

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 COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY AND WAYS & MEANS

FEBRUARY 26, 2019
10:00 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 211

SENATE BILL NO. 759 SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairpersons Rhoads and Dela Cruz and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 759 SD1, which establishes a two-year agricultural theft and vandalism pilot project to examine the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural theft and agricultural vandalism in the counties of Hawaii and Maui. The Department supports this bill provided that it does not impact the priorities listed in the Executive Budget and offers comments.

The Department of Agriculture has entered into two-year contract with the Hawaii county prosecutor's office for one investigator to conduct agricultural theft and agricultural vandalism investigations. This has been very valuable and productive project with the limited staff performing investigations and outreach with farmers, law enforcement, and farmers markets. We encourage the continuation of the joint efforts being done to pursue prosecution agricultural related crimes. We would like to note that the \$200,000 and two (2) positions were relative to the County of Hawaii and moving that effort forward. If the Legislature would like to provide funds for the County of Maui, we would ask for additional resources to meet those needs per the County of Maui's discretion.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Council Chair
Kelly T. King



Director of Council Services
Maria E. Zielinski

Vice-Chair
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Riki Hokama
Alice L. Lee
Michael J. Molina
Tamara Paltin
Shane M. Sinenci
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

February 25, 2019

TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Kelly T. King
Council Chair

Handwritten signature of Kelly T. King in cursive.

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 26, 2019; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 759, SD1, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this bill is to establish a two-year agricultural theft and vandalism pilot project to examine the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural theft and vandalism cases in the counties of Hawaii and Maui, including theft and vandalism affecting individuals who are not full-time farmers or ranchers.

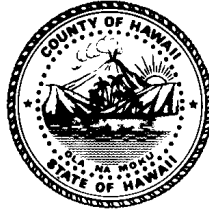
The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. Given the broad acreage that many farming and ranching operations encompass, it is often difficult for farmers and ranchers to secure their entire operations at all times.
2. Theft and vandalism of farms and ranches dispossesses victims of food they have grown, deprives them of a source of income, and reduces their self-sufficiency.
3. As a result, the cost of production and the shelf price of the vandalized crop increases, and it becomes more difficult for farming and ranching operations to be successful.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.

Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

February 22, 2019

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Committee on Judiciary

Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Committee on Ways and Means

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

Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members:

RE: SB 759, SD1 Relating to Agriculture (Agricultural Theft)

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 759, SD1.

For about a year, our Prosecuting Attorney's office has had an investigator working on agricultural crimes, and we have received positive comments from the agriculture community about his work. The preamble of this bill does a good job of explaining the vulnerabilities agriculture has to theft and vandalism, and our news media has documented farmers who have gone out of business because of their losses.

In order to continue the program, state funding is both desirable and appropriate. I hope you will act favorably on SB 759, SD1, and consider increasing funding to accommodate the expansion of the program to Maui.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim
MAYOR

LATE

SB-759-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2019 6:21:58 AM
Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senators Mike Gabbard and Senator Rosalyn Baker and members of the committee:

Maui County farmers has experienced agriculture theft and we appreciate being part of this pilot program. With the limited amount of resources to do all-important work, we appreciate your understanding that additional help must is needed to protect these hard working membersof our economy.

Yuki Lei Sugimura

Maui County, Councilmember



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY AND WAYS & MEANS
Tuesday, February 26, 2019 — 10:00 a.m. — Room 211

Ulupono Initiative Supports SB 759 SD 1, Relating to Agriculture

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Wakai, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committees:

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 SB 759 SD 1, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a two-year agricultural theft and vandalism pilot project in the County of Hawai'i and Maui County, because it aligns with our goal to increase local food production.

In our conversations with farmers and ranchers, one issue that keeps coming up is agricultural theft and how there is little enforcement and punishment for offenders. Agricultural lots are a prime target for thieves as there are many open entry points, farms are often located in rural and isolated areas, and punishments are minor relative to other crimes. For farmers that can afford to, they have to spend money on security infrastructure, monitoring, and manpower to defend their agricultural operations. Profit margins for agricultural operations are already tight and if a business loses revenue from theft or vandalism and has to invest heavily in security, this could push more local farmers and ranchers out of the agricultural sector. Ultimately, this underrated issue is one that hurts our ability to increase locally grown food in our state.

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 these committees' 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

SB-759-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2019 1:35:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

SB-759-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2019 7:48:57 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Warren Watanabe	Testifying for Maui County Farm Bureau	Support	No

Comments:



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

LATE

February 26, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 759, SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 211
10:00 AM

Aloha Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Wakai and Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committees:

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 interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau strongly supports SB 759, SD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a 2-year Agricultural Theft and Vandalism Pilot Project to examine the effectiveness of prosecuting agricultural theft and agricultural vandalism in the counties of Hawaii and Maui.

Agricultural theft and vandalism are persistent problems facing agriculture. Weather, drought, pests, weeds, disease, activists, unstable markets, transportation, labor issues, and a changing climate all contribute to uncertainty for farmers and ranchers. Few businesses face such challenges, yet we are charged with producing food, fiber, fuel and flowers for the 99% of non-farmers. Add in the constant threat and impacts of trespass, theft, and vandalism, and it's a wonder farms and ranches remain viable.

In working with our members, HDOA, and law enforcement, we have collectively concluded that a dedicated enforcement officer housed in the county prosecutor's office would be a giant step forward in minimizing agricultural crimes and enhancing public safety. HFB continues to work with both the police and prosecutor's office to find ways we can work together to help deter, apprehend, and convict individuals that are committing agricultural theft and vandalism.

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