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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 AGRICULTURE

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2020
8:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 312**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1766
RELATING AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1766 to appropriate moneys to the Agricultural Development and Plant Industry Divisions of the Department of Agriculture.

We are deeply grateful that the State Legislature wants to support programs under these divisions to increase biosecurity at airports and harbors; support small local farmers; and promote the safety of workers and the public in relation to agriculture, invasive species, and native ecosystems. We concur with this measure that Hawaii's small local farmers, agriculture operating environment, and native ecosystems are facing severe threats from the effects of globalization, market consolidation/concentration, invasive pests and climate change.

The Department supports fully the intent of this measure as long as it does not adversely impact priorities in the Executive Biennium budget and in the Hawaii Interagency Biosecurity Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



HB-1766

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 1:17:43 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2020 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nicole K Galase	Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	No

Comments:



February 5, 2020

Representative Richard P. Creagan, Chair
Representative Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

Support of HB 1766, Relating to Agriculture (Appropriates moneys to the Department of Agriculture to support agriculture in the State.)

Friday, February 7, 2020, 8:30 a.m., in CR 312

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 1766** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands (IAL) in Hawaii. The bill reinforces the need for funding to support and promote collaboration amongst sectors of the community - business, government, and agricultural stakeholders - and the importance for them to work together to improve the economic viability of, and public safety in relation to the State's agricultural industry.

HB 1766. This bill appropriates moneys to the agricultural development and plant industry divisions of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to increase biosecurity at airports and harbors; support small local farmers; and promote the safety of workers and the public in relation to agriculture, invasive species, and native ecosystems.

LURF's Position. HB 1766 is consistent with the underlying intent and objectives of the IAL laws (Hawaii Revised Statutes [HRS], Sections 205-41 to 52), which were enacted to fulfill the mandate in Article XI, Section 3 of the Hawaii State Constitution, "to conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands."

Enactment of the long-awaited IAL legislation would be pointless without implementation of measures and inducements which provide for funding required to support farmers and efforts to promote agriculture and agricultural safety; to mitigate the risks involved in food production and distribution; and to ensure worker and public food safety throughout the State's agricultural industry.

By recognizing the significance of and need to develop and improve local agriculture, and appropriating funds to address the needs of the industry, this bill significantly helps to promote economically viable agriculture and food self-sufficiency in Hawaii. As such, LURF is in **strong support of HB 1766**.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of this measure.



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February 7, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1766
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 312
8:30 AM

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, 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 1,800 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 supports HB 1766, which appropriates funds to the Agricultural Development and Plant Industry Divisions of the Department of Agriculture to increase biosecurity at airports and harbors; support small local farmers; and promote the safety of workers and the public in relation to agriculture, invasive species, and native ecosystems.

Invasive species have become one of the most challenging problems impacting Hawaii. Many invasive species are damaging Hawaii's environment and the state's economy. Agriculture has a vested interest in this matter. Agriculture is one of the major casualties when invasive species are introduced. Every year, numerous new pests are introduced into the State, such as the coqui frog, coffee berry borer, axis deer, macadamia felted coccid, little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, small hive beetle, and varroa mite, to name a few.

In the 2002 LRB study on invasive species, it was reported that the estimated cost of financing all invasive species programs was \$50 million. The report estimated that the lost revenue to agriculture was \$300 million per year. It also states that the invasion of unwanted pests has the potential to economically devastate the State by keeping tourists away from the island and that invasive species can affect tourism indirectly by altering or displacing Hawaii's environmental assets. The HISC currently estimates that those costs are now \$38 million on top of the current funding for biosecurity.

Market development is another critical component of expanding Hawaii's agricultural industry. A coordinated marketing effort statewide to market locally grown products in a strategic and comprehensive manner is key to being competitive in a global economy.

New and potential markets, such as cruise lines, international and national markets, and other large buying entities will be able to purchase in large and consistent volumes of locally produced products. HODA's Agricultural Development Division (ADD) promotes the economic viability of commercial agriculture in Hawaii by sponsoring joint marketing programs for agricultural products, facilitates the development and expansion of marketing opportunities for targeted agricultural and processed products, and provides timely, accurate and useful statistics. The ADD has comprehensive marketing programs such as "Buy Local, It Matters!", a call-to-action campaign to help encourage local residents to buy local farm products, the "Hawaii Seal of Quality" program which was developed to distinguish quality Hawaii grown crops and value-added products and the "Made in Hawaii" branding program. These campaigns promote locally grown agricultural products and recognize the farmers, ranchers, retailers, and restaurants that bring these products to the consumer.

HFB strongly supports this measure which seeks to protect the people, environment, and agriculture as well as promote the economic viability of commercial agriculture in Hawaii.

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