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STATE OF HAWAII**

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**DAVID Y. IGE**  
GOVERNOR

**LEO R. ASUNCION**  
DIRECTOR  
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Statement of  
**LEO R. ASUNCION**  
Director, Office of Planning  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**  
Friday, February 23, 2018  
11:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

in consideration of  
**SB 2575, SD1**  
**RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION.**

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

The Office of Planning (OP) supports the intent of SB 2575, SD1 to conduct import substitution projects to encourage Hawaii farmers and growers to identify and grow food and nonfood alternative products to phase out imports of high-risk pathway food and commodities by 2027. OP agrees in the importance of higher education system in Hawaii to promote the understanding of sustainable food productions and training a new generation of students for jobs in the sustainable food and agriculture sector focused on sustainable food systems. OP therefore supports the intent of SB 2575, SD1 provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
February 23, 2018 at 11:00 a.m.

By  
Maenette K. P. Ah Nee-Benham, Chancellor  
University of Hawai'i West O'ahu

### SB 2575 SD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu (UHWO) supports SB2575 SD1, which would appropriate funds to expand the existing educational programming in Sustainable Community Food Systems at UHWO in order to increase food security, self-sufficiency, economic development and food system resiliency in the State of Hawai'i.

The pressing social and ecological issues facing food systems today are complex and interrelated, defying single disciplinary solutions. Systematically advancing the goals of food security, resiliency and equity in Hawai'i will require educating new generations of food system professionals to think across traditional disciplinary boundaries to actively engage real-world challenges. The Sustainable Community Food System Program at UHWO provides a rich experiential, applied and multi-disciplinary undergraduate education that develops student comprehension of interrelated ecological and social issues in agriculture such that they may begin formulating meaningful responses to these challenges. Through a holistic study of the food system, the SCFS degree aims to develop highly skilled and civic-minded graduates prepared to advance the sustainable food and agriculture sector through new businesses and social enterprises, and preparing students for graduate-level training in disciplines such as Education, Hawaiian Studies, Natural Resource Management, Political Science or Urban and Regional Planning at UH Mānoa.

UHWO supports the following provisions of Section 2 of SB2575 SD1:

- 1. Establishing scholarships for students to enroll in the Sustainable Community Food Systems program at the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu.** The BAS-SCFS at UHWO will provide a world-class education to the historically underserved Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) population of West O'ahu. The SCFS program is designed to serve the NHPI population through the integrative study of traditional ecological knowledge and modern science with the objective of stewarding the agricultural resources of Hawai'i over the long-term. A scholarship program for SCFS will help assist adult learners in West O'ahu to access culturally relevant options in higher education while meeting state priorities.

- 2. Creating job opportunities and on-site training by creating positions for a full-time garden manager and part-time student assistants for the Student Organic Garden at the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu.** The Student Organic Garden has grown to be a popular and dynamic living laboratory for the entire UHWO campus. Classes in SCFS, Mathematics, Political Science, Education and Hawaiian and Pacific Studies now regularly use the garden for experiential and hands-on learning. The garden serves hundreds of undergraduate and public school students each year. A permanent full-time garden manager position and part-time student employee positions for the garden will enable UHWO to continue to offer a wide range of high quality educational programming in sustainable horticulture, home gardening, cooking and nutrition.
  
- 3. Creating a Hawaiian Center for Sustainable Community Food Systems, a two hundred-acre education, training, outreach, food processing, and applied research center; provided that prior to creating and implementing the center the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu, shall conduct and submit to the legislature a study that determines the feasibility and benefits of creating a center.** UHWO will conduct and submit to the legislature a study that determines the feasibility and benefits of creating a Hawaiian Center for Sustainable Community Food Systems (HCSCFS), a 200-acre multi-disciplinary and applied education center dedicated to advancing food security and sustainable economic development of the food system of Hawai'i and the Pacific. Through multiple program areas including certified organic production, youth leadership training, undergraduate and graduate education, organic farmer training, K-12 education, public workshops, food processing and applied agro-ecology research, the HCSCFS will provide the necessary educational and physical infrastructure to achieve a more sustainable, resilient and secure food system for the state of Hawai'i.
  
- 4. Implementing research projects, hosting conferences, and employing additional staff and faculty as the director of the program deems necessary.** To build upon prior success, the SCFS program is seeking additional funding to support applied agro-ecology and food system research, promote popular understanding of critical agriculture and food issues through public education, and build the SCFS program curriculum in the fields of ecology, indigenous natural resources management, epidemiology, and public health and nutrition through the hiring of additional faculty members.

UHWO supports this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Supplemental Budget.

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2575 SD1.

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
Governor

**DOUGLAS S. CHIN**  
Lt. Governor



**SCOTT E. ENRIGHT**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
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Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS**

**FEBRUARY 23, 2018  
11:00 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2575 SD1  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION**

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2575 SD1, which appropriates funds for the University of Hawaii, West Oahu, to expand its existing programs and develop new means to increase food security and self-sufficiency in the State. The Department supports this bill.

The Department supports this measure as it looks to increase agricultural education at the University of Hawaii. Recent numbers from the 2012 US Agricultural Census has found the average age of farmers in Hawaii is over 63 years old. It is the Department's goal to reverse this trend by continuing to work with our state partners to encourage a new generation of agriculturalists dedicated to improving Hawaii's food security and self-sufficiency.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





## Senate Committee on Ways & Means

### Board of Directors:

Friday, February 23, 2018, 11:00 a.m., Conference Room 211

Gary L. Hooser  
President

### **Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action supports: SB2575, SD1**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Committees,

Andrea N. Brower  
Ikaika M. Hussey  
Co-Vice Presidents

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) strongly supports of SB2575 SD1, which seeks to appropriate funds for the University of Hawaii West O'ahu to expand its existing programs and develop new means to increase food security and self-sufficiency in the State.

Kim Coco Iwamoto  
Treasurer

HAPA is a statewide environmental, social and economic justice organization, which emerged out of the community-led movement in Hawai'i to transition towards more fair and sustainable food systems.

Bart E. Dame  
Secretary

The Sustainable Community Food Systems program at UH West O'ahu has established a strong track record of creating a pipeline for culturally relevant jobs, for local youth, in agriculture through its established partnership with MA'O Farms.

Paul Achitoff

This program will help Hawai'i meet stated goals of reducing our dependency on imported food. UHWO's emphasis on sustainable food systems, teaches students how to regenerate soil health, so their farming practices can continue to provide abundant, nutrient rich foods in the long term.

Malia K. Chun

Laura Harrelson

Katie McMillan

Walter Ritte Jr.

Karen Shishido

An investment in growing the next generation of farmers and increasing our local food supply will also keep more money in our local economy. UHWO's program brings an emphasis on social entrepreneurship and financially viable careers for local youth. This program has been so successful that other islands are looking at how they can replicate this model.

Leslie Malu Shizue Miki

Please support SB2575, SD1.

Kekaulike Prosper Tomich

Best Regards,

Cade Watanabe

Anne Frederick, Executive Director  
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 5:03:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                    | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Natalie McKinney    | Testifying for Kokua Hawaii Foundation | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Kā• kua Hawai'i Foundation strongly supports this bill. The UH Wst Oahu Community Food Systems Program is [ranked second in the nation](#) for delivering higher education in sustainable agriculture at an affordable price. Investing in the UHWO Community Food Systems Program is an investment in Hawaii agriculture and more careers in our ag and food systems, increasing our self-sufficiency.



**Board Members**

*President*

Jason Okuhama  
Managing Partner,  
Commercial & Business Lending

*Secretary*

Marcus Kawatachi  
Deputy Director,  
Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission

Trina Orimoto

Clinical & Research  
Psychologist

Kaipo Kukahiko  
Executive Director,  
KEY Project

Miwa Tamanaha  
Deputy Director,  
Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo

**HACBED Staff**

Brent N. Kakesako  
*Executive Director*

Keoki Noji  
*Chief Operating Officer*

Athena T. Esene  
*Bookkeeper & Office Manager*

Will Simmons  
*Food Systems Specialist*

Foley Pfalzgraf  
*AmeriCorps VISTA*

Alex Narrajos  
*AmeriCorps VISTA*

Date: February 21, 2018

To: Senators Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means

From: Brent Kakesako, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED)

Re: Support for SB2575 SD1

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

The Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED) supports SB2575 SD1, which would appropriate funds for the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu (UHWO) to expand its existing programs and develop new means to increase food security and self-sufficiency in the State.

HACBED was established in 1992 as a nonprofit statewide intermediary to *address social, economic, and environmental justice concerns through community-based economic development*. It advances its mission with core competencies in the areas of community and organizational capacity building, community and economic development planning, and asset policy development and advocacy. Over time, what has rung true across the different communities HACBED has been blessed to support is the importance of choice and control in the lives of families across the state to achieve their vision for genuine wealth – and within the context of food, this has been no different. HACBED has supported a network of community-based organizations over the past four years to continue the work of restoring ancestral abundance. Under that broader framework, this loose network focused its efforts on shifting our institutions and systems tied to food and knowledge production.

A key part of that work was supporting the burgeoning Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Sustainable Community Food Systems (SCFS) at UHWO, “a multi-disciplinary, experiential and applied education program about key ecological and social issues in food and agricultural systems.”<sup>1</sup> The SCFS degree was born out of community-based organizations, like MA'O Organic Farms, who saw the need for pathways that were relevant to their communities and by extension, their youth. The BAS reflects this desire and need as well as meets existing shifts around workforce development, such as the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as it “incorporates problem-based and hands-on learning to develop food system professional capable of solving real-world problems and transitioning Hawai'i agriculture toward greater ecological sustainability and social equity.”<sup>2</sup>

In reaching out to teachers and students in the natural resources and agriculture

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.uhwo.hawaii.edu/academics/degrees-and-certificates/bachelor-of-applied-sciences/food-systems/>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

academies within the public high schools in UHWO's service area, including Nānākuli, Wai'anae, Kapolei, Campbell, Leilehua, Waialua, and Kahuku, HACBED heard resounding support for the program. The program fits with the interests of the students in those regions and their particular desire to return to their communities to support and improve them. Yet, HACBED also heard about current challenges in terms of time and resource constraints on teachers as well as the lack of support, training, and mentoring to incorporate concepts tied to food security and food self-sufficiency into their courses. A lot of the groundwork we have done would inform and potentially fulfill large parts of the requirement for a feasibility and benefits study by UHWO relating to the proposed center for sustainable community food systems included in SB2575.

As such, passage of SB2575 SD1 would support an institution of higher learning within a community that is hungry for these offerings and alleviate broader issues of food security and self-sufficiency by offering the following opportunities that would essentially be a systemic approach to shifting our response and actions:

- *Scholarships* – support for students to enroll at UHWO and further their knowledge of sustainable food systems;
- *Jobs & On-Site Training* – support for students to have paid, hands-on opportunities to apply their knowledge;
- *Center* – 200-acre center that would provide education, training, outreach, food processing, and applied research capabilities and support for the different stakeholders across the food system;
- *Research* – support for staff and faculty to broaden their knowledge and that of UHWO, and by extension the students.

Increasing the ability of families to grow their own food will build their self-sufficiency and by extension the self-sufficiency and food security for the entire state. As such, SB2575 SD1 would support programs that build these critical skills within the context of current opportunities to address systemic challenges facing all of our families statewide.

Please let me know if you may have any additional questions at (808)550-2661 or [bkakesako@hacbed.org](mailto:bkakesako@hacbed.org).

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Brent N. Kakesako  
Executive Director



**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 3:06:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                 | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Nancy Redfeather    | Testifying for Ka Ohana<br>O Na Pua | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

The UHWO Sustainable Community Food Systems Program is the perfect example of a program that will train our young adults to be active members, supporters, and participants in the future of Hawaii' community food systems. State Reports have been calling for something like this for many years, and now we have a program situated in a high need area of Oahu, that can provide the kind of education that will change lives, increase healthy future decision making, and provide hope and career alternatives for the future of Hawai'i.



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PO Box 1414, Kilauea, HI 96754  
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Testimony Presented to the Senate Committee on Ways & Means  
Friday, February 23, 2018, at 11:00 a.m.

Testimony by Keone Kealoha, Executive Director (Kanu Hawaii), Board Chair (Malama Kauai)  
Submitted on behalf of Kanu Hawaii & Malama Kauai  
SB 2575 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION  
Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-chair Keith-Agraran and members of the committee:

**We offer testimony in strong support SB 2575**

Kanu Hawaii and Malama Kauai are very encouraged that the state legislature is considering, and hopefully passing, SB2575 - a financial investment in the future of local food production. Supporting agricultural education, new farmer and local food enterprise creation is a tangible and meaningful demonstration of a long term commitment to Hawaii's food security.

We may have notions to support more local food production, however, without the state making it a financial priority we are not going to get there.

Mahalo to you and your committee for recognizing we must fund the future we desire, it will not happen without proactive direction setting and resource allocation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure,

Keone Kealoha

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Keone Kealoha", written in a cursive style.

Executive Director, Kanu Hawaii  
Co-founder and Board Chair, Malama Kauai

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 10:22:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Melodie Aduja       | Testifying for OCC<br>Legislative Priorities<br>Committee, Democratic<br>Party of Hawai'i | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the  
Ways and Means Committee  
Feb. 23, 2018

By  
Albie Miles, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, Sustainable Community Food Systems  
University of Hawai'i – West Oahu

SB 2575 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Dear representatives,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2575.

I am an Assistant Professor and founding director of the Sustainable Community Food Systems (SCFS) Program at the University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu (UHWO). I received my Ph.D. in Environmental Science, Policy and Management (ESPM) from UC Berkeley, and have worked in the field of agroecology and sustainable food systems for the last 15 years. My research and publications explore the relationship between farming system biodiversity and ecosystem services from agriculture, and the structural obstacles to more sustainable food and farming systems. In addition to my time in the UH System have worked at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome, Italy and the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems at UC Santa Cruz (CASFS).

A sustainable community food system is one in which producers, retailers, community members and governmental and non-governmental organizations partner to create a vibrant and resilient local food economy where the environmental, economic, and social health of a particular place is enhanced and sustained over the long term. Developing more sustainable community food systems for Hawai'i represents an opportunity to create a new food economy that integrates the objectives of job creation, economic development, land stewardship, food security, environmental protection, and climate change resiliency with community health and well being.

The UHWO SCFS Program prepares students for jobs in the sustainable food and agriculture sector in Hawai'i and beyond. SCFS is a multi-disciplinary, experiential and applied education program about key ecological and social issues in food and agricultural systems. It incorporates problem-based and hands-on learning to develop food system professionals capable of solving real-world problems and transitioning Hawai'i agriculture toward greater ecological sustainability and social equity through work in farming, policy-making, planning, business, social-enterprise, research and education.

I strongly support the passage of this bill and the UHWO Sustainable Community Food Systems Program for the following reasons:

1. The uniqueness of the SCFS Program: The SCFS program is the premier trans-disciplinary food systems program in the University of Hawai'i system;
2. The SCFS Program has very strong community support, including that of key native Hawaiian serving organizations and institutions (e.g. MAO Organic Farms, Kamehameha Schools);
3. SCFS program is a rapidly growing program serving a significant percentage of native Hawaiian students (40%);
4. The SCFS Program complements existing UH CTAHR programming and advances UH Sustainability Policy through innovative course work and research on agriculture and food system sustainability, resilience and equity;
5. SCFS Program has been recognized for its leadership in sustainable agriculture and food systems research and education by the Elsevier Atlas Award Committee, the Inter-institutional Network on

Agriculture and Food System Sustainability (INFAS), the USDA Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions Program, and the Sustainable Agriculture Education Association;

6. The SCFS Program contributes to the community, the state and the nation by providing higher education opportunities focused on creating new food economies that enhance economic development, sustainable land stewardship, food security, environmental protection, and climate change resiliency, and community health and well being.

