

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

GLENN K. MURANAKA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**APRIL 5, 2019
10:05 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 463 HD1 SD1
RELATING TO FOOD SAFETY**

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 463 HD1 SD1 which proposes to require the department to partner with the agricultural community to establish a food safety certification training program to assist small and medium sized farms to be certified by the USDA Good Agricultural Practices certification program. The Department supports the intent of this measure provided it does not impact the Department's priorities listed in the Executive Budget.

The Department currently works in partnership with the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH-CTAHR), who performs coaching and training with farmers to comply with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Produce Safety Rule and the USDA Good Agricultural Practices requirements. Under a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, the Department conducts U.S. Department of Agriculture's Good Agricultural Practices audits at the request of farm businesses and restricts auditors from performing outreach and coaching activity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Friday, April 5, 2019 — 10:05 a.m. — Room 211

Ulupono Initiative Supports HB 463 HD 1 SD 1, Relating to Food Safety

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Murray Clay and I am Managing Partner of Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and better manage waste and fresh water resources. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

Ulupono supports HB 463 HD 1 SD 1, which provides funding for the Department of Agriculture to partner with the agricultural community to establish a food safety certification program for obtaining Good Agricultural Practices certification, because it aligns with our goal to increase local food production.

One of the greatest challenges facing agricultural enterprises over the next few years is getting into compliance with new federal food safety regulations. These new rules are expected to protect public health by providing more information about food production. However, the new regulations are expected to be significantly more strict, which requires more time and cost for compliance. It is a challenge for our farmers and ranchers to navigate the nuances of the law, track new data requirements, and implement best practices for food safety. Without support, farmers and ranchers, particularly smaller scale operations, may be in violation of the law or be forced to shut down, which will jeopardize the future of local agriculture in Hawai'i.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become increasingly complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

We believe that through collaboration, we can help produce more local food and support an economically robust homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Murray Clay
Managing Partner

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Committee ON WAYS AND MEANS

Chelsie Alkire
Student at University of Hawai`i at Manoa

Thursday, April 04, 2019

Support for HB463 HD1 SD1, Relating to Food Safety

Aloha Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Keith-Agaran, and other committee members,

My name is Chelsie, and I am currently a graduate student at the University of Hawai`i at Manoa (UHM). I am writing you today in support for HB463 HD1 SD1, relating to food safety. I appreciate that this bill intends to allow the Department of Agriculture to partner with members of the agricultural community in order to develop a food safety certification training program for small and medium sized farms. Living in Hawaii, there's always talk about sustainability. One of the main ways that I hear about how to remain sustainable is to support local farmers and buy local, whether that's fresh produce or package items made from locally grown produce.

However, there's always the potential issue of foodborne illness. One of the more recent cases is the California lettuce recall that occurred back in Dec 2018. Not only is there the danger of actually contracting the disease associated with the recall, it sends the public into a state of panic that can accelerate the spread of misinformation. For example, I remember seeing a FaceBook post from an old coworker around the time when rat lungworm disease first grabbed the media's attention in 2018, stating something along the lines of: "Stop buying local produce! We are all at risk of rat lungworm disease!" It was disheartening to see that, because although she had her and the community's safety in mind, it wasn't a very sustainable practice!

I appreciate that this bill will make it easier for local farmers to comply and remain compliant with the FDA Food Safety and Modernization Act. By educating local farms on the most updated and modern food safety practices, we are taking a step forward in ensuring that chances are foodborne illnesses are minimized during the beginning stages of food production.

Thank you so much for all the hard work you guys are doing daily for all us constituents! Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB463 HD1 SD1.

Mahalo,
Chelsie



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Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

LATE

TO:

Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: April 5, 2019
TIME: 10:05am
PLACE: Conference Room 211

RE: HB463 HD1 SD1 Relating to Food Safety

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

Local agriculture is important to HFIA. Small farms in Hawaii face many challenges, including the financial and administrative burden of meeting state and federal regulations. Providing Hawaii farms with the support they need to comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Good Agricultural Practices Certification will help to get more local Hawaii produce into the hands of Hawaii consumers. Many of our member retailers require the farms they buy from to have USDA GAP Certification because it confirms that a farm is committed to the highest standard of produce safety and freshness. GAP Certification is also an important first step towards full compliance with the Food Service Modernization Act (FSMA). This bill will help make Hawaii farms and Hawaii agriculture more viable, and help to decrease our reliance on imported food. We encourage you to vote yes on this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LATE

Date: April 5, 2019

To: SENATE COMMITTEES ON WAYS & MEANS

Emily Martinez

Student at Kapiolani Community College

Re: Strong Support for HB 463

Hearing: Room 211, April 5, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong SUPPORT of HB 463 relating to food safety which allows the Department of Agriculture to partner with the Hawaii agricultural community to establish a food safety certification training program to assist small to medium-sized farms to assist the United States Department of Agriculture Good Agricultural Practices Certification Program.

I strongly support the bill HB 463, relating to food safety because I truly believe foodborne illnesses is a very serious topic that needs to be addressed. There have been numerous cases in the past where people have been affected by the improperly handled products. However, with the proper training and certification from farmers, they can reduce the risk of food hazards such as disease-causing microorganisms, toxins, and chemical contaminants and assure that people are consuming safe and reliable products. By passing this bill will not only reduce the risks of foodborne illnesses but it will also help local agricultural farmers to produce fresh, local foods and reduce imported products from out of state, which will maintain sustainability in Hawaii from people buying and supporting the local farmers with their fresh produces. This will also promote a healthy lifestyle to the citizens in Hawaii.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to support this bill,

Emily Martinez, 18

Kapiolani Community College

Honolulu