathy K. Sokugawa
Acting Director



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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 10, 2017

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 715
RELATING TO URBAN 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 interest of our diverse agricultural community.

Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 715 with comments, creating opportunities in Urban Agriculture.

S.3420 introduced by Senator Stenebow, titled "Urban Agriculture Act of 2016" clearly recognizes the changes in agriculture. Farm Bureau supports the concept of Urban agriculture. AFBF President Zippy Duvall states:

"As an organization that supports farmers of all sizes, commodities and production systems, Farm Bureau believes this legislation will build a stronger bond among all farmers--rural, suburban and urban."

We strongly believe that it will take all kinds of agriculture, complementing each other to achieve Hawaii's goal of moving the needle on Hawaii's level of self-sufficiency and sustainability.

We also need to be aware of changes in people's expectations of agriculture and the regulatory environment within which ag exists. This measure addresses this concern through the requirement of ordinances in County zoning laws.

Many years ago, as agritourism expanded, HFB worked with the legislature to include agritourism in the Ag District. It required that the enterprise had to be accessory and secondary to a commercial farming operation and that the types of activities allowed were to be defined in ordinance. Some counties found that developing the ordinances was cumbersome and wanted it deleted and this year, HB 505, seeks to replace agritourism with agricultural commerce. HFB tried to respect home rule as it worked with the legislature to craft the language relating to agritourism, similar to the language in this measure to allow counties to identify the provisions around urban agriculture. Based on our experience, we strongly recommend consultation with the various Counties while moving forth with this measure.

The criteria put forth is important. People in residential zoning have expectations of the environment in their communities. Would the sounds of livestock be acceptable? How much traffic would be tolerated with home based marketing? In rural areas, crime has increased and neighborhood watches are implemented to watch for unknown vehicles in the area. How will this be handled?

These are real concerns. The prospect of more people growing food provides an excellent opportunity to connect with people to develop an understanding of agriculture. At the same time, we need to balance this with the expectations of the neighborhood. Utilizing empty lots in the business district or roof top farming truly provide opportunities. HFB looks forward to being part of the dialogue to reach a workable program.

HFB respectfully requests your support of this measure to continue dialogue on the topic and input from the various Counties that would be implementing this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on this important subject.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 7, 2017 1:16 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB715 on Feb 10, 2017 08:30AM*

HB715

Submitted on: 2/7/2017

Testimony for AGR on Feb 10, 2017 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	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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Hello,

My name is Kim from Nuuanu on Oahu, and I am writing in support of HB715.

Incorporating urban agriculture is a smart decision. Hawaii imports most of our food. Urban ag creates community, provides those without space to garden a way to do that, and maintains green space to reduce runoff that harms the coastal ecosystems. It is an important part of any modern city.

Dr. Kim Falinski

LATE

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2017 4:16 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: yitgordon@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB715 on Feb 10, 2017 08:30AM*

HB715

Submitted on: 2/9/2017
Testimony for AGR on Feb 10, 2017 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wyatt Gordon	Moiiliili Neighborhood Board	Support	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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