If passed, SB 2575 will have a significant and positive impact on the SCFS Program, its students and the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

Albie Miles, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, Sustainable Community Food Systems  
University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu  
91-1001 Farrington Highway  
Kapolei, Hawai'i 96707  
E-mail: [albie@hawaii.edu](mailto:albie@hawaii.edu)  
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310-902-0531 (mobile)

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
February 6, 2018 at 1:15 p.m.

By  
*Debbie Millikan*  
*Oahu Farm to School Network*



SB 2575 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Chairs Gabbard and Kahele, Vice Chairs Riviere and Mercado Kim, and members of the committees:

The Oahu Farm to School Network **strongly support SB2575** which appropriates funds to support the UH West Oahu Sustainable Community Food Systems (UHWO SCFS) program. The results of such support will be to increase food security and self-sufficiency in the State.

Founded in 2012 and coordinated through 'Iolani School and Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL), the Oahu Farm to School Network (OFSN) works to strengthen and connect farm to school programs on O'ahu by building the network of service providers and producing professional development and policy advocacy opportunities for stakeholders.

The success of UHWO SCFS is of huge value to the work of the farm to school movement in Hawaii, both through building a strong workforce in the ag industry and through collaborative efforts to train agriculture educators.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 10:42:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kevin Chang         | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 11:49:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Alan Rosenfeld      | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Dear Senate WAM Committee,

I am writing to express my support for SB 2575 and to thank Senator Gabbard and the other legislators who have led this initiative. Although I am a faculty member at UH West O'ahu, I write today as an individual and a resident of Makakilo/Kapolei. As we think about the long-term viability of our local economy (and society) in a world of increasing population and energy costs coupled with diminishing resources and environmental peril, it is essential for the government and people of Hawai'i to act now to address the State's food (in)security. This measure takes an important step towards achieving that goal by supporting a higher education program that focuses specifically on building sustainable community food systems while providing scholarships for young people interested in studying 21st-century agriculture and improving the food production yield in our local communities. Mahalo!

Respectfully yours,  
Alan Rosenfeld, Ph.D.



Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
February 6, 2018 at 1:15 p.m.

By  
*Alphie Garcia*  
*University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu*

SB 2575 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Chairs Gabbard and Kahele, Vice Chairs Riviere and Mercado Kim, and members of the committees:

*I strongly support SB 2575.*

*Living and working on an Oahu, I've always been keenly aware of the sustainability issues that we face here in Hawai'i with our dependency to the mainland for our food and energy needs. The SCFS program will educate our young people and, hopefully, steer a new generation towards ecological independence. The SCFS program here at UHWO provides a unique opportunity for students to learn an interdisciplinary field in an environment that incorporates Hawaiian culture and sustainable practices. It's amazing to see the work that they've done throughout the semesters at the UHWO Student Organic Garden.*

*Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.*

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 3:56:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 4:41:36 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Tasia Y      | Individual   | Support            | No                 |

Comments:

Aloha Kā• kou-

I am writing in strong support of SB 2575.

The UH West O'ahu's Sustainable Community Food Systems Program has recently been named second in the nation for quality and value of education in sustainable food systems. Nationwide (as well as internationally), there is a movement towards studying and pursuing careers in sustainable agriculture and food systems as a means to mitigate the inevitable effects of climate change- many of which we are already experiencing and that will only worsen if nothing is done.

There is no other program like this within the UH system- this degree gives students an interdisciplinary education regarding the state of our food system, how we got here, what policies can be put into place to better support small farmers who use ecologically-beneficial practices to feed local communities, etc. It prepares students to pursue the career that interests them most while approaching that work from a place of aloha for our 'Ā• ina and a deep understanding of how a sustainable community food system can make us more resilient in the face of climate change and other potential impediments to importing 90%+ of our food.

As we have seen in Florida recently, our youth are speaking up. This program continues to grow in numbers because of student interest in learning about sustainable food systems, the connections between the health of our communities and our 'Ā• ina, the intersections of indigenous and western science, etc. This is a burgeoning field with more and more food systems, garden education, farm-to-school, etc jobs being created every year. We need to give our young leaders in Hawai'i this education to be able to compete for jobs in this growing field.

Personally, the establishment of this program has created a job for me after serving as a FoodCorps Service Member at MA'O Organic Farms several years ago. It has allowed me the opportunity to continue to serve communities in the Wai'anae moku in a slightly different capacity. We must arm our young people with the skills to mitigate the effects of climate change through a deep understanding of sustainable, resilient, and equitable food systems and our roles within them. UH West O'ahu is leading the way and I highly

encourage you to support this program's efforts for the sake of Hawai'i (and the world's) future.

Mahalo nui for considering this testimony in strong support of SB2575.

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 5:03:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jennifer Milholen   | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 5:18:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Monique Mironesco   | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Aloha members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 2575. I have been teaching a core requirement course called Politics of Food in the Sustainable Community Food Systems (SCFS) program since its inception in 2014. In fact, I have taught the class since 2007. In 2011, along with folks from MA'O Farms, and with the support of former UHWO Chancellor Gene Awakuni, we worked to design a program to meet the needs of the UHWO service area to matriculate students who understand the systems thinking necessary to fix our broken food system in Hawai'i. We received a multi-year grant from Kamehameha Schools with which to hire Dr. Albie Miles in 2013-4. He has taken over the program and shaped it into a top notch educational opportunity for young people both on the Leeward Coast and the 'Ewa plain.

Every time I teach this required course for the program, students tell me that the class has changed their lives. It has improved their health; enabled them to understand how food systems work (currently not very well); as well as ways that they can be agents of change in their own communities regarding food and agriculture. Similar comments are directed toward Dr. Miles and his colleagues on a regular basis when they teach all of the other classes students take throughout the years in the SCFS program.

The SCFS program at UHWO is changing the way students understand their respective roles in their own communities. It is inherently different than any other program in the University of Hawaii system because it focuses on economic, political, environmental, public health, and social justice aspects of the food system, not just agriculture, or even some small very specialized piece of agriculture in Hawai'i. It enables students to understand connections among these various strands, as well as encourages them to focus on solutions through service learning and extended practica in both policymaking organizations, and on-farm experiential work.

Support for the Sustainable Community Food Systems program can only benefit the surrounding community and help Hawai'i work towards its ambitious sustainability goals to feed its residents. I hope you will support its creation and appropriate adequate funding for us to be able to do the work that our community needs us to do.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure.  
Aloha,  
Dr. Monique Mironesco

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
February 6, 2018 at 1:15 p.m.

By  
Steven West  
UHWO Student and Concerned Citizen

SB 2575 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Chairs Gabbard and Kahele, Vice Chairs Riviere and Mercado Kim, and members of the committees:

I strongly support and encourage legislators to pass and fund SB 2575 because it provides a solution confronting Hawaii in Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency.

Thirty-five years ago, I graduated from the United States Air Force Academy with a commission as an Officer in the United States Air Force. For over 24 years I served with a passion defending the United States of America. The threat ranged from the Cold War to the War Against Terror. My second career continued down the same path. Now, the world has dramatically changed, food self-sufficiency and food security have emerged as a more significant problem facing American citizens. My epiphany occurred last year learning about the purpose and vision of Sustainable Community Food Systems (SCFS) program at the UHWO. It convinced me that this course provides pathways for the community to increase local food production, to improve access to food, and to stimulate community development towards self-sufficiency.

Another pathway that this program provides a degree and a profession in food systems. My email inbox receives a constant flow of job opportunities seeking subject matter experts in agroecology. I am impressed that the reputation of this program on a global scale. Last semester, I was conducting research and was in contact with a Professor from the University of New Zealand. The Professor commented that the UHWO SCFS course has an excellent reputation and is doing great work. This is amazing that this program, in a short period, can have such a positive impression. But what makes the SCFS program great is the dedicated, motivated, and passionate Hawaiian students. I am energized with their zeal to learn, to apply, and to make a positive contribution in Hawaii.

As a full-time student in the program and the same passion I felt thirty-five years ago, I firmly believe that the SCFS program is the critical first step to becoming an operational solution to the challenges the State of Hawaii faces when it comes food self-sufficiency and food security. Currently, I am learning the ecological and economic practicality of Hawaii agriculture. With climate destabilization, severe weather, unpredictable environmental, social, or economic calamities, SB 2575 is a proactive plan and a way forward to replace our dependency on food imports. The risk is too high not to act now.



