



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
and

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at 2:20 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

SCR 126/SR 96 – URGING THE GOVERNOR, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES, AND OTHER RELATED ENTITIES TO TAKE ACTION TO HELP EXPAND THE AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY IN THE STATE

Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Ruderman and Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Senate Committee on Higher Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SCR 126/SR 96. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) supports the overall intent of the resolution but provides comments in order to explain the current situation and how it affects the intent of the resolution.

- CTAHR supports the portion of the resolution that urges CTAHR to help expand the aquaculture industry.
- Currently, CTAHR employs a faculty member engaged in aquaculture research who has been successful in bringing to the State of Hawai'i significant funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Health in support of aquaculture. He is engaged in basic research on fish physiology under aquaculture that will advance our knowledge in that area for future development.
- CTAHR has combined with the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology to jointly fund an Extension Specialist in aquaculture. The hiring of that Extension Specialist is currently in progress.
- CTAHR is developing an aquaculture research facility in Mānoa to support the work of both faculty members in order to train students and to engage in meaningful aquaculture research.

- The Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture has recently been transferred to CTAHR from Hawai'i Pacific University. This will help further aquaculture research and outreach not only in Hawai'i but in the Pacific Basin
- CTAHR has recently hired Extension Agents (funded by the FY 2018 Legislature) in Economics and Finance which will provide expertise to individuals interested in starting an aquaculture and/or aquaponics business.

For these reasons, we strongly support the first part of this resolution. We believe that aquaculture has tremendous potential to meet the protein needs of the state. To this end we are reorienting our limited resources to improve our aquaculture presence and, at the same time, we appear to be meeting the intent of this resolution.

The second resolution requests that CTAHR to transfer specific parcels of land to the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) for the purpose of establishing aquaculture production on those lands. It is our understanding that the parcels outlined in the resolution are part of the CTAHR Waiale'e Livestock Experiment Center on the North Shore of O'ahu.

- Negotiations are currently under way with ADC for the transfer of the entire Experiment Center, not just those specific parcels
- Once the land is transferred to ADC, CTAHR will no longer have any say in how the land would be used. Therefore, the use for aquaculture will be the purview of ADC at that time. CTAHR would not have responsibility for addressing the use requested in this resolution
- ADC has been in conversations with the North Shore community which has strong ideas of how that land should be used. Including input from the community in the resolution would be beneficial to enhancing the acceptance of any aquaculture industry that may be installed in that area.

With this in mind, we make the following suggestion for the resolution:

Consider verbiage that includes the North Shore community in the decision-making process.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the resolution.

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 COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT  
AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

**MARCH 20, 2019  
2:20 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 126**

**URGING THE GOVERNOR, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, THE  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND  
HUMAN RESOURCES, AND OTHER RELATED ENTITIES TO TAKE ACTION  
TO HELP EXPAND THE AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY IN THE STATE**

Chairpersons Gabbard and Kim and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SCR 126 that urges the Governor, the Department of Agriculture, and the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH CTAHR) to help expand the aquaculture industry within the State and for UH CTAHR to transfer parcels identified as Tax Map Keys 5-8-001-013, 5-8-001-055, 5-8-001-007, and 5-8-001-006 to the Agribusiness Development Corporation for the purposes of establishing aquaculture production in those lands. The Department of Agriculture supports this measure.

Aquaculture is a fast growing food production sector. The passage of SCR 126 will provide new land parcels for expanding the Hawaii aquaculture industry in an effort to support the Governor's initiative of doubling food production.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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March 20, 2019

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**TESTIMONY ON SCR 126/SR 96**

URGING THE GOVERNOR, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES, AND OTHER RELATED ENTITIES TO TAKE ACTION TO HELP EXPAND THE AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY IN THE STATE.

Room 224  
2:20 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Ruderman and Kidani, 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 SCR 126/SR 96**, which urges the Governor, HDOA, CTAHR and others to take action to expand Hawaii's aquaculture industry.

Hawaii had an innovative aquaculture development program (ADP) during the 1980s and 1990s, initially under DBED, then DLNR, and finally DOA. ADP assisted prospective farmers and investors in many ways, including technical assistance, help with site selection and permitting, and perhaps most importantly, providing a strong voice within government in support of aquaculture as a desirable and appropriate industry for Hawaii. ADP played a large part in creating an industry that, starting from almost zero in the 1970s, now generates more than \$76 million annually and is one of the largest sectors of Hawaii's diversified agriculture. Unfortunately, despite its success, ADP has been reduced in staff and function, ultimately being folded into the Animal Industries division of DOA and continues to be downsized. It is no coincidence that Hawaii's aquaculture revenues have leveled off in recent years. In order to restore ADP's ability to help develop aquaculture as a beneficial and sustainable industry for Hawaii, we believe that the following provisions are necessary: 1) increased information dissemination to industry, 2) assistance with site selection and permitting, 3) enhance existing aquatic disease prevention services, and 4) increase in staffing.

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



THE SENATE  
THE THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2019

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, March 20, 2019  
TIME: 2:20 p.m.  
PLACE: Conference Room 224  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

Re: [SCR 126 / SR 96](#) URGING THE GOVERNOR, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES, AND OTHER RELATED ENTITIES TO TAKE ACTION TO HELP EXPAND THE AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY IN THE STATE.

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Mercado Kim, Vice Chairs Rudderman and Kidani, and Committee Members,

The Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association supports the intent of SCR 126 / SR 96 which urges Hawaii State government to take actions to help expand the aquaculture industry within the State in an effort to meet the Governor's goal of doubling local food production. Aquaculture is the fastest growing food production sector worldwide. Hawaii and the U.S. overall currently import approximately 90 percent of all seafood consumed nationwide, with an estimated 65 percent of these imports now coming from foreign aquaculture production. With strong State leadership and advocacy and support within State government, Hawaii has a strong market opportunity to significantly increase local aquaculture production and seafood import substitution while concurrently supporting sustainable economic development in Hawaii's rural farming and coastal communities.

**SCR-126**

Submitted on: 3/19/2019 9:54:38 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2019 2:20:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
STANLEY RUIDAS	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SCR-126**

Submitted on: 3/19/2019 10:16:17 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2019 2:20:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please oppose SCR126 unless you amend the bill to state an environmental impact statement first needs to be conducted for any aquaculture facilities. Aquaculture has contaminated aquatic resources around the globe, and it would be just another assault against Hawaii's already-fragile and moribund marine ecosystem.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei

**SCR-126**

Submitted on: 3/19/2019 12:05:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2019 2:20:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
RuthEllen Klinger-Bowen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a former team member of the Aquaculture Development Program, I fully endorse the restart of this much needed agency. Hawaii aquaculture continues to grow, but without the concerted efforts and support of a state funded program, seafood and the ornamental products (cultured and wild caught) from Asia will overshadow us.



**LATE**

**SCR-126**

Submitted on: 3/20/2019 9:05:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2019 2:20:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Thee, see ba	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**SCR-126**

Submitted on: 3/20/2019 9:51:38 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2019 2:20:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Darren Okimoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Ruderman and Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Senate Committee on Higher Education:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on SCR 126. I offer this testimony as a private citizen and respectfully request that all members of both committees support this bill. I serve as the Associate Director/Extension Leader of the the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant).

Our program has been working with the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to help expand the aquaculture industry in the state. We are partnering with CTAHR to jointly fund an Extension Specialist position in aquaculture through a recruitment that is in progress. We are also collaborating with CTAHR faculty on a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)-funded project to develop an aquaculture facility at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa that will provide integrated research, extension, and education services to aquaculture stakeholders. We are also in the process of developing proposals for the 2019 Federal Funding Opportunities on aquaculture investments from the NOAA National Sea Grant Office in partnership with CTAHR and other partners to create an aquaculture-focused geographic collaborative program that will advance sustainable aquaculture practices that serve to increase the production of protein from freshwater and marine systems in Hawai'i and the Pacific region.

For these reasons I strongly support SCR 126. Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the bill.