

OFFICE OF PLANNING STATE OF HAWAII

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Statement of
RODNEY FUNAKOSHI
Planning Program Administrator, Office of Planning
before the
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM
AND
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**
Friday, March 22, 2019
1:15 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

in consideration of
SCR 165 / SR 131
**REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF PLANNING TO ESTABLISH AN AGRICULTURAL
HOUSING TASK FORCE TO STUDY EXISTING COUNTY AND STATE LAWS,
RULES, AND PROCESSES TO PLAN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ON-FARM
EMPLOYEE HOUSING WITHIN THE STATE AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT.**

Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Taniguchi and Ruderman, and Members of the Senate Committees on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism, and Agriculture and Environment.

The Office of Planning (OP) offers **comments** on SCR 165 / SR 131, which aims to establish an agricultural housing task force within OP to review State and county laws, rules, and processes to identify barriers to the provision of farmworker housing on farms in the State Agricultural Land Use District.

OP is certainly willing to explore with State agencies, the counties, and agricultural organizations how regulations and procedures can be improved to provide safe, sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing for farmworkers. However, OP does not have the resources necessary to cover the cost of the participation and collaboration of Neighbor Island counties in this effort.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
& TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT**

**MARCH 22, 2019
1:15 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 165
REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF PLANNING TO ESTABLISH AN AGRICULTURAL
TASK FORCE TO STUDY EXISTING COUNTY AND STATE LAWS, RULES, AND
PROCESSES TO PLAN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ON-FARM EMPLOYEE
HOUSING WITHIN THE STATE AGRICULTURE DISTRICT.**

Chairpersons Wakai and Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SCR 165 that establishes an 11-member Agricultural Housing Task Force in the Office of Planning. The Task Force is to identify barriers to construction of on-farm employee housing within agricultural districts by studying existing relevant State and county laws, ordinances, rules, and processes; make recommendations; and propose a "master use application process to be applied throughout the State". A series of reports to the Legislature is requested. The Department of Agriculture offers comments and otherwise defers to the Office of Planning and to the counties, who have the primary responsibility for permitting habitable structures on agricultural land.

The outcome expected from the Task Force is recommendations to streamline the processes to authorize the construction of safe, sanitary, and affordable on-farm employee housing on farms that are engaged in agricultural production within agricultural districts.



In response to previous legislation, the Department searched for evidence of the lack of affordable housing for farm workers needed by working farms to attract and retain employees and to operate farms in an economical manner on the Big Island. Available statistics show that the majority of hired farm laborers in Hawaii worked on Big Island farms and are the lowest paid farm laborers among the four counties.

- Statewide farm labor statistics (2007 and 2012 Census of Agriculture – Hawaii County Data; Table 7, pages 238 and 215, respectively) show increases in the number of farms with hired labor (1,783 to 1,977) and the total number of hired laborers (11,523 to 12,492). The statewide total number of farms was 7,521 in 2007 and 7,000 in 2012, so about 25% of Hawaii’s farms hired at least one farm laborer during both census periods.
- From 2007 to 2012, there was a 62% increase in the number of farms with one hired laborer. The Big Island accounted for the largest increase in farms with one farm laborer. Statewide, farms with 2, 3-4, and 5-9 hired laborers showed declines of 16% to 2%. One possible explanation for the increase in farms with one hired laborer is that farms with multiple hired laborers reduced their work force but kept at least one laborer.
- In 2012, the Big Island accounted for more than 50% of the statewide total of farms with hired labor, and the number of hired laborers. However, the total payroll for hired farm labor on the Big Island was 25% of the statewide total payroll for hired farm labor.

These indicators show a declining trend from 2007 to 2012 in the number of farms that hire multiple farm laborers – this sets a point of reference for identifying the characteristics of housing that is needed. It is unknown whether simply providing affordable farmworker housing is enough to retain farm workers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these resolutions.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, & TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE &
ENVIRONMENT

Friday, March 22, 2019 — 1:15 p.m. — Room 224

Ulupono Initiative Supports SCR 165, Requesting the Office of Planning to Establish an Agricultural Housing Task Force to Study Existing County and State Laws, Rules, and Processes to Plan for the Construction of On-Farm Employee Housing within the State Agricultural District

Dear Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Taniguchi, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, 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 SCR 165, which establishes an agricultural housing task force within the Office of Planning, because it aligns with our goal of more locally produced food.

A lack of on-site housing for agricultural workers has helped to exacerbate Hawai'i's agricultural workforce shortage. Without a housing benefit, jobs in the agricultural field are often not as competitive compared to other sectors of the economy. Plus, being on-site will give farmers more time for operations, the ability to monitor growing challenges on the farm, and have a stronger presence to reduce agricultural theft.

We believe this task force is a good first step toward finding a solution to the complex issue of agricultural workforce housing.

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



**Senate Committees on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism &
Agriculture and Environment
Hawai'i Center for Food Safety strongly supports: SCR165**

Dear Chair Wakai, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Ruderman, and members of the committee,

My name is Autumn Ness and I am the Co-Director of the Hawai'i Center for Food Safety. CFS is a nationwide public interest, sustainable agriculture nonprofit organization whose mission centers on supporting the increase of sustainable local food production, and increasing public transparency in food production. We have over 1 million farmer and consumer members across the country, including nearing 10,000 in Hawai'i.

I am writing in support of SCR 165, as I recognize it as an important step in providing tangible support of our farmers who are advancing the State of Hawai'i local food production goals, while also providing housing solutions.

HCFS specifically strongly supports the language about giving special consideration to modular housing as a solution. I strongly believe that modular homes are not just a small part of the solution, but should be the focus of this task force, for a few reasons.

1. It's more economically realistic for a farm to build 1-4 modular homes for \$20-60,000 each than 1 'ohana unit for \$350,000.
2. Modular homes are less attractive to luxury, gentleman estate-type investors. If small, modular homes are the only type of structure allowed on ag. land as farmworker dwellings, developers are less likely to want to turn that land into a luxury investment property.
3. When and if that farm/ag. land changes ownership, the modular homes can be easily moved off property if needed, and there is no permanent loss of that ag land.

However, it is my understanding that, existing building codes and zoning regulations do not always support the building of such modular structures. I am particularly hopeful that this problem can be addressed with language that specifies that the intent of the task force is to create a separate legal designation, as it relates to zoning, for homes with a permanent foundation and modular homes without a permanent foundation.



HCFS also supports the proposed make-up of the task force, and I would be happy to answer an questions as to why each proposed representative is an important part of the task force's success.

Mahalo nui loa for your support of SCR165.

Autumn Ness, Co-Director
Center for Food Safety, Hawai'i Program

SCR-165

Submitted on: 3/19/2019 3:23:19 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Seikai Darcy	Testifying for Share Your Mana	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Please support SCR165 to assist farms to function in Hawaii.

Many mahalos!

Lisa Darcy, Founder

Share Your Mana

Maui county resident

SCR-165

Submitted on: 3/19/2019 4:24:31 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2019 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments:

SCR-165

Submitted on: 3/19/2019 7:29:51 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lois Crozer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-165

Submitted on: 3/19/2019 9:22:49 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha lawmakers,

I STRONGLY support this Resolution. It's long overdue and will help to house our young farmers who cannot afford the current rental costs.

Mahalo,

Barbara Barry

SCR-165

Submitted on: 3/20/2019 12:22:51 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Monika Haar	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-165

Submitted on: 3/20/2019 8:01:26 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sean Jennings	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SCR-165

Submitted on: 3/20/2019 8:15:22 AM

Testimony for EET on 3/22/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
De Austin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Respected lawmakers,

I am the grandchild of a farming family, all of whom were born and raised on Maui, with many generations going back to before colonization. My family survived through various employment in addition to farming, hunting, and fishing.

