



1200 Ala Kapuna Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 ♦ Fax: (808) 839-7106 ♦ Web: www.hsta.org

Corey Rosenlee
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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB 2569 - RELATING TO PESTICIDES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 2569**, relating to pesticides.

Our children's health should always be one of our state's top priorities.

Yet, in Hawai'i, pesticide misuse continually endangers the well-being of our keiki. According to an investigation conducted by the *Cascadia Times*, pesticide application at large agrochemical companies on Kaua'i is ten times the national average and includes the neurotoxins chlorpyrifos, atrazine, and paraquat, which have been linked to developmental disabilities in young children.

Pesticides also waft over school communities and sicken our students, after being sprayed on windy days. In 2007, for example, nearly a dozen students at Kahuku High and Intermediate fell ill when a nearby farmer ignored windy weather while applying restricted use pesticides. In 2008, in Waimea on Kaua'i, dozens of students got sick after farmers applied pesticides on a nearby seed corn plot. Establishing buffer zones around school campuses, then, is an imperative step toward eliminating this unnecessary threat to our children's safety.

We must protect our keiki from chemical harm caused by corporate recklessness and greed. To preserve the health of vulnerable students, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



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

February 13, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2569
RELATING TO PESTICIDES

Room 211
10:30 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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 opposes SB 2569, which would expand the membership of the pesticide advisory committee to include a representative from the Farmers' Union United, DOE, each county mayors' office, a medical expert, and a non-governmental organization scientist.

The bill will hurt regulatory efforts to respond in a timely way to new pesticide science and real concerns. Expansion of the Committee will make it unwieldy without adding to its collective expertise. We oppose this bill because:

- it is unnecessary as the proposed additional members are already adequately represented by other members on the Committee
- pesticide regulation is extremely technical, making it difficult for non-experts to grasp
- additional members will delay necessary rule-making that ensures the safety of the community and farmers --- enlarging the already large group will make it more difficult to obtain quorum and consensus
- the Committee is merely advisory in nature; it does not and should not supplant the expertise and authority of the EPA and the DOA.

HFB has carefully monitored pesticide issues across the nation and within the State for decades. We and our farmer-members have supported and participated in many programs within the Department of Agriculture and the University of Hawaii to improve pesticide education and ensure the safe use of pesticides.

There is currently an unfortunate disconnect between public perception of pesticides and scientific reality that is exacerbated by the frightening propaganda used by mainland activist groups now operating in Hawaii. Their false claims purposefully ignore the strict and effective regulatory process, based on more than 120 health, safety and environmental tests to ensure the safety and effectiveness of each pesticide before it is registered for use by the EPA under two federal laws: the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

Under these laws, EPA ensures that each pesticide “will perform its intended function without unreasonable adverse effects on the environment.” To meet this standard, **every** crop protection product is evaluated over a period of many years, for potential effects to humans, wildlife, plants and other organisms. Pesticide products are not allowed on the market if EPA deems that there are *any* questionable results from the studies, including years-long chronic exposure toxicity testing dictated by some of the foremost toxicological scientists in the nation. These studies involve testing chronic effects of lifetime exposure, effects on reproduction, mutagenic effects on genes and inherited traits and carcinogenic effects during lifetime exposure. EPA specifically takes into consideration potential effects on children and other sensitive populations. The process is thorough, complicated, lengthy, and expensive. In addition, the State of Hawaii further restricts pesticides based on scientific evidence specific to the islands.

The groups that are demanding further restrictions on pesticides used in agriculture are not facing the reality that pesticides are necessary, especially in Hawaii. They are not going after the extremely toxic pesticides used to protect their homes from termites, nor the ones used in restaurants, hospitals, conservation areas, and their own yards.

Pesticides can and are being used safely. In fact, even the plants we eat on a daily basis contain pesticides *made by the plant* to protect itself from harm.

Many members of the public use pesticides on a daily basis but do not realize it. By definition in our laws, pesticides include not just agricultural products but also:

- Disinfectants like Lysol sprays, wipes, and toilet bowl cleaners
- Clorox bleach
- Sterilizers, cleaners, and disinfectants used in hospitals
- Restricted use pesticides put into our drinking water so we don't get sick from pathogens
- Ant, roach, and rat traps.
- Neem oil products and other "Organic" products
- Termiticides used to protect our homes
- Anti-flea and tick products to keep our pets healthy and parasite-free
- Invasive weed killers that threaten our watersheds and other critical conservation areas

Farmers also use pesticides (including organic ones) to protect their crops against the persistent onslaught of devastating introduced insects and weeds. Without the careful and judicious use of these products, many farmers could not stay in business.

Expanding the duties of the pesticide advisory committee to include establishment of state standards for chronicity, expansion of the good neighbor program, and establishment of a comprehensive buffer zone policy for the State **is inappropriate** because it is the purview and responsibility of the U.S. EPA and the State DOA, that have the staff, the expertise, the budget, and the mandate to regulate each of those concerns, based on

science and evidence. Adding more non-expert community members to the Committee will not accomplish its purpose and goal -- to ensure the safe use of pesticides in Hawaii.

The Committee already has the broad authority to “advise and assist the department in developing or revising laws and rules to carry out and effectuate the purposes of this chapter and in advising the department in pesticide problems.”

The mandates added by this proposed law are in areas of extreme technical complexity that require the expertise of trained specialists in that specific field. That is the purview of the EPA and the DOA. Scientific regulatory standards should not be set by a group of non-expert volunteer community members.

The current advisory role of the Committee makes sense. Members include those with pesticide expertise along with community and conservation group representation. In addition, the public, including the proposed representatives, already has the opportunity to participate in all pesticide-related rule-making.

Thank you for your careful consideration of our comments in opposition to this bill, and for your support of Hawaii's farmers and ranchers.



Board of Directors

TESTIMONY FROM BENNETTE MISALUCHA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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In Opposition to SB 2569 Relating to Pesticides

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Joshua Uyehara

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
February 13, 2018, 10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 211

Secretary

Dawn Bicoy

Chair Dela Cruz and members of the committee:

Treasurer

Laurie Yoshida

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices, and build a healthy economy.

Directors-at-Large

Adolf Helm

Mark Stoutemyer

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HCIA respectfully **opposes SB 2569**, which expands the membership of the pesticide advisory committee to include a representative from the DOE, each county mayors' office, a medical expert, and a non-governmental organization scientist. Expands the duties of the pesticide advisory committee to include establishment of state standards for chronicity, recommendation to the legislature of specific changes to the State's pesticide laws and regulations, expansion of the good neighbor program, and establishment of a comprehensive buffer zone policy for the State.

President Emeritus

Kirby Kester

Executive Director

Bennette Misalucha

While we agree with the bill's intent to allow greater diversity of participation in the pesticide advisory committee, we hold reservations regarding the expansion of the role of the advisory committee. We feel the suggested additional responsibilities should remain with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA), whose duty is to enforce the safe use of pesticides based on scientific assessments and established rules. They are the most qualified to evaluate current pesticide laws and regulations and objectively assess the effectiveness of related programs.

It is for these reasons that we oppose SB 2569. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Bennette Misalucha

Executive Director, Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

SB-2569

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 8:20:58 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/13/2018 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments: