

Vincent Mina
President
HFUU-HFUF



P.O. Box 99, Wailuku, HI 96793-0099, (808) 800-3974
February 3rd, 2020

Anny Bruch
VP HFUU-HFUF
&
Kaua'i Chapter
Pres.

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1892 before the House Committee on Economic Development & Business, Chair Angus L.K. McKelvey, WEDNESDAY 9.35PM IN CONFERENCE ROOM 309

David Case
Secretary

Aloha Chairman McKelvey and Members of the Economic Development & Business Committee.

Annie Alvarado
Treasurer

HFUU is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy, nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters organized as 13 Chapters in the four Hawai'i Counties. In 2017, the Legislature awarded Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation a Grant in Aid project to Strengthen Regional Food Hubs in Hawai'i. As part of that project, the coordinator, Dr. Saleh Azizi, facilitated a focus group among multiple food hubs to improve our understanding of the resources needed for food hubs to be sustainable and respond to demand for local food, especially by the Farm-to-State initiative. The result of the focus group, which was participated by a majority of Hawaii's existing food hubs, are now in front of you, a Food Hub Pilot program to support existing and new food hubs in all of Hawaii's counties.

Christian
Zuckerman
Wai'anae,
O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Waimanalo,
O'ahu

Almost all food hub developments in Hawaii were launched by family farmers to help other small-scale family farming. Food hubs are entities in or nearby farm communities that support small farmers with aggregation, processing, marketing and sale of locally grown food. Research by Dr. Noa Lincoln at UH Manoa suggest that much of the local food grown by Hawaii's residents and small farmers is unaccounted for and often overlooked in official reporting about local food production. The dark number of unaccounted local food is now being captured by food hubs all over Hawaii. Less than ten food hubs that are affiliated with HFUU facilitate marketing, sale and delivery of local food on behalf of over 500 family farmers. HFUU would like to offer the following revisions to HB1892:

Brynn Foster
North Shore,
O'ahu

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

1. Page 1- Lines 15-17 Strike language: Non-profit organizations may apply for certain types of federal program funding, but the awarded amounts are generally insufficient for anything but small-scale farming.
2. Page 3- Lines 1-4 Revise language: (A) Construction or improvement of facilities for aggregation, washing, minimal processing, packaging, cold storage, and other value-added facilities;
3. Page 3- Line 9- Revise language: for the award of initial startup grant funding or subsequent
4. Page 3- Lines 12-13- Revise language: Priority shall be given to organizations with demonstrated experience in aggregation, washing, minimal processing, packaging, cold storage, and other value-additions for delivering local produce to local markets.
5. Page 3- Line 16- Revise language: ...and agricultural cooperatives with requisite insurance requirements and a certificate of vendor compliance with Hawaii compliance express.
6. Page 3- Line 17-20- Revise language: Applicants seeking to launch new establishment of food hubs in areas where none currently exist shall have first secured a physical location...
7. Page 5- Line 1-2- Revise language: ...program should be made permanent, with or without modifications.

Bobby Pahia
Kahalawai,
Maui

John Dobovan
Haleakala, Maui

Matthew
Van Paepeghem
Hana, Maui

Dash Kuhr
Kohala, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawai'i

Food hubs build their strength from sourcing from a large number of small producers and suggest that all of Hawaii's people can become part of an increasing family of food producers. HB1892 further notes that a funding source is needed to support the establishment and growth of food hubs on a scale that meets demand by State institutions such as schools and hospitals. Collectively, food hubs offer powerful networks to improve our island food security, reduce relying on imported foods, and steady supplies for farm-to-state sourcing of local food. Food hubs promote a way of life that brings back Hawaii's history of abundance and self-reliance and where all people and households can contribute to a better future together.

Steve Lund
Puna, Hawai'i

HAWAII FARMERS UNION UNITED

Drake Weinert
East Hawai'i

Vincent Mina, President

Matt Drayer
Ka'u, Hawai'i

The Hawai'i Farmers Union United and its Chapters are a nonprofit corporation formed under Hawai'i law and Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code. HFUU advocates for the sovereign right of farmers to create and sustain vibrant and prosperous agricultural communities for the benefit of all Hawai'i through cooperation, education and legislation. Because HFUU is an agricultural advocacy organization, donations to it are not tax deductible

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 12:26:01 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Helmut Klauer	A'a Li'i Farm	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 12:58:44 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Karen Winslow	Hawaii Farmers Union	Support	No

Comments:

HB1892

Hearing for Wednesday, February 5th at 9:35Am:

RELATING TO FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM

Requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a five-year food hub pilot program to increase access to local food. Provides for the award of grant funding by qualified applicants wishing to establish or expand a food hub. Requires reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

Michael Ferreira,
Founding Board Member, (Past)
Waianae Chapter
Hawaii Farmers Union United
92-7049 Elele St.
Kapolei, HI. 96707
808-861-7115
MickFerreirais@gmail.com

I am submitting testimony in support to allocate money to create grants for Food Hubs. Not every farmer is able to attend farmer's markets and Food Hubs enable them to be able to sell their produce to one location who then markets the goods within the community. It allows the public to shop at that Food Hub(s) at times where a farmers market may be unavailable and / or open only once a week. This will provide a consistent place for farmers and customers to come together indirectly.

In this way, a Food Hub may be able to get signed up with USDA to be able to provide produce to EBT customers where farmers would have had to sign up individually. A Food Hub allows farmers to do what they do best. Work the fields. Thank you.

Michael Ferreira
Founding Board Member (Past)
Waianae Chapter,
Hawaii Farmers Union United



2/3/2020

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1892 BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS IN CONFERENCE ROOM 309

Aloha Chairman McKelvey and Members of the Economic Development & Business Committee,

Alternative Structures International (dba Kahumana Organic Farms), a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization operating on 50 acres in Lualualei Valley in Waianae. Since its establishment in 1974, Kahumana has integrated social services with training venues and social ventures that work toward three goals: 1. Ending Local Family Homelessness, 2. Providing Services for People With Developmental Disabilities, and 3. Lowering Hawaii's Dependence on Imported Food.

In 2017, Kahumana launched Kahumana Farm Hub (KFH) with the mission of connecting local growers with local markets. The hub facilitates sales on behalf of small farmers and backyard growers on the Leeward Coast of Oahu. The hub has been a powerful reminder of how Hawaii residents can contribute to food security. In the first 2 years KFH generated a total of \$280,499 of which \$204,325 was paid directly to over 100 growers (see image 1). KFH shows that multiple small farmers and backyard growers create a resilient network illustrating the strength in numbers of backyard grower and their contribution to Hawaii's local food supply.

**KFH local food supply-
200,000 pounds in 2 years**



Image 1- Kahumana Farm Hub. In 2017, The Grants-in-Aid funded Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation grant to strengthen community food hubs among them the Kahumana Farm Hub. Currently, KFH supports over 100 Ohana growers from the Leeward Coast of Oahu by assisting growers with marketing and sale of their locally grown fruits and vegetables.

Kahumana supports all the revisions suggested to the bill language by Hawaii Farmers Union United in their testimony.

Sincerely,



Christian Zuckerman
Farm Director
Kahumana Organic Farms
86-660 Lualualei Homestead Road
96792, Waianae HI



Pono Hawai'i Initiative

Josh Frost - President • Patrick Shea - Treasurer • Kristin Hamada
Nelson Ho • Summer Starr

Tuesday, February 4, 2020

Relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program
Testifying in Support

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

The Pono Hawai'i Initiative (PHI) **supports HB1892 Relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program**, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a 5 year food hub pilot program to increase access to local food and provides for grant funding for qualified applicants to establish or expand a food hub.

The creation and encouragement of community food hubs could help Hawaii meet its food sustainability goals. Food hubs help to expand market access to small and medium sized farmers creating a way for those entities to sell their products on a much larger scale. Food hubs create jobs and strengthen economies all while increasing access to fresh, healthy locally produced food. This can be a win-win scenario for our local communities.

For all these reasons, we urge you to move this bill forward.

Mahalo for the opportunity,
Gary Hooser
Executive Director
Pono Hawai'i Initiative

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 12:08:42 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joseph Mella	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Joseph Mella, joeymella@gmail.com

1108 Upper Kimo Drive, Kula, HI

Dear Honorable Elected Official,

I am writing to you today in support of SB 2722.

My name is Joseph Mella and I am currently in cohort 5 of the FAM farmer training program. We are building a vision to support our land growing vegetables for our family. From my early investigations I have found that small farmers face a lot of challenges. We are blessed with a beautiful year round growing season and I have found more and more support from elders and teachers willing to share knowledge. However to grow food is not enough, we then need to market, possibly prepare value added products, and then sell- all with ideally the least amount of waste and lost energy. Although I am beginning to research all the needed steps to fulfil these actions, I have found it quite hard to navigate. All the steps are in place for logical sense, food safety being the top priority. The concept of "Food Hubs", as you know, can take a lot of that headache away. The food hub takes partial responsibility and through collaboration makes it easier for smaller farms to thrive. As a food hub begins to grow more people in our community will see the benefit of growing a little extra in their family gardens. That joy of growing food for our family can then be a nice supplement income for struggling families. These food hubs can also be a gathering place for elders and teachers to share their knowledge. We can all grow together on many levels. Please support this bill aimed to develop the food hub concept.

With love and gratitude,

Joseph Mella

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 12:33:16 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Adrienne. I live on the island of Maui. Hamakualoa, Pauwela. I am a current FAM program and since I started this journey, I have already learned so incredibly much. I realize how lucky I, and my children are that I have been able to malama the aina, to feed my ohana, and someday soon to feed my community. The knowledge that I need to sustainably grow food fortunate enough to be raised, would not be available to me if it weren't for the FAM program. Before now, I was not a member of the farming community on Maui. I'm a renting, backyard gardener with dreams of living off my own land. When the weather permitting, we had a garden.

Since moving to the islands almost a decade ago, I have started a family and gotten a sense of the importance of our impact on the land. I have watched so many people come and go. I have heard recounted time and time again that people leave to the mainland because living here is too expensive. In particular, groceries are too expensive. For average families to grow food year-round, our produce is largely brought from seemingly everywhere else in the world, instead of growing it locally. I believe that the lack of sustainable farming on our islands is because of a lack of knowledge and not believe the lack of knowledge stems from a lack of interest in this instance. I believe that the individuals on our islands sustainably don't have the knowledge they need to feel confident in their abilities to farm sustainably in a financially sound way. I know that passing the Beginning Farmer Training Program Bill and it's appropriate moneys is a great investment in knowledge. Knowledge is power. Such a powerful thing; to grow your own food. I can go to the store and buy something shipped here from who knows where, or I can learn how to grow that pepper and provide it for a fraction of the cost. If we grow it and then we can all afford to live here, healthily. To keep families here in Hawaii we must educate ourselves. It would be nice if products that are currently being marketed as "Made on Maui" were actually made of things that are "made on Maui" and every ingredient in it was shipped to Costco from somewhere else and a lot of these missteps, we still have a great opportunity here in our islands to change this legacy and to show the rest of the world together to affect positive change for the health of our land, our people, and our visitors. By passing bills for farm to allow our community to empower ourselves towards a greener, sustainable Hawaii.

We need to implement sustainable values and practices to enrich our community, and the only way to do that is to be said that in traditional Hawaiian culture, 'the life of the community was predicated on the health of the land.' In our community how to make the land healthy again, so we can sustain ourselves and keep ourselves from crisis. We have a reasonable assessment that we will be able to sustain our families through farming. So we ask you now to pass bills for proper stewardship of the land to make Hawaii as bountiful and healthy as it ever has been. Mahalo for your knowledge.

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 12:46:33 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

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

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 12:51:57 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Rhoden	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I have been active in the agriculture sector in Hawaii for over 10 years and I strongly support the state's efforts to assist in the development of local food hubs to strengthen and sustain local communities. Farmers in Hawaii already face significant challenges in the post harvest tasks that are required before their product gets to markets. In many cases farming areas lack the required infrastructure to help farmers expand and meet the needs of larger markets that would provide them with more profit and operational sustainability. Food hubs, centrally located in ag communities, can provide the infrastructure needed for post harvest (including but not limited to washing, packing, storage, and delivery) while also providing an economic boost in terms of job creation. Food hubs may also be created with specific community needs in mind, so that along with post harvest infrastructure needs, aggregation is possible to allow several smaller farms to service a large customer and/or to provide value added processing space, training and meeting space, and other agriculture support services.

Planning for a food hub is a community effort and may take time, therefore this bill should take into account that few communities are ready to begin construction. Realistically they will need to time and funding for planning purposes to ensure the hub meets needs in the community but also functions profitably.

I support HB 1892 with the suggestion that the bill be amended to include planning as a grant priority area.

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 12:58:00 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jacob Willams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 1:25:41 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Rodwell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 1:38:17 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Terry Kristiansen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 1:50:30 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cindy Evans	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 1:55:07 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Linda Hastings	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 2:20:29 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

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

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 3:11:26 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
valerie Lasciak	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

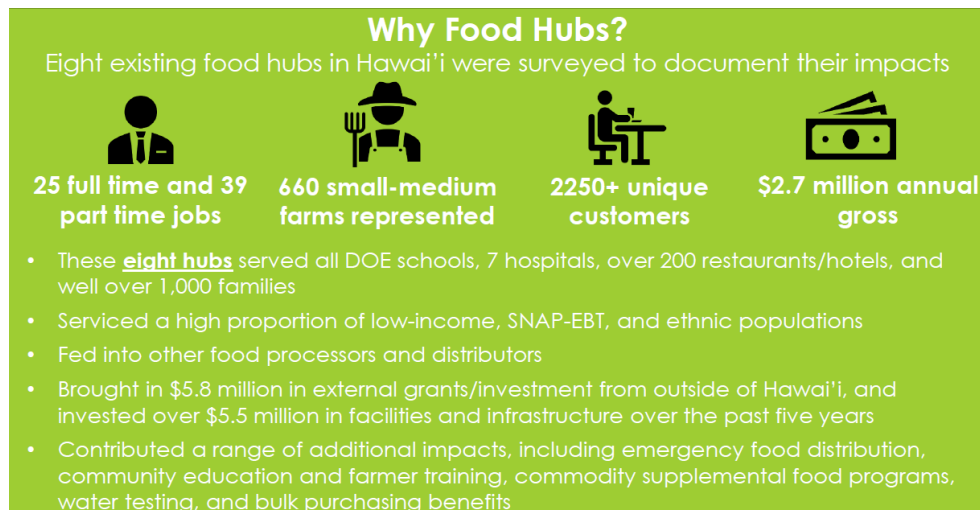
2/3/2020

Public Testimony in Strong Support of HB1892

Before the House Committee on Economic Development & Business in conference room 309
Aloha Chairman McKelvey and Members of the Economic Development & Business Committee

Aloha Kakou,

A recent survey of 8 food hubs by the Hawai'i Farmers Union United show that they represent over 650 small and medium farms and generate 2.7 million in income annually in local food sales (see image below).



By way of introduction, I am Saleh Azizi, and I am the Community Economic Development Coordinator at Kahumana Organic Farms, an organization operating for 40 years in Wai'anae to provide services to the most vulnerable members of our community, combat homelessness, provide service for people with disabilities and lower Hawaii's dependence on imported foods through sustainable agriculture.

In 2019, I worked with the Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation as a Food Hub Coordinator. I facilitated meetings with ten existing food hubs to document the obstacles they face in their journey to expand their operations and services for the benefit of small farmers who grow local food for Hawaii's consumers. The observations and recommendations compromised a central part of my PhD. Dissertation that was awarded in 2019 by the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Food hubs have positive effects on economic development far beyond facilitating local market connections for small farmers. Those benefits include creating culturally meaningful jobs in rural areas for residents and more opportunities for construction companies hire for expansion of facilities.

Saleh Azizi Fardkhales, PhD

808-383 5224

azizi@hawaii.edu

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 6:36:19 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
DONNIE BECKER	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 7:37:23 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Lacques	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 7:51:52 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ken Stover	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 8:27:44 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Antoinette M Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Angus McKelvey, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development & Business,

As a member of HFUU, gardener (wannabe farmer), and resident of Maui, **I urge you to support HB1892**. We must become self-reliant regarding food. It amazes me that with the ideal growing conditions we are so blessed with in Hawaii, that we don't eat the freshest, most nutritious, homegrown produce and export as opposed to importing. This Bill helps create and support food hubs - all in an effort to support Hawaii's small farmers.

Thank you for your time and dedication to Hawaii's people and this place,

Sincerely,
Antoinette M Davis.

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 9:54:33 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Phyllis Robinson	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

As the grantwriter for the Hawaii Farmers Union United for 8 years, I had the pleasure of visioning the creation of regional food hubs on Maui Island. In 2012 we conducted a needs assessment with our Maui Chapter of the farmers union and determined from 64 participants that there was clear interest and need. Ninety percent said yes to participation in a Food Hub.

Twice we submitted grants to the USDA Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) to fund a feasibility study to determine if the farmers in our wide network on Maui island could profit from participating in a cooperative Food Hub operation. There was included in the study an offer to farmers in Haiku site of leasing surrounding County owned land. Two additional sites were chosen for the study and 12 farmers wrote letters of commitment for the grant.

With our two grants we submitted, we had to have matching money. We were given the necessary match from the Hawaii Department of Agriculture and the County of Maui. In the first grant we joined with the Kohala Center, in the second with Tri-isle RC&D. For various reasons, we were not funded. We are prepared to dust off this old grant now that we may have some solid support from both the County of Maui and the state. The great thing about this first planning grant from the USDA was that if the plan proved feasible, a subsequent 2nd round of funding for implementation by the USDA was substantial enough to provide the beginning infrastructure for each of 3 food hubs to get started. Our main customers for the local food to be processed in the 3 hubs was for each district's school lunch programs. We sure would love to try this again.

And we want to see each island in Hawaii have the same opportunity to implement food hubs. We see it as the only way for farmers to make a living – these hubs can become self sufficient. Our vision included a restaurant, retail store, tours for kids and the chance for the school garden kids to travel to our hubs and see their grown food processed and fed to their school peers. All of this creates a generation of children wanting to grow their own foods and who knows they may be inspired to become farmers and feed their families and their community and of course the island visitors.

We have one word of advice to anyone wanting cooperatives as the operating structure for your food hub, involve your farmers from the very beginning - even during the

feasibility study phase. Pay them to do the process - let them create a sense of ownership.

Andre de Almeida
86-660 Lualualei Homestead RD
Waianae, HI 96792

Hawaii State Legislature
State Capitol
415 South Beretania ST
Honolulu, HI 96813

February 3, 2020

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1892 BEFORE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

As an active apprentice of Kahumana's Farm Hub I strongly support HB1892. On the day to day life at Kahumana's Farm hub I get to interact with each hub member that comes in to get cash for their produce. Some hub members rely on the farm hub to make their lives a little easier. For instance, there is a hub member whose husband recently has been fighting cancer and she does not get the chance to leave her property to sell her bananas. So we instead go to her to make her life a little easier and that way she gets to spend time with her crops and family.

Another example, is a family that goes hiking in the valley and the mountains. The father and son duo enjoy the time together while foraging for fruits to bring to the farm hub. Not only is this family enjoying quality time together in nature, they are getting food for themselves and exchanging some for cash to help with expenses.

Whether families are getting cash to help fill up their gas tanks, or help with the expenses at home, one thing i'm sure is that the farm hub is making people's lives better with fruits that would normally just go to waste. For that reason I firmly believe that HB1892 should pass in order for small farms and families to improve their lives.

Sincerely,

Andre de Almeida
(808)670-4804

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 5:51:18 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rachelle House	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a small market farmer on the Big Island. I strongly support this bill which would provide funding for food hubs.

Food hubs make it possible for local foods from small farms to reach larger markets through aggregation, shared wash/pack facilities, shared processing, marketing and sales. Food hubs are powerful networks that reduce our state's reliance on imported foods, increase island security, and create steady supply for larger markets. Funding for food hubs enables them to create a steady supply of locally sourced food for larger institutions such as schools and hospitals while supporting local farmers livelihoods.

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 9:41:32 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Yoshito L'Hote	Aina Ho'okupu o Kilauea	Support	No

Comments:

I am in favor of this bill as it will allow local small farms to access the market place in a competitive manner.

Our ability to sell to customers is vital to small farms and aggregation is also an other advantage that food hubs offer for small farms

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 9:51:58 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 10:16:38 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Suzanne Fields	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

YOU MUST SUPPORT THIS AND ALL RELEVANT legislation in support of farming and access to healthy foods for ALL Hawaii people.

Providing support for food hubs is LONG OVERDUE and critical to supporting sustainable agriculture, workforce development in the ag sector, and access to Healthy Food for everyone.

- Food hubs are critical to expanding farm to school/farm to state by allowing small farmers (the majority of Hawaii's farmers) to aggregate, store, wash/process, pack, market, and distribute produce and other foods and to bid on larger contracts offered by state institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons). Food hubs support existing and new farmers by relieving/sharing the burden of these significant challenges.
- These bills will expand current efforts and increase government investment in farm to school/farm to state and the regeneration of Hawaii's community food systems.

Do what is pono and support this and all other bills in support of local agriculture

Suzanne Fields

Haiku, Maui

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 10:41:16 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melissa Reickert	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 2, 2020

Dear Members of the House,

My name is Melissa Reickert, I live on the island of Maui, and I am writing in support of HB 1892 to appropriate funds to establish a 5-year food hub pilot program. I am a current member of the Farm Apprentice Mentor Program Cohort 5. If I've learned anything thus far in the FAM Program, it's that farmers work hard! We are privileged to spend our weekends learning from an incredible pool of mentor farmers. My take-away every weekend is that farmers are required to keep so many balls in the air to support themselves and their families as they provide food for the community. Creating food hubs would help our farmers focus on growing food rather than marketing and distribution. In addition, food hubs would make it more convenient for consumers to acquire the healthy, local food grown thus taking steps towards islandwide food security. Food hubs are a win-win.

Food hubs are critical to local food systems. Large agribusinesses that tend to grow mono-crops are not the answer to Hawaii's food needs. It is the small to mid-size farmers that will feed our island population if adequately supported. USDA research found that 76% of food hubs work almost exclusively with small to mid-size farms. At the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2016, Governor Ige announced a bold vision to double Hawaii's food production by 2020. Increased food production is indeed important but unless we create ways to get that food into the hands of the consumer, increased food production is a moot point. Food hubs are pivotal to realizing Governor Ige's vision. They are vital to helping farmers access broader markets such as schools, hospitals, restaurants, and community groups. They also provide a consistent, reliable, and accessible market for island families. Doubled food production in Hawaii is only relevant if that food reaches the tables of consumers. Food hubs are the solution.

I ask you to support HB 1892. This budget allocation to support a 5-year food hub pilot program will promote entrepreneurship, create jobs, and fight food insecurity in our islands. And it will support our farmers who work tirelessly to feed us. Thank you for helping to create a sustainable Hawaii.

Aloha,

Melissa Reickert



Testimony of Hawai‘i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
In Support of HB 1892 -- Relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program
House Committee on Committee on Economic Development & Business
Wednesday, February 5, 2020, 9:35 AM, in conference room 309

Dear Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of HB 1892, which creates a food hub program in the Department of Agriculture.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines food hubs as facilities that “facilitate the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally produced food products.” These facilities are a critical yet undervalued piece of the local food system infrastructure.

Hawai‘i Appleseed believes it is important that low-income residents have access to the same standards of food quality and nutrition as wealthier residents. Unfortunately, the lack of infrastructure for local food production makes lower income markets more difficult for Hawai‘i farmers to reach. This creates an inequitable system, where only affluent households have access to fresh, local ingredients, and lower income households must rely on nutrient-poor processed foods, exacerbating the health disparities between higher and lower income individuals.

Food hubs are an economic development tool for rural communities. A recent survey of Hawai‘i food hubs, conducted by the Hawai‘i Farmers Union United, found that most existing food hubs in the state serve low-income populations, including direct sales to families who rely on SNAP-EBT, and aggregation of food for schools with a high proportion of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Over the past five years, they have brought in nearly \$6 million in outside investments, most of which has been channeled into local infrastructure, and have created over 60 jobs.

Local food production is an important goal, but we often place all the emphasis on the “production” end of the supply chain, while ignoring all of the other steps needed to get those products to local markets. Farmers need market infrastructure if they are to reach local families, and food hubs are a critical piece of that infrastructure.

We appreciate your consideration of this testimony, and urge you to pass HB 1892.

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 10:49:31 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lauren Loor	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha members of the Economic Development and Business Committee, my name is Lauren Loor and I am a resident of Maui County. I ask that you please support HB 1892 relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program. Food hubs are critical to expanding farm to school/farm to state by allowing small farmers (the majority of Hawaii's farmers) to aggregate, store, wash/process, pack, market, and distribute produce and other foods and to bid on larger contracts offered by state institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons). Food hubs support existing and new farmers by relieving/sharing the burden of these significant challenges. This bill will expand current efforts and increase government investment in farm to school/farm to state and the regeneration of Hawaii's community food systems. Mahalo for your time and consideration.



LATE

Date: February 4, 2020

To: The Honorable Angus McKelvey, Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Economic Development & Business

From: Lydi Bernal, Coordinator, Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Re: SUPPORT for HB1892, Relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program

Hrg: February 5, 2020 at 9:35am at Conference Room 309

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB1892**, which requires the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to establish a five-year food hub pilot program and provides for the awarding of grant funding to establish and expand food hubs.

The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) works to advance policy and systems change to reduce disparities and improve the health of Hawai'i residents. HIPHI is home to the Obesity Prevention Task Force¹ and the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui².

Through our extensive experience with strengthening Hawaii's farm to school movement over the past decade, it has become abundantly clear that **food hubs are an absolutely essential and key component to regenerating Hawaii's community food systems**, and thus to achieving food security and food self sufficiency in Hawai'i. This bill is critically important for supporting the sustainability and growth of small family farms (which constitute 95% of all farms in Hawai'i³) by significantly expanding their access to large institutional markets such as the Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE).

On January 30, 2020 the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui, HIDOE School Food Services Branch (SFSB), and partners hosted a **webinar for farmers and distributors** on supplying fresh and local produce to HIDOE. The turnout was impressive with over 120 registered participants. Importantly the three panelists representing those with experience sourcing local produce to HIDOE were from **community-based food hubs**, including the Kohala Food Hub, Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative, and Sustainable Molokai. Each entity serves as a regional aggregation center, sourcing from dozens of small family farms and supplying thousands of pounds of locally grown foods annually to HIDOE SFSB.

Thanks to the **strategic investments** made during the last several years by the Hawai'i State Legislature (including funding for the HDOA Hawai'i Farm to School Program, HIDOE SFSB Farm to School Coordinator, and HDOA Farm to State positions), and the focused efforts of a

multitude of community partners, we are beginning to see the first fruits of Hawaii's farm to school movement. We respectfully request that you to **please pass this bill as an essential next step** toward achieving our shared vision for food security and food self sufficiency in Hawai'i!

Me Ke Aloha,

Lydi Bernal
Coordinator, Hawai'i Farm to School Hui
Member, Obesity Prevention Task Force
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

¹ Created by the legislature in 2012, the **Obesity Prevention Task Force** is comprised of over 40 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawaii's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents.

² The **Hawai'i Farm to School Hui** is a statewide network comprised of five island-level networks, community organizations, schools, state agencies, and other food systems stakeholders with a collective mission to strengthen Hawaii's farm to school movement. The three pillars of successful farm to school programs are 1) school gardens, 2) agriculture, culinary, nutrition, and food systems education, and 3) school food improvements through local food procurement. The Hawai'i Farm to School Hui formed in 2010 and became a program of HIPHI in 2017.

³ United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) **2017 Census of Agriculture**. Small farms are defined by USDA as earning less than \$250,000 in gross sales per year, which applies to 5,250 of 5,521 (95%) farms in Hawai'i. Importantly, 75% (3998 of 5316) of Hawaii's farms are one to nine acres in size.

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 11:26:06 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
tanya torres	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii has outstanding support for local food production but many people below the poverty line (especially indigenous communities) struggle to find the time, energy, and finances for local food. Whether they are working multiple jobs and dont have the time to go shopping, cant afford the price premiums for local produce, or don't live close enough to markets selling adequate healthy local foods. Though a food hub wouldnt solve all these issues, it could make it easier for communities to have access to healthy local food. I think a pilot program to try and tackle these issues is a step in the right direction.

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 11:53:47 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kyle Clarkin	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

A grant program of this proportion would change countless lives, because it provides what local farmers need to get their food to the people. As well as providing our people with healthy affordable local food. This bill would also put an end to much of the food that is wasted every year. We can not afford all the external costs that come from having a non local food producing system. How can we justify wasting food, when there are children in our communitys who do not recive proper nutrition. Bill HB1892 would solve a large part of this challenge we face. as well as exponentially help in reaching Hawaii's goal of becoming more food sustainable. The people of these islands are restoring these islands, Thank you so much for your contribution to this process, I dream of becoming more involved in local government and the opportunity to have my voice heard on this subject is very meaningful. Mahalo Nui loa



LATE

February 4, 2020

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS
Rep. Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Re: HB1892 Relating to a Food Hub project - **In Support**

For Hawaii farmers, particularly small- to medium-sized farms, to meet challenges including the ravages of climate change, it is important that they have a pipeline that provides an outlet for both first-quality and slightly off-grade produce.

Establishment of this program would also benefit farm to school and other state priority programs and reduce food waste.

GreenWheel Food Hub recommends passage of this measure as a positive contribution to developing a robust food chain in Hawaii.

Larry Geller
Nanette Geller
Project Co-Directors
GreenWheel Food Hub

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 12:07:57 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ashley Clark	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Ashley Clark. I live on the fertile island of Maui, in the Ahupua'a of Hamakualoa and the Moku of Huelo. I am a current FAM (Farm Apprentice Mentorship) apprentice in cohort 5.

I relocated to Maui just over a year ago to immerse myself in small-scale regenerative agriculture. No where else in the United States have I found such a rich community of land stewards and earth caretakers as here within the farming culture of the Hawaiian islands. This unique climate allows for the cultivation of a broad spectrum of tropical, cultural, and common western fruits and vegetables. As a result, the Hawaiian islands provide ideal growing conditions for the education of current and future farmers.

As a farm manager for the last year, working on 2.2 acres of certified organic farmland I have seen firsthand the challenges of the production process. From seed to plate there are many steps that must be followed for both organic certification as well as state & federal laws regarding post-harvest process and distribution. One of the particular struggles my farm faced has been around the production of eggs. In order to retail our farm fresh eggs, they must be washed and processed in a support commercial kitchen. In our case, the kitchen is 1 hour away. With a flock of 100 birds producing 50-75 eggs per day, driving 2 hours daily, on top of the costs of the support kitchen, packaging supplies, needs for refrigeration and distribution, at the end of the day, leaves us in the red. In my particular region, many farmers work with water catchment or well water & septic systems. As a result it can be nearly impossible to establish a commercial kitchen because of the limited availability of inspectors who perform wastewater calculations, the requirement of monthly water testing of water tanks, and the labeling and reporting process to demonstrate safe practices. In addition, energy costs of packaging and storing any more than a small quantity of eggs becomes quickly very costly. These issues are deterrents for many small farmers in my region. A clear solution to this would

be the ability to establish food hub systems where multiple farms/farmers could utilize shared facilities to support the process of getting food to consumer. There is much more the the process of getting food to consumers than production alone, and farmers need systems built up around them to support these many steps. Many small farmers do not have the resources to afford commercial kitchens, refrigeration, & delivery trucks. If we could collectively share resources, within a reasonable distance to farms/farmers, the ease of burden on small farmers could be lessened.

Agriculture in Hawaii is extremely culturally significant and communities have thrived here for hundreds of years through sharing resources within ones Ahupua'a. I urge to please consider the multitude of positive effects from the institution of food hub systems in Hawai'i for local farmers and local food production.

Mahalo nui loa,

Ashley Clark

FAM Cohort 5

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 12:52:16 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David S. Case	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Small to medium-scale farms are real and potential sources of nutritious food throughout Hawaii. Food hubs are a method to aggregate and distribute agriculture produce from these farms, which enables those farmers to increase their income while providing more sources for distribution of their products. I therefore support HB 1892 providing for a five-year pilot food hub program.

Respectfully,

David S. Case

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 12:54:52 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dennis F Lokmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 12:57:15 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ming Wei Koh	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Food hubs are critical to expanding farm to school/farm to state by allowing small farmers (95% of Hawaii's farms) to aggregate, store, wash/process, pack, market, and distribute produce and other foods and to bid on larger contