

SB 1544

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Acting Chairperson
Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

FEBRUARY 4, 2019
1:20 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

SENATE BILL NO. 1544
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 1544, which encourages the development and implementation of a “whole farm system approach” through a farm mentoring program to be established within the Department of Agriculture. There is an appropriation. The Department of Agriculture supports the intent of this measure provided it does not impact the Department’s priorities listed 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 and the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



SB-1544

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 5:51:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
William W. Steiner	Testifying for Pacific Agricultural Land Management Systems	Support	No

Comments:

As CEO of Pacific Agricultural Land Management Systems and cofounder and General Manager of Hawaii Oil Seed Producers (HOSPRO) LLC we support this bill because a developing oil palm industry in Hawaii will need to train individuals to serve as mill operators, nursery operators, production personnel and growers to produce vegetable oil for production of biofuel, plastics, cosmetics, animal feed and pharmaceuticals for the people of Hawaii.

signed: Dr. William W.M. Steiner



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 4, 2019

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 1544
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 224
1:20 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director 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 interest of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports the intent of SB 1544, which establishes 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 KTA, Safeway, Times, Costco, restaurants, and hotels 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 the opportunity to testify on this measure.



O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities (OCCLP)

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 4, 2019

TIME: 1:20 p.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 224, State Capitol

RE: SB 1544 Relating to the Agriculture

Aloha mai kakou Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

The O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities (OCCLP) of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i (DPH) hereby submits its testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 1544 relating to the Agriculture.**

SB 1544 provides that the department of agriculture shall establish a farmer apprentice mentoring program to teach farmers about methods to improve soil health by using whole farm systems that: (1) practice sustainable agriculture as defined by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Public Law 101-624, title XVI, subtitle A, section 1603 (codified as 7 United States Code section 3103); and (2) recycle locally available organic, diverse plant and animal agricultural nutrients, enhanced by fermentation and other ecological processes such as Korean natural farming as defined by the University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources.

To support the development of new generations of farmers, DPH supports increased availability of training in agriculture and related business requirements at centers of education around the state. DPH supports making available incentives and low-cost loans to enable new farmers to establish farming operations. *Democratic Party of Hawai`i Platform (2018), p. 9, In. 49-51.*

For the foregoing reasons, i.e., to support increased availability of training in agriculture and related business requirements at centers of education around the state, OCCLP supports SB 1544 and urges its passage out of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment.

Mahalo nui loa

Me ka `oia`i`o

/s/ *Melodie Aduja*

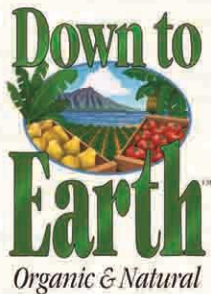
Melodie Aduja

Chair, O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of
Hawai`i

Ph. (808) 258-8889

Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com

Love Life!



SB 1544 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE
Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Environment
February 4, 2019, 1:20pm State Capitol

Aloha Sen. Mike Gabbard, Chair, Sen. Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair, and
Committee Members,

Down to Earth Organic and Natural testifies in support of SB 1544.

Down to Earth Organic and Natural has six locations on Oahu and Maui. Since we
opened in 1977, we have supported healthy lifestyles and preservation of the
environment by selling local, fresh, organic and natural products, and by promoting a
vegetarian lifestyle.

We are strongly in support of SB 1544 and the establishment of a strong farmer
apprentice mentorship program to encourage, inspire, and produce a new
generation of farmers who are dedicated to sustainable, regenerative methods. A
strong whole farm system apprenticeship and mentoring program will help ensure
food security, economic opportunity, and sustainability of our land.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.

Alison Riggs
Public Policy & Government Relations Manager
Down to Earth

2525 S. King St., Suite 309
Honolulu, HI 96826

Phone (808) 824-3240
Fax (808) 951-8283
E-mail: alison.riggs@downtoearth.org

Corporate Office
P.O. Box 1166
Kailua, HI 96734
Phone: (808) 484-5890
Fax: (808) 484-5896
corporate@downtoearth.org

Oahu Locations

Honolulu
2525 South King Street
Honolulu, HI 96826
Phone: (808) 947-7678
Fax: (808) 943-8491
honolulu@downtoearth.org

Kailua
201 Hamakua Drive
Kailua, HI 96734
Phone: (808) 262-3838
Fax: (808) 263-3788
kailua@downtoearth.org

Pearlridge
98-211 Pali Momi Street
Suite 950
Aiea, Hawaii 96701
Phone: (808) 488-1375
Fax: (808) 488-4549
pearlridge@downtoearth.org

Kapolei
4460 Kapolei Parkway
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707
Phone: (808) 675-2300
Fax: (808) 675-2323
kapolei@downtoearth.org

Kakaako
500 Keawe St.
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 465-2512
Fax: (808) 465-2305
kakaako@downtoearth.org

Maui Location

Kahului
305 Dairy Road
Kahului, HI 96732
Phone: (808) 877-2661
Fax: (808) 877-7548
kahului@downtoearth.org

www.downtoearth.org

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:45:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Helmut Klauer	Testifying for A'a Li'i Farm	Support	No

Comments:

LATE



P.O. Box 99
Wailuku, HI 96793-0099
(808) 800-3974

Vincent Mina
President

Kyle Studer
Vice President &
Ka'u Chapter Pres.

David Case
Secretary

Briana Rodrique
Treasurer

Ray Maki
Kaua'i

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

James McCay
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Brynn Foster
North Shore, O'ahu

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Bobby Pahia
Kahalawai, Maui

John Dobovan
Haleakala, Maui

Matthew VanPaepeghem
Hana, Maui

Dash Kuhr
Kohala, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawai'i

Steve Lund
Puna, Hawai'i

Yuri Zhuraw
East Hawai'i

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 1544 (FARMER APPRENTICE MENTORING)
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2019 AT 1:20PM

Aloha Chairman Gabbard and Members of the AEN Committee,

Hawai'i Farmers Union United (HFUU) strongly supports SB1544 Relating to Agriculture and establishes appropriations for a Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program to teach and train farmers to utilize a whole farm system approach to agriculture.

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU), a statewide organization, is a nonprofit corporation formed under Hawai'i law. It advocates for the sovereign right of farmers to create and sustain vibrant and prosperous agricultural communities for the benefit of all Hawai'i through cooperation, education and legislation. Since 2010, the HFUU has acted on behalf of local farmers, gardeners, parents and island citizens working to build a regenerative agri-food system through 13 chapters in all Hawai'i's counties. HFUU became a chartered member of the National Farmers Union (NFU) in 2017 and currently represents 1,500 members statewide. The national organization has designated Hawaii as the second fastest growing state NFU chapter in the country.

Growing new farmers has been a key facet of the HFUU statewide strategic plan. Our planning goals are simultaneously aligned with the shared vision of increased food security and agricultural self-sufficiency for all counties and the State of Hawaii. The Farm Apprentice Mentoring (FAM) program to train beginning farmers was first piloted 2015-2016 in Maui and responds to three major priorities for the State's food security needs including growing more farmers, increasing the supply of Hawaii's skilled agricultural workforce and contributing to increased local food production on small family farms through a hands-on farm immersion component.

Please don't hesitate to contact me for questions or concern in regards to this testimony.

HAWAII FARMERS UNION UNITED

Vincent Mina, President

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:40:51 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Autumn Ness	Testifying for Hawai'i Center for Food Safety	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 1:29:57 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dashiell Kuhr	Testifying for Hawaii Institute of Pacific Agriculture	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

The Hawaii Institute of Pacific Agriculture strongly supports SB1544 legislation.

Mahalo

Dashiell

Kuhr

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:59:39 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Dobovan	Testifying for Kulahaven Farms LLC	Support	No

Comments:

As an ageing farmer I am keenly aware of the need for younger farmers to replace me. We cannot grow food for our population without farmers and this bill is vital in that effort and for the survival of our society. I urge you to give it your support. We will support you in turn with nutritious food and our votes.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Monday, February 4, 2019 at 1:20 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

SB 1544 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 1544 relating to agriculture with the purpose of promoting whole farm systems and the education of farmers in those systems. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) supports with amendment the intent of this bill and we respectfully provide the following information to substantiate our position.

The economic and sustainable practice of agriculture encompasses a number of central concepts that can be found in any sustainable farm system. These include: appropriate timing of farming methods and applications, conservation tillage, cover cropping, crop rotation, and appropriate scale of operation.

Agriculture has decades of experience in defining sustainable agriculture. The practices above are designed to overcome the mistakes made in the past. While the Green Revolution was, indeed, a revolution that brought us the ability to produce more food and feed the U.S. population at low cost compared to the rest of the world; it also brought us increased soil erosion and adverse environmental effects.

The above-mentioned practices have another thing in common. They are well-researched and supported through decades of experimentation. This bill does the following:

1. It gives the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture the responsibility of establishing a farmer apprentice mentoring program that will teach farmers how to improve soil health. CTAHR strongly supports this intention. Soil health is the key to

sustainable farming, soil organic matter is the key to soil health. The CTAHR GoFarm program is one example of such a program working state-wide that the department may want to look at as a model.

2. It requires the program to recycle locally available organic, diverse plant and animal agricultural nutrients, etc. The well-defined agricultural practices mentioned above meet these needs when done properly. Cover crops use plant and nutrient sources to soil build organic matter. Including livestock in the cropping rotation returns as much as 70% of the nutrients that livestock eat to the soil in an available form for the next crop. Manures can be worked into the soil if done properly. There is a wealth of data on organic and conventional farming systems that have passed the test of critical evaluation over time; and should be part of a well-designed training program.

CTAHR's criticism of this bill is that CTAHR does not support the teaching of Korean Natural Farming for crop production as a well-accepted farming practice, at this time. The bill states that CTAHR would define that system. The college will define it as not an approved agricultural system to be used in teaching future farmers at this time. We clarify the previous statement using "at this time". This system is poorly researched and poorly documented. CTAHR does not approve of teaching methods that are hearsay or based on personal testimonies. At that time, when this system passes the test of critical evaluation, CTAHR believes that this could be incorporated into appropriate training programs.

We support the intent of this bill and, if Korean Natural Farming is dropped from it as a responsibility of CTAHR, we offer strong support.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 1:54:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Genevieve N Neumann	Testifying for Lokoea Farms	Support	No

Comments:

SB-1544

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 3:36:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John R. Gordines	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 9:09:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keith Ranney	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:43:53 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kenneth Whitehead	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB1544

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:44:59 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Isabelle Olivit	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:45:55 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David S. Case	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 1544 (FARMER APPRENTICE MENTORING) BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Aloha Chairman Gabbard and Members of the AEN Committee

This legislation would expand a successful, pilot program the Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) started on Maui in 2015. HFUU is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing over 1,500 family farmers and their supporters organized as 13 Chapters in the four Hawai'i Counties. HFUU's Haleakala Chapter started the Farmer Apprentice Mentoring (FAM) program in 2015-2016 with a grant from Maui County. The program is now funded with several grants through HFUU's affiliated 501(c)(3), Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation (HFUF). Through HFUF, the FAM program has mentored and graduated 38 apprentice farmers on Maui and is training another 20 or more in 2019.

As explained in this legislation, the FAM program immerses beginning farmers in a "whole farm system" approach to agriculture under the guidance of experienced farmer mentors. Treating farming as a "whole farm system" pays close attention to soil health, specifically increasing beneficial fungal and micro microbial activity in the soil to improve plant mineral availability. It also promotes cover cropping and composting to improve soil water-holding capacity, lower water usage and decrease weed pressure. When combined as a whole system, these practices also reduce reliance on imported chemical soil amendments and pesticides, which means reduced costs to family farmers and increased, potential profit.

SB1544 also notes that Hawai'i currently imports about 85% of its food at an annual cost of over \$3 billion or \$7,000 per household. Increasing the number of farmers who grow food is a key component of the long-term solution to the Hawai'i local food production deficit. The FAM program responds to three major priorities for remediating this deficit, including: (1) growing more farmers, (2) increasing the supply of Hawai'i's skilled agricultural workforce and (3) contributing to increased local food production on small family farms through immersion in hands-on, farm management. HFUUnow seeks to expand this successful, locally funded, pilot program as an expanded, statewide program administered with more reliable funding through the Department of Agriculture.

Very Truly Yours,

David S. Case

(808) 494-9588

casedavids@gmail.com

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:46:20 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Crawford	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this program, the folks I know who have participate in the FAM program from East Maui in past years have expressed how valuable they found it as they develop their careers in agriculture. As we seek to grow more food on the islands, we first need to grow more farmers! The FAM program is a successful model on Maui that should be expanded to all islands.

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:50:22 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christy Stesky	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 11:52:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Suzanne Fields	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB1544. If Hawaii is ever to achieve it's goal of sustainability, we need more farmers. Much like we have set goals for energy independence, we need to establish goals for agriculture independence; sustainably growing our own food to flip the current trend of 85% of our food being imported. We need to achieve 100% of our food grown locally and to do that WE need to grow farmers LOCALLY! The FAM program will help us on that path.

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 12:05:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maureen Datta	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 12:06:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda Hastings	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 12:25:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Havilah Mills	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 12:47:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Raphiell Nolin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 12:49:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brynn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 1:40:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Egusa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

85% of the food we eat in Hawaii is shipped in. What happens if shipping to Hawaii stops, long term? Thousands of people will starve to death. Many will also die of thirst (no fuel for elec generators, thus no water from tap). This is unacceptable and irresponsible. We desperately need food security. We must grow enough food in Hawaii to feed the people in an emergency.

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 1:40:48 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steven Forman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 1:53:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

LATE

SB-1544

Submitted on: 2/4/2019 2:48:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John NAYLOR	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

We need young up & coming farmers in order to reach goals including Hawaii grown foos security!

Seems like a no brainer!