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Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**MARCH 29, 2019  
2:00 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 308**

**SENATE BILL NO. 491 SD2 HD1  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on Senate Bill 491 SD2 HD1. This bill appropriates funds for operating expenses of the Department of Agriculture. The Department supports this bill and offers comments.

The budget items contained in the bill represent the Department's needs that are above the current base budget. These additions would address matters such as supplementing the agricultural loan revolving fund with general funds, providing funds for food safety grants, and providing funds for agricultural surveys.

In addition to these items, the Department humbly requests the restoration of the nine (9) positions on the attached list that were deleted in HB2 HD1 SD1 CD1. The Department is actively pursuing each position identified in the attached list in an effort to fill important roles for programs that will support the agricultural industry moving forward. Each position is listed by Program ID, position title, and position number

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



## Department of Agriculture Request to Add Positions that were Deleted in HB 2 HD1 SD1 CD1

### **PROGRAM ID: AGR192 - General Administration for Agriculture**

#### **Administrative Services Officer – Position No. 4657**

***This position is currently filled.***

The Administrative Services Officer (ASO) is responsible for the department's Administrative Services Office which includes: the Fiscal Office, Human Resources Office, Budgeting Function, IT Services Office, Property Management/Risk Management/Inventory/Office Services and neighbor island administrative services.

These administrative staff services are essential in allowing the various department divisions to function in a structured, organized, efficient and lawful manner by establishing applicable policies, procedures and guidelines to properly operate within all State and Federal laws. The position maintains control and guides administrators regarding these various functions through training, divisional meetings, ongoing one-on-one interactions, reviews of submittals and directives. The deletion of the ASO will result in the Administrative Staff services offices to operate without guidance, direction and management, that may severely hinder the overall operations of the department.

### **PROGRAM ID: AGR151 – Quality and Price Assurance**

#### **Commodities Program Branch Manager - Position no. 4693**

***Recruitment is currently being conducted by DHRD for solicitation of applicants. Internal vacancy announcement recruitment completed. Position is expected to be filled in FY-19.***

This supervisory position coordinates personnel within the branch to conduct statewide functions which certify commodity condition and grade standards; monitor labeling and advertising requirements; certify import and export requirements; issue licenses to dealers of farm products; enforce rules and regulations; conduct good agricultural practices audits; and work closely with various government and private sector entities. In addition to overseeing the functionality of the branch, the manager must develop, maintain, and evaluate program capabilities and potential to ascertain the optimum direction for quality assurance activities. The manager integrates the expertise and resourcefulness of staff to minimize overlap or duplication of branch services. The manager must also review and develop amendments to the laws and rules which governs the function of the branch and provides interpretation of policies and procedures for the staff and client groups.

This position became vacant in September 2017 and was temporarily filled until October 2018. Recruitment was conducted in 2018 and resulted in unfavorable results during the interview. We will continue to work to fill this position as soon as we can at it serves a high priority.

### **Agricultural Commodities Marketing Specialist V - Position No. 40690**

***Recruitment by internal vacancy announcement is completed, and the interview is scheduled for April 3, 2019 and the position is expected to be filled in FY-19.***

This position is the Hawaii District Supervisor who is responsible for the coordination, administration and supervision of all Commodities Branch programs and activities in the Hawaii district, and also serves as the subject matter specialist in charge of the Coffee Unit, with statewide functional responsibilities.

This position is responsible for the coordination of all certification, regulatory, grading, licensing, registration, investigative and public service activities in the Hawaii district and responsible in maintaining proper working relations with the client group in the district.

As the Coffee Specialist, this position is critical in developing training materials and instruction, standard operational procedural handbooks and instructions in the subject matter and provides statewide coordination, direction and technical guidance for the subject matter area to assure conformity throughout the State.

The coffee industry has expressed interest in reinstating mandatory certification of Hawaii-grown green coffee. This will involve the inspection and certification of all Hawaii-grown green coffee in the state, with specific allowed exemptions to small producers. Without this position, the department will not be able to fulfill this service to the coffee industry and cause subsequent delay in certification and increased turnaround time. for up to 3 to 4 weeks. This will cause a major hardship to the coffee industry to export their coffee, with limited storage capacity, and limited cash flow needed to pay their coffee producers in a timely manner.

### **Agricultural Commodities Marketing Specialist III, position no. 4863**

***Recruitment process to proceed in Fourth Quarter FY 2019.***

This position is the subject matter specialist in charge of the Eggs and Feed Unit, and has a distinct statewide functional responsibilities directly related to the attainment of branch program objectives, which include: 1) protecting consumers, producers and distributors against mislabeled products and fraudulent practices; 2) providing inspection and certifications service to promote orderly marketing and facilitate transactions between buyers and sellers; 3) encourage and assist the establishment and development of markets for Hawaiian agricultural products by promoting better preparation, grading and handling of commodities for market; and 4) protecting the agricultural industries and consumers of its products from adulterated animal feed.

This position plans, coordinates and implements the federal certification of shell eggs under a cooperative agreement with the USDA and establishes procedures for issuance of federal certificates, training and licensing of graders and conducts investigation; and plans, develops, coordinates and supervises the enforcement of the Hawaii Revised Statutes and Hawaii Administrative Rules pertaining to shell eggs and animal feed.

With the establishment of a new egg farm, which is expected to open this year with 1,000,000 laying hens, and the establishment of a new feed mill, this position is critically needed to oversee the certification and inspection activities needed to support the industry.

**Agricultural Commodities Marketing Specialist V, pseudo position no. 91306A**

**Establishing the position number for recruitment.**

This position was created in preparation of performing on-farm Food Safety Modernization Act audits (FSMA). The department has entered into an agreement with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to conduct outreach, training and on-farm readiness reviews in preparation for FSMA inspections. The agreement also authorizes the Department to conduct the FSMA inspections on behalf of the FDA. The farmers have stated that they would prefer having the Department conduct the FSMA inspections instead of the FDA. Inspections of "big" farms, those with income greater than \$500,000 are subject to FSMA inspections, will commence effective April 2, 2019. The FDA has indicated that they will conduct the FSMA inspections until such time the Department is prepared to perform these inspections. This position will support these efforts and directly meet the inspection requests of local farmers and ranchers.

Food safety is critical to assure the consuming public the production of safe food. This position is needed in order for the department to fulfill this obligation to assure that the farmers produce safe food for the consuming public.

**PROGRAM ID: AGR812 – Measurement Standards**

**Measurement Standards Program Manager, Position No. 122022**

***This position is under active recruitment. The department completed the internal vacancy announcement (IVA) and DHRD is soliciting applicants. Position is expected to be filled in FY-19.***

The primary purpose of this position is to plan, organize, direct, coordinate and administer the State's Measurement Standards program. The statewide activities of the branch are conducted through the Standards & Technical Services Section and the Standards and Trade Practices Enforcement Section

This supervisory position coordinates personnel within the branch to conduct statewide functions. This position develops methods to strengthen program direction and

progress; revises program activities to meet changing economic conditions and technological advancements.

**Measurement Standards Inspector V (stated as pseudo no. 91302A, 91303A and 91304A in HB2 HD1 SD1 CD1; however, positions numbers have been established as 122945, 122946, and 122947)**

***Position numbers have been established and are proceeding to internal vacancy announcement (IVA) recruitment followed by DHRD solicitation of applicants. Positions expected to be filled in early FY-20.***

Position nos. 122946 (91303A), and 122947 (91304A) serves as senior level inspectors in the Maui and Hawaii counties respectively. The primary purpose of these positions is to plan and carry out the all of the enforcement activities within the branch in the respective districts. This involves performing a wide range of inspections and testing of all commercially used weighing and measuring devices, responsible for certifying that all scales, petroleum pumps, taximeters and other measuring devices used in retail transactions are accurate and properly registered of use in the State, perform packaging, labeling, and pricing for conformance to specifications, tolerances, quality and quantity content. These positions will unilaterally conduct investigations, and issue citations or noncompliance notices as appropriate.

Position no. 122645 (91302A) serves as the Packaging and Labeling Specialist. The primary purpose of this position is to serve as the expert in the enforcement of laws, rules, and procedures for the inspection of packaging, labeling and pricing, train staff in those inspection procedures, update forms, assist in work planning and supervision of inspection, and advise the Program Manager and inspectors in technical matters related to the enforcement. This position conducts complex investigations and issues citations or noncompliance notices as appropriate, performs reviews of labels submitted by the agricultural industry, advises farmers on corrections needed. Many Hawaii coffee farmers submit their labels for review to ensure that their coffee labels are in compliance with §486-120.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, pertaining to Hawaii-grown roasted coffee.

The Packaging and Labeling Specialist position is needed to assure the consumers that retail transactions pertaining to package content, pricing, and labeling information are accurate and equity in the marketplace.

**SB-491-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/27/2019 1:41:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2019 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
HERBERT M. "TIM" RICHARDS, III	Hawaii County Council	Support	No

Comments:



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March 29, 2019

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON SB 491, SD2, HD1**  
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Room 308  
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, 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.

Hawaii Farm Bureau **strongly supports SB 491, SD2, HD1**, which appropriates funds for operating expenses of the department of agriculture DOA.

The success of the agriculture industry is dependent on the resources provided to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture. The department provides resources to agriculture loans, grants, and certification programs, just the name a few. This bill would enable the department to continue their efforts in supporting and growing the agriculture industry.

HFB respectfully requests your strong support of this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important subject.

**LATE**

**SB-491-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/29/2019 12:00:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2019 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
NANCY JONES	Hydroponics Alternatives - Waianae	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen and Honorable Committee on Finance Members:

We submit this brief testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of SB 491, SD2,HD1 to provide sufficient funding for the Hawaii Department of Agriculture. We are a small farm located in the Wai`anane Ag. Park and strongly support fully funding programs and staffing positions that will help monitor and increase local food production. The Department provides an array of resources to assist local farmers like us and with funding appropriations by your committee can steer all of us toward most sustainable agricultural production and improved food security. For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to please allocate sufficient funds to the Department to hire much-needed staff and implement much-needed programs as well.

Mahalo for this opporunity to present this testimony in SUPPORT of SB 491, SD2, HD1.