There is a Chinese proverb that says, "When the wind changes direction, there are those who build walls and those who build windmills." SB 2575 is that windmill that Hawaii needs now for a better future and well-being of its citizens.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2575. Please pass and fund.

Steven West  
UHWO Student  
Sustainable Community Food System

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2018 10:39:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lydi Morgan Bernal  | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

I strongly support this bill to expand the UHWO Sustainable Community Food Systems Program.

The expansion of this program through funding for scholarships, outreach, dedicated staff, and the development of a learning and research center is absolutely essential to achieving increased food security, self-sufficiency, and sustainability for Hawaii.

Thank you very much for hearing this bill. Please provide full funding for the expansion of this important program!

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
February 23, 2018 at 1:15 p.m.

By  
Elise Dela Cruz-Talbert  
University of Hawaii - West Oahu, Sustainable Community Food Systems

SB 2575 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Dear members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

I am writing to strongly support SB 2575. I am a doctoral candidate in Epidemiology at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and was recently hired as an instructor in the Sustainable Community Food Systems Program at the University of Hawaii - West Oahu. My research and work over the last decade has focused on chronic diseases and measuring the impacts of food systems on community well-being.

I was drawn to the SCFS Program and its students for the following reasons:

- The SCFS Program, is unique in that it is a sustainable agriculture program which focuses on responding to community needs, hands on learning, and applied research methods;
- Interdisciplinary education and research is fostered in the program -- which is so critical to understanding the complex factors related to agriculture in Hawaii and the world over;
- The SCFS Program regularly partners with community organizations that are also doing work which promotes sustainable agriculture, such as MAO Farms for one example;
- I am excited to provide our students -- the future generation of agricultural leaders, farmers, and policy makers -- with a strong foundation in theory and analytic tools to conduct community needs assessment and food systems research.

For all these reasons I also believe that the program can and will continue to attract faculty and students which will help to make the University of Hawaii at West Oahu a top choice among the nation for sustainable agriculture education. And that this in turn will allow Hawaii to further shine as a leader and innovator on sustainability, climate change, and agricultural research and policy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2575.

Sincerely,

Elise Leimomi Dela Cruz-Talbert, MPH

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 6:44:24 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>     | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dr. Ricardo C. Custodio | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2575**

**February 23rd, 2018**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran,

I have practiced medicine for over 35 years. In that time, I have realized that wellness is more than the absence of disease. Wellness comes from the interplay of health, food and culture. We understand this at UH West Oahu and it serves as a motivation for our interdisciplinary partnership between the departments of Sustainable Community & Food Systems, Health Science and Native Hawaiian & Indigenous Health & Healing.

In order to proceed with the work we need to do, resources must be given to Sustainable Community & Food Systems. We need to lessen our dependence on imported food. This became clear for most of us in Hawaii during the Missile Alert mistake.

Fortunately, my students were prepared. Since September of 2016 (before Trump was elected) I have run a scenario where Trump is President, Kim Jong-un is unstable and Putin continues to be aggressive. An all out nuclear war breaks out and Hawaii is spared by our Kauai missile defense system. The students in the scenario are asked to plan the next three days. The very first task they all come up with is to find food.

In the debriefings the students all recommend we address the lack of locally grown food.

For these reasons I support SB2575.

Mahalo,

Ricardo C. Custodio, M.D., M.P.H.

Associate Professor & Chair of Health Science, UH West Oahu

Pediatrician, Kalihi-Palama Health Center

Reede Scholar, Harvard University

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 7:24:07 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kenneth Whitehead   | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

I support

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 8:12:30 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| Submitted By    | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Joanna Friesner | Individual   | Support            | No                 |

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment Senate Committee on Higher Education

By Joanna Friesner, PhD

Agricultural Sustainability Institute, University of California, Davis

SB 2575 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Chairs Gabbard and Kahele, Vice Chairs Riviere and Mercado Kim, and members of the committees:

As a member of the University of California, Davis Academic Federation, engaged in training, collaboration, research and education in sustainable food systems, I strongly support SB 2575. Thank you for the opportunity to provide my testimony in support of the bill.

**Hawai'i is uniquely situated in its complex and historical food system setting, and as such, requires place-based (local) solutions, education and training.** While I live and work in California, I am part of a cross- US academic network, INFAS (<http://asi.ucdavis.edu/networks/infas>), consisting of members of academia situated in a variety of institutions. Each member engages in local, national, and/or international food systems and sustainable agriculture work and projects. A key recent focus of the network has been the emerging recognition of the value of institutional interactions and collaborative work with the communities we strive to serve. A related focus is on understanding the history of the university systems in the US, and in particular, the power and privilege they were founded on, and how such systems are maintained. We also consider the obligations of academia to more fully understand the effects of universities on local and national communities, including native and indigenous peoples.

**Hawai'i is our newest network member and presents a valuable opportunity for members to learn and engage, specifically via the University of Hawai'i- West O'ahu' Sustainable Community Food Systems program.** The program fully aligns with network values as it provides inter-disciplinary training, education, and

collaboration within the sustainable food and agriculture sector in Hawai'i, and beyond. Notable is its emphasis on solving real-world problems and working to reverse social inequities within the food system while striving for greater ecological sustainability.

**Along with teaching skills and understanding economic sustainability in agriculture and food systems, the SCFS program addresses the three pillars of sustainability: social, ecological, economic.**

**The SCFS program is unique in its focus on Hawai'i, and by that alone, is highly worthy of support. Given the program's additional focus on community building (a community that stretches to colleagues such as UC Davis, and other mainland universities within the INFAS network) I strongly support the advancement of the program and its training goals.**

In the future, the INFAS network (currently 26 US institutions) wants to strengthen ties with members of the SCFS at the University of Hawai'i- West O'ahu'. I envision a variety of modes of reciprocal learning and sharing including via faculty, students, and research, education and training opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure!

Sincerely,

Joanna Friesner, PhD

Coordinator: Inter-institutional Network for Food and Agricultural Sustainability (INFAS)

Agricultural Sustainability Institute (ASI)

UC Davis/Davis, CA 95616

Phone: 530-752-7556/Email: [jdfriesner@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jdfriesner@ucdavis.edu)



**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 8:48:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Christine Ahn       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Testimony Presented Before the

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Senate Committee on Higher Education

February 6, 2018 at 1:15 p.m.

By

Christine Ahn

**SB 2575 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION**

Chairs Gabbard and Kahele, Vice Chairs Riviere and Mercado Kim, and members of the committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2575 that would provide critical support to the University of Hawaii West Oahu Sustainable Community Food Systems.

As someone who has moved here from Northern California with my family, I can attest to the need for more education and awareness for sustainable agriculture which would greatly improve Hawaii's food self-sufficiency, especially in the face of growing insecurity caused by climate change and other disturbances. In just three years, the

UHWO SCFS program was ranked as the second most affordable and quality sustainable agriculture program nationally. An investment of this kind from the State of Hawaii would demonstrate its commitment to be in the forefront of addressing greater resiliency in the vulnerable food system in Hawaii (as it already imports more than 90 percent of its food). We only need to look at the devastating impacts of the hurricanes on Puerto Rico to see how Hawaii would face similar challenges.

As a supporter of Ma'O Farms in Waianae and the transformation that that organization has had on improving the land that is being stewarded to cultivating young Hawaiian leaders, the UHWO SCFS program provides an important gateway for these and other youth to complete their Bachelor's Degree in a field that advances their ability to contribute in many meaningful ways to improving food security for Hawaii. Having visited the student garden at UHWO and the hale that serves as an important meeting place for the university community, one can see how transformative this program can continue to be if given the proper support and investment by the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure,

Sincerely,

Christine Ahn

Manoa resident

1909 Aleo Pl, Honolulu, HI 96822

**SB-2575-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 8:52:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2018 11:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Melinda Buck        | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Aloha Chairpersons and members of the committee,

i strongly support SB2575.

Thanks

Melijda Buck