I am a public school teacher and parent who is concerned about the welfare of our farming community here on the islands. I know that our markets are already supplied heavily by the mainland and other sources. Is it true that 95% of our food comes from off-island? The idea of not being able to sustain ourselves without said shipments is truly sad. We create more buildings on top of our rich life-giving volcanic soil, instead of farms.

Aren't we aiming to become sustainable? Isn't that the governor's/government's intention, for Hawaii to be free of fossil fuels? What about the food? I see that as part of the same question of sustainability. If our farmers are not supported, where will our food come from in the future?

Please support SCR165.

Thank you.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

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

Mark Hamamoto
PO Box 204
Waialua, HI 96791
478-8469

Friday, March 22, 2019

Testimony in SUPPORT of SCR 165

Aloha Senators,

My name is Mark Hamamoto, an organic farmer on 6-acres of land in Waialua, O’ahu. I have been selling organically raised produce on O’ahu for the last 10 years. I sell at local farmer’s markets, through a Community Supported Agriculture program, and to a variety of stores and restaurants on the North Shore and in Honolulu.

I am writing in support of SCR 165 for the primary purpose of increasing sustainable agricultural production here in Hawaii. On the North Shore, like in many other places around Hawaii, there are many people who live on agricultural land without farming it. I believe that those who are living on agriculturally-zoned land should be required to utilize the land for the purpose in which it was designated – farming. On the other hand, many people who are willing to put in the hard work of farming, can not afford the agricultural land that is available for sale. This Resolution would provide a very important resource for farmers who are seeking to purchase agricultural land, or for current agricultural land owners who are not using their land for farming: housing for farm workers.

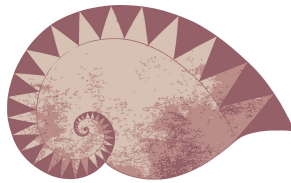
I met a farmer from the mid-west who told me that where he is from there are clear laws that allow farmers to have dwellings for ‘farm hands’ who work on their land. So there are clear precedents in other states that supports farm worker housing. It makes the hard and economically challenging work of farming more feasible. And the ripple effect throughout the communities in which these successful small farms are located are incredibly important. They provide jobs, housing, and good food that remain in the communities.

The concept of Food Sovereignty is also growing around the world, which understands healthy, locally grown food as a basic human right. Legalizing safe and sanitary farm worker housing is a simple, practical and important step that can be taken to help our community maintain this basic human right for locally grown food. It will make Hawaii more food secure, and have positive repercussions on many levels of our overall well-being as a community.

Please support SCR 165.

Mahalo for this support.

Aloha,
Mark Hamamoto



Pono Hawai'i Initiative

Josh Frost - President • Kau'i Pratt-Aquino - Secretary • Patrick Shea - Treasurer
Kristin Hamada • Nelson Ho • Summer Starr

Wednesday, March 20, 2019
Testifying in Support

Aloha, Chair and Committee members

The Pono Hawai'i Initiative (PHI) **is in support of SCR165/SR136** which requests the Office of Planning to create an Agricultural Housing Task Force to examine the State and County laws, rules and process for the construction of on-farm employee housing.

Agriculture is important to Hawaii, not only as an industry and export but it is vital element in food sustainability. Local farmers face many challenges, among them are the lack of affordable housing available for their workers on site. One of the hurdles in the creation of onsite affordable units is the many overlapping laws and jurisdictions make the process confusing and cumbersome.

SCR165/SR136 will help to bring together the various agencies and people in a room with real farmers to help work out a plan to make the process more accessible. Creating uniform laws and rules are essential to clearing up the confusion and will eliminate the barriers that are currently in place. These potential changes will help Hawaii reach its goal of food sustainability and ensure that the men and women doing the work have sanitary, safe and affordable housing.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Gary Hooser

Executive Director

Pono Hawai'i Initiative, an organization member of the Common Good Coalition