



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Wednesday, January 31, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

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

### SB 3030 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Riviere, and members of the committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of the over-all concept of SB 3030 which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for establishing a farmer mentor program, as well as curriculum development for the program in the area of whole farm systems.

CTAHR strongly supports a whole farm system approach that focuses on maintaining and enhancing soil health. Whole farm systems include the diverse approaches to agriculture ranging from certified organic farming to integrated livestock/farming. The basic component of these systems is sustainable soil organic matter management, combined with integrated pest management under a verifiable economic umbrella. They typically include conservation tillage, cover crops and a well-designed cropping system.

Another important aspect of this curriculum should be teaching the economics of scale in order to assure that the farmers being trained in the program understand that a commercial operation has to be a certain size in order to become profitable (depending on the value of the crop), particularly given the costs of production involving food safety regulations. A whole farm system has the opportunity to lower the production inputs, hence making the operation more commercial.

We also suggest that a necessary component of a whole farm system curriculum is that it be based on well-documented science that passes the test of the peer review system.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of the over-all concept of the bill, but leave it to the Department of Agriculture to decide if this is within its mission.

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
Lt. Governor



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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 COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT**

**JANUARY 31, 2018  
1:30 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 3030  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 3030 that encourages the development and implementation of a “whole farm system approach” to agriculture in Hawaii. There is an \$1 million appropriation. The Department of Agriculture supports the intent of this measure provided it does not impact the Department’s priorities in the Executive Budget and offers comments.

The Department of Agriculture supports efforts to improve the capacity of new and existing farms to succeed in their endeavors. We support all forms of agricultural activities and practices. However, the Department of Agriculture is not structured for or has any practical experience with establishing and implementing an agricultural educational program. In turn, the Department would rely on the expertise that currently exists in the local community, such as the Go Farm program.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony.





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January 31, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON SB 3030**  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 224  
1:30 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Riviere, 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.

HFB agrees with the intent of SB3030, establishing a farmer mentoring program.

Hawaii's farmers and ranchers are aging. The average age exceeds 60 years old and if they were in other professions would be retired. Yet many of these farmers are those that provide to grocery stores, like Safeway, Times, Costco, and truly make a difference in reducing imports. Unfortunately for many, succession plans do not exist and as they retire, the lands go out of agricultural production. There is an urgent need for interns or apprentices that are willing to not only work on these farms but take over their operations.

Soil health is only one aspect of being a successful farmer. Knowledge of regulations, finances, and marketing are just a few of the areas that are required to ensure that farmers are viable. We respectfully request that the **mentorship include other areas of training, so the intern or apprentice will be provided a well-rounded experience of what it takes to be a successful farmer in Hawaii.**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this important matter.

**SB-3030**

Submitted on: 1/30/2018 12:53:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2018 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David S. Case		Support	Yes

Comments:

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB3030 FARMER APPRENTICE MENTORING  
("FAM") PROGRAM BEFORE SENATE AEN

JANUARY 31, 2018, 1:30PM

Aloha Chairman Gabbard and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment. The Hawaii Farmers Union United ("HFUU") appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of SB2573 to fund a pilot project to recycle local agricultural nutrients.

The Hawaii Farmers Union United ("HFUU") in cooperation with its nonprofit foundation, Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation ("HFUF") has managed the Farmers Apprentice Monitoring ("FAM Program") for the last two years in Maui County. The FAM Program grew out of HFUU's Haleakala Chapter and is now supported by grants from Maui County and two other private foundations. SB3030 would create a similar program within the Department of Agriculture that would enable the State of Hawaii to extend the now tested and successful FAM curriculum and training methods to other islands in the State of Hawaii.

I would be glad to provide the Committee with the latest review and assessment of the FAM Program in support of SB3030, but the content exceeds the capacity of the Legislative electronic testimony program.

HAWAII FARMERS UNION UNITED



Vincent Mina, President

**SB-3030**

Submitted on: 1/26/2018 12:14:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2018 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John R. Gordines	Hawaii Floriculture & Nursery Ass.	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-3030**

Submitted on: 1/30/2018 8:10:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2018 1:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leimomi Khan	DPH Hawaiian Affairs Caucus	Support	No

Comments:

The Hawaiian Affairs Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii supports SB 3030 that would establish a farmer apprentice mentoring program to teach and train farmers to utilize a whole farm system approach to agriculture and to make an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture for the farmer apprentice mentoring program.

The Democratic Party of Hawaii has long held the value that our party and our government shall strive to preserve and strengthen the future of agriculture in Hawaii, and the growth of Native Hawaiian farming, agricultural and healing practices. In this regard, we recognize the importance of local farming to support, protect, expand and improve upon agriculture, thereby lessening the percentage of food imported into Hawaii. We support the promotion of locally grown agricultural items by strongly supporting small farms and farmers.

This measure recognizes the importance of farming and that a whole farm system approach to Hawaii that pays close attention to soil health, specifically increasing mineral availability and improving soil structure, water-holding capacity, crop health, and food nutrition can improve food security and benefit the local economy. Teaching a new generation of farmers to use this whole farm system will create an alternative method of farming that may appeal to many young farmers across the State.

We recognize the importance of farming to support, protect, expand and improve upon agriculture, thereby lessening the percentage of food imported into Hawaii. We support the promotion of locally grown agricultural items by strongly supporting small farms and farmers.

Please adopt this measure as a means to improve food security and self-sufficiency in Hawaii and to support the growth of farmers in Hawaii.