

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA  
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

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

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**JULY 1, 2020  
12:30 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 817  
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE BOARD OF  
AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, VINCENT MINA, FOR A TERM TO  
EXPIRE 06-30-2024**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message 817 that submits for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, Vincent Mina, for a term to expire on June 30, 2024. The Department supports the confirmation of Vincent Mina.

Mr. Mina is a farmer who is actively engaged in the community and in promoting the agricultural industry in Hawaii. His interest in soil remediation techniques fall in line with his desire for a sustainable agricultural model for the State of Hawaii. Mr. Mina also serves as the President of Hawaii Farmers Union United and has been involved in policy decisions that shape the landscape of agriculture in Hawaii.

Mr. Mina was confirmed as a member of the Board of Agriculture in 2018. He will continue to bring his unique perspective to Board discussions and we look forward to his continued service on behalf of agricultural producers in the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this nomination.





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 12:30 p.m.

By  
Nicholas Comerford, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
And  
Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

GM 817 – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, VINCENT MINA, for a term to expire 06-30-2024.

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

We wish to voice our strong support for Mr. Vincent Mina's consideration for confirmation to the Board of Agriculture. We have worked with Mr. Mina for close to the past 3 years on this same board, and find him an open-minded, socially conscience, and well-informed individual who has performed admirably during the past several years. Continued appointment to the board provides continuity around important issues, as well as giving voice for underrepresented agriculture systems. Mr. Mina has shown a strong interest in making agriculture in Hawai'i a strong component of the state economy.



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

July 1, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON GM 817**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, VINCENT MINA, for a term to expire 06-30-2024.

Room 224  
12:30 PM

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

I am Randy Cabral, Vice-President 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.

**HFB supports** the nomination of Mr. Vincent Mina to the Board of Agriculture.

Mr. Mina has been a commercial farmer on Maui for many years and previously served as a Board Member on the Maui County Farm Bureau. He is now with the Hawaii Farmers Union, a group affiliated with the National Farmers Union that advocates for agriculture.

HFB respectfully requests your support of Mr. Vincent Mina's reappointment to the Board of Agriculture.

Thank you for your continued support for Hawaii's farmers and ranchers.

**GM-817**

Submitted on: 6/25/2020 3:30:01 PM

Testimony for AEN on 7/1/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Testifying for Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	No

Comments:

It is a good idea to have someone on the Hawai'i Board of Agriculture, like Vince Mina, who is both a Farmer and an agricultural leader in his community. Vince has his ear to both the needs of the farming community and community food system needs. Agriculture is going to become much more important in Hawai'i in the near future, and we need people like Vince with steady and wide experience to help guide agricultural policy for the State.

**GM-817**

Submitted on: 6/29/2020 10:30:10 AM

Testimony for AEN on 7/1/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alan Gottlieb	Testifying for Ponoholo Ranch Limited	Support	No

Comments:

**GM-817**

Submitted on: 6/29/2020 11:15:30 AM

Testimony for AEN on 7/1/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
VINCENT KIMURA	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

This testimony is in SUPPORT of Vincent Mina to continue another term on the Hawaii Board of Agriculture.

I've known Vincent Mina over the past 6 years, first personally and then professionally, and in that time have known him to be an upstanding farmer, family man, and leader for the Hawaii Farmers Union. His passion for supporting the membership, mission, and vision of the union is unwavering and speaks volumes to ensure the majority of our farmers in Hawaii have a voice.

I currently sit as President of the Waimanalo chapter of the Farmers Union and have the utmost respect for his leadership and ability to ensure all sides are heard, and governance is followed. He has had a major role in not only establishing the statewide union, and also supporting each and every chapter's establishment and growth. I have found him to be a creative out-of-the-box thinker, a man of his word, and one to not back down from a challenge. I have professionally seen him stand for what he feels is right for the members, even if it challenge's the status quo or his beliefs.

Thank you,

Vincent Kimura

**GM-817**

Submitted on: 6/29/2020 9:11:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 7/1/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David S. Case	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard and Vice-Chair Ruderman--

I am writing to enthusiastically support Vincent Mina's reappointment to the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. I have known Vincent for about a decade as the President of the Hawaii Farmers Union United ("HFUU") and its affiliated charity, the Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation ("HFUF"). I have served as the Secretary of HFUU for about seven years and of HFUF for about three. During that time I have watched Vincent lead HFUU from about 200 members and one Chapter on Maui to more than 1,000 members representing family farmers with 13 Chapters located in distinct regions in all four of Hawaii's Counties. He is a knowledgeable representative of Maui County, but he is a working family farmer who brings a statewide and national perspective to the Board as well. Vincent is a visionary and inspiring leader for Hawaii agriculture and uniquely suited to sit on the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. I urge your Committee to advance his nomination for full Senate approval.

Mahalo nui loa,

David S. Case

casedavids@gmail.com

**GM-817**

Submitted on: 6/30/2020 3:31:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 7/1/2020 12:30:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ronald Weidenbach	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Vincent Mina is a knowledgeable and passionate supporter of small and mid-sized agricultural operations in Hawaii with more than a decade of firsthand experience as a family farmer on Maui and President of the Hawaii Farmers Union United. He has served the BOA well during his current term, and my wife, Estralita, and I are confident that he will continue to do so going forward. We strongly support his nomination to the BOA for another term.



Applicant Vincent Mina- Hawaii Board of Agriculture Representative for Maui County

**1-Why do you wish to be a member of the Board of Agriculture?**

Serving as a board member for the past two years has shown me that if I'm chosen to continue that in doing so I will be able to make a positive difference to the board and the department.

**2-How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Board of Agriculture?**

To work collaboratively and cooperatively with the chair and fellow board members in looking out for the best and highest interest of the department in its mission to preserve, promote and develop essential agricultural resources and infrastructure. My responsibility is to attend all meetings when called, read beforehand all the informational packet of agenda items being addressed at the monthly meetings. To also communicate beforehand to the secretary if for some reason I am not able to attend.

**3-Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Board of Agriculture, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position?**

As a farmer making a living for the past 27 years on our family farm, I have had an in depth experience of what it takes to build an agricultural system that is profitable along with the essential importance of our local food production in agriculture. Understanding the importance of stepping up as a leader by building over the past ten years a statewide farm advocacy organization and its affiliated charity, has given me a wealth of experience in how to work with others within the agricultural community who are mutually committed to making a difference within our local agriculture. Being also on the National Board of the Farmers Union has given me a national perspective on agricultural issues that I bring into my HDOA board experience.

**4-What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?**

Besides continuing to build on the relationships with my fellow board members of which I value very much, I have also started work that I want to see come through to fruition. Namely developing an avenue through HDOA to assist in rebuilding our agricultural systems within the state, literally from the ground up. This being in the form of a cover crop seed industry, with the intention to utilize state agricultural lands in order to rebuild our islands soils for production of food security, and protecting our land resource in erosion control.

**5-Name three qualities that best describe you and that would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Board of Agriculture?**

1-I am willing to see another point of view without thinking I need to let go of my own in order to see it.

2-I am a self starter who loves learning from others that I work with who have skills and experience I admire and want to aspire to.

3- I approach each issue with an open mind of seeing it from both sides before making a decision.

I feel these qualities benefit the board of agriculture in my ability to be seen as a fair representative to the department within the public eye, who are concerned about our agricultural presence here in Hawaii.

**6-Name one previous experience that would make you stand out.  
How would this benefit the Board of Agriculture?**

I have garnered the respect from other leaders within the agricultural community over the years and find that having a collaborative and cooperative approach to solving problems and dealing with issues has been such an enriching experience and is benefit to my being involved within the board of agriculture

**7-Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interests that could arise during your service on the Board of Agriculture? How would you overcome any possible conflicts of interest?**

If any potential conflict of interest would ever to arise, I would first of all bring that to the attention of the chair, fellow board members and the department legal council and if necessary recuse myself in any of the decision making process.