

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

DOUGLAS S. CHIN
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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 AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT AND
LABOR**

**MARCH 28, 2018
1:15 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 145
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, IN COLLABORATION WITH
THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, TO CONVENE AN
AGRICULTURAL LABOR TASK FORCE**

Chairperson Gabbard, Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 145 that requests the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to convene an Agricultural Labor Task Force of no less than 20 members. The Department of Agriculture offers comments

The resolution convenes an Agricultural Labor Task Force, however it does not define the purpose and intent of the group. Data and information are needed to establish a basis for developing and evaluating options to improve upon the current agricultural labor situation. For instance, it may be useful to identify the current labor needs of each of the sectors comprising Hawaii's agricultural industry and the minimum skills and other attributes desired by employers in each sector. Further, information on farm employees and their wage level by sector may help other housing-focused agencies and interests in determining wage-appropriate housing options.

The Department would like to note that there are bills currently moving through the Legislature to support the Agricultural Workforce Development Pipeline Initiative.



Both HB 2115 and SB 2563 provide the necessary resources to support the development of an agricultural workforce statewide.

The Department is concerned about the size of the Task Force, the staffing it will require, and the reallocation of resources that are already fully committed to existing activities and to the various legislative initiatives this session. The Department recommends pursuing a bill next session that dedicates resources to this important issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS S. CHIN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



LEONARD HOSHIGO
DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

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March 28, 2018

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

The Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair;
The Honorable J. Kalani English, Vice Chair; and
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor

Date: Wednesday, March 28, 2018
Time: 1:15 pm
Place: Conference Room 224, State Capitol

From: Leonard Hoshijo, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Re: SCR No. 145 Requesting the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to Convene an Agricultural Task Force.

SCR145 urges the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to convene an agricultural task force to address a labor shortage in the coffee industry.

The Department does not support the measure as written, as it is unclear what is being asked of the Department of Agriculture and the Department Labor and Industrial Relations in the convening of an agricultural task force.

DLIR notes that workforce development is largely federally funded, therefore, any responsibilities given to the Department through the resolution would require an appropriation.

DLIR also notes that this measure only addresses one subsector within the agricultural sector. The Department currently is involved in two, related initiatives that

could address workforce needs in the coffee subsector. Act 229 (SLH, 2016, §371-21) created the Agricultural Workforce Development Pipeline Initiative, which seeks to expand the pipeline of agricultural workers to address pending shortages in Hawaii's agricultural workforce. Two appropriation measures (HB2115, SB2563) are moving through the legislative process to continue funding for this initiative.

DLIR's Hawaii Agriculture Workforce Advisory Board provides grants to subsectors to assist with workforce needs. The coffee subsector may develop grant proposals to present to the Board to help the address workforce shortages in the industry.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
And

Senate Committee on Labor
Wednesday, March 28, 2018 at 1:15 p.m.

By

Nicholas Comerford

Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno

Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Vice Chancellor for Research

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SCR 145 – REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, IN
COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS, TO CONVENE AN AGRICULTURE LABOR TASK FORCE

Chairs Gabbard and Tokuda, Vice Chairs Riviere and English, and members of the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Committee on Labor:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SCR 145.

For commercial agriculture to be successful in Hawai'i, sufficient farm labor and
affordable housing for farm workers, are two of the main issues that will need creative
solutions. In fact, sufficient farm labor is an issue facing agriculture nationally, not just in
Hawai'i. Aspects of the problem include labor that is paid a viable living wage,
availability of housing, skills to do the job, and a dependable farm labor force.

Since the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources is requested within the
resolution to be a member of the task force, we feel that the college has people well-
qualified in the area of Human Resources to provide meaningful participation.

The college can, and is willing, to participate as resources allow.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 145.



PO Box 168, Kealahou, HI 96750
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HAWAII STATE SENATE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT & LABOR

Wednesday, March 28, 2018
1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 224

RE: Testimony in Support of SCR 145

Aloha Chairs Tokuda & Gabbard, Vice Chairs English & Riviere and members of the Committees,

I am Chris Manfredi, President of Hawaii Coffee Association.

The Hawaiian coffee industry is conservatively ranked by USDA as Hawaii's second highest-value crop (\$48.8MM; 2016). The Hawaii Coffee Association's (HCA) mission is to represent all sectors of the Hawaiian coffee industry, including growers, millers, wholesalers, roasters and retailers located throughout the State of Hawaii. The HCA's primary objective is to increase awareness and consumption of Hawaiian coffees. A major component of HCA's work is the continuing education of members and consumers.

The HCA STRONGLY supports SCR 145

The coffee industry is currently experiencing a significant labor crisis. The need for harvest labor is immediate. Some farms have been experienced crop losses on the magnitude of 30%.

Fierce competition for labor drives up the cost of production, pushing prices higher, which in turn encourages crop thefts. Sadly these higher prices are driven by cost, which do not benefit the grower.

It's a vicious cycle. A farmer pours all his resources into producing a crop. Come harvest time, he or she can't get enough workers to pick the fruit. Bidding wars among neighbors are common, driving up costs, pinching cash flow, and squeezing the margins for the grower.

If a crop goes unharvested, berries remain in the field, serving as a reservoir for Coffee Berry Borer. The infested cherries host dormant insects in the off season. These beetles emerge and infest the subsequent crop, leading to further cost increases, reduced yields and thinner margins for growers. Further, higher infestation levels hurt the overall quality of Hawaiian coffee. This can (and does) lead to price reductions that threaten the health of the industry.

The problem is not unique to the coffee industry. At the 2017 Ag Leadership Conference I moderated panel of local, state and federal lawmakers, various agencies and key industry stakeholders.

Included on that panel were the following:

- Hawaii Department of Agriculture
- Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
- US Department of Labor
- Senator Gabbard
- Senate President Kouchi
- Kirsten Turner; representing Rep. Tulsi Gabbard
- Tim Richards as Hawaii County Council member
- Greenwell Farms
- Kauai Coffee
- Hawaii Coffee Association
- Hawaii Macadamia Association
- Hawaii Farm Bureau
- Hawaii Farmers Union United
- Maui Gold Pineapple
- A labor law consultant and attorney

Since, members of the audience and others have expressed a strong interest in solving this long-standing issue, including representatives of other commodity groups, boards, agencies, educators and Chambers of Commerce.

In our short time together we identified two immediate needs:

1. Expanding the labor pool
2. Improving availability of affordable housing for laborers

We also identified three important demographic groups that could benefit while helping to alleviate the immediate pressure on agriculture:

1. The homeless population
2. At-risk veterans
3. Transitioning prison inmates

This resolution was borne out of the aforementioned initiative, thereby providing a forum within which solutions can be found. It will take a strong commitment from the public and private sectors to solve this long-standing issue.

Thank you for your support of SCR 145 and for giving us this opportunity.

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/26/2018 9:53:12 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dale Sandlin	Testifying for Hawaii Cattlemens Council	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/27/2018 1:02:45 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John C. Cross	Testifying for Kau Valley Farms	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/27/2018 1:16:45 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Bateman	Testifying for Heavenly Hawaiian Farms and Hawaii Coffee Association	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SCR 145. This is a very significant resolution potentially benefiting the coffee industry.

Coffee farming is a laborious and financially risky enterprise at best. Production can vary significantly from year to year. The greatest single item cost for farmers is labor. We have experienced a shortage in all facets of farming. And, the costs of labor continue to spiral upwards out of control. Labor costs must be stabilized quickly. SCR 145 is a major step in the right direction. Coffee farmers need your help now!

I strongly support SCR 145, and request that you approve it unanimously and pass it out of committee. Your coffee farming constituents will greatly appreciate this positive step.

Mahalo nui,

Dave Bateman, Director, Hawaii Coffee Association

Heavenly Hawaiian Farms

78-1136 Bishop Road,

Holualoa, HI 96725



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March 28, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR

TESTIMONY ON SCR 145

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, IN COLLABORATION WITH
THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, TO CONVENE AN
AGRICULTURE LABOR TASK FORCE.

Room 224
1:15 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Riviere, Vice Chair English, and
Members of the Committees:

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.

Hawaii Farm Bureau **supports SCR145**, which requests the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to convene an agriculture labor task force.

Hawaii's farmers find it difficult to retain employees, especially during harvesting seasons. To maintain and expand production levels, it's clear that we need to explore solutions for employment. This is critical to achieving Hawaii's goal of increased self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Through this taskforce we hope to find solutions by exploring the following:

1. Expanding the labor pool
2. Improving availability of affordable housing for laborers

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

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/27/2018 2:15:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
james Kimo Falconer	Testifying for MauiGrown Coffee, Inc	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/27/2018 6:34:25 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Daniel Dinell	Testifying for Hawaii Coffee Company	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/25/2018 6:29:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
J Ashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/27/2018 2:19:05 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

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

To the Honorable Jill N. Tokuda, Chair; the Honorable J. Kalani English, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee on Labor:

Good morning. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **SCR145** relating to the Agriculture Labor Task Force; Department of Agriculture; and the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

The OCC on Legislative Priorities is in favor of **SCR145** and supports its passage. **SCR145** is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it requests that the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations convene an agriculture labor task force to: (1) expand the labor pool, and (2) improve the availability of affordable housing for laborers from the homeless population and at risk veterans, two demographic groups that could benefit from employment while helping to alleviate the immediate pressure on agriculture.

The Platform of the DPH provides that "Agriculture 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. We encourage the responsible development of ocean resources in order to achieve sustainability of our marine resources, and ensure and improve the health of our reef and marine life."

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 DPH, P.2, Line 76-80, 97-99 (2016)).

"Housing is a basic human need and we believe that adequate, accessible, affordable, and safe housing should be available to all residents of Hawai'i. Affordable housing that is fair in proportion to individual income is the basis of prosperity for our citizens and stability in our economy. Recent and past real estate bubbles have fueled disproportionate rent increases, a key contributor to homelessness. Therefore, we support efforts to promote truly affordable housing for all citizens who rent." (Platform of DPH, P.7, Line 340-344 (2016)).

We believe in the concept of "Housing First" to develop affordable, stable housing and support services to break the cycle of homelessness for people with the fewest housing options.

We support dedicated social services and housing opportunities for Hawaii's homeless population, to get them off the streets and reintegrated into society, with specific devoted services for disenfranchised groups including but not limited to the Hawaiian community, aged-out foster kids, youth, returning veterans, the aged, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender homeless. (Platform of DPH, P.7, Line 354-358(2016)).

Given that **SCR145** requests that the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations convene an agriculture labor task force to: (1) expand the labor pool, and (2) improve the availability of affordable housing for laborers from the homeless population and at risk veterans, two demographic groups that could benefit from employment while helping to alleviate the immediate pressure on agriculture, it is the position of the OCC on Legislative Priorities to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC on Legislative Priorities

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

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/27/2018 6:31:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lorie Obra	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-145

Submitted on: 3/27/2018 6:45:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/28/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Donna Woolley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a farmer it is extremely difficult to bring our crop in on time without adequate help. We are coffee farmers and spend most of our profits on raising the finest coffee we can and not to have pickers to help bring it in creates a loss of income. Housing is critical as pickers don't want to work unless you can provide housing.