

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

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

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

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1888  
RELATING TO THE PESTICIDE SUBSIDY PROGRAM**

Chairperson Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1888, relating the pesticide subsidy program. This bill appropriates funds from the general fund to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture for fiscal year 2020-2021 to assist in the eradication of the coffee berry borer through the pesticide subsidy program established under Act 105, Session Laws of Hawaii 2014, as amended. The funds are to be deposited in the pesticide use revolving fund established pursuant to section 149A-13.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes. The Department supports this measure insofar as it can be reconciled with HB1861, which seeks comparable objectives, and offers the following comments.

Invasive species are a primary threat to Hawai'i's agriculture and economy. The coffee berry borer is a significant coffee pest in Hawai'i and the world. The funding of the program will allow the Department to continue to support coffee farmers in their efforts to address this threat for fiscal year 2020-2021.

The Department notes that House bill 1861, which also seeks to fund the coffee berry borer subsidy program, is more comprehensive in extending the life of the program and provides funding for a manager position. The Department prefers HB1861



over HB1881 for those additional beneficial features. Also, we would like to clarify that the purpose of the subsidy program is to manage and suppress coffee berry borer populations, not eradicate them as indicated in this bill. Eradication is not considered a feasible option at this point. Lastly, the subsidy program is currently administered by the Plant Pest Control Branch (PPC), whereas the pesticide revolving fund is administered by the Pesticide Branch, so it may be more appropriate to allocate the funding to the operational budget for PPC, namely AGR 122.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**HB-1888**

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 6:12:56 PM

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

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Z. Arakawa	Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:



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February 7, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE  
RELATING TO THE PESTICIDE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1888**  
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 1888**, which appropriates moneys to DOA for the CBB pesticide subsidy program.

Coffee is one of Hawaii's signature crops; one that helps bring fame and tourists to Hawaii. Coffee Berry Borer (CBB) threatens the entire Hawaiian coffee industry. While the full tally is yet to be made, farms on Hawaii Island have experienced deep losses. Some have failed. Moreover, large quantities of coffee have been downgraded due to insect damage, reducing the value of the remaining crop. CBB is a serious threat to Hawaii's agriculture industry and the state's economy. While CBB is battled worldwide, no other coffee growing origin shares Hawaii's high labor costs and restrictions on pesticides that may be used elsewhere to fight this destructive pest. This places the industry at a competitive disadvantage when compared to the rest of the coffee-growing world.

Fighting CBB is a priority in other coffee-producing countries. The USDA has expressed its support targeted toward research, education, and mitigation. The industry's response has been immediate and multi-faceted. A non-profit CBB task force has been formed, including growers, processors, HDOA, UH, USDA and county government. CTAHR and HDOA have been responsive and effective in their combined efforts. The industry has committed countless private sector dollars and has leveraged both State and Federal funds. The State must continue to do its part.

A recent CTAHR economic analysis estimates FY2013 crop losses due to CBB at \$7.68 million, with a resultant \$571,000 annual loss in state tax revenues. The extension of the

CBB Pesticide Subsidy Program should be viewed as a modest investment one of the state's largest and most important agricultural industries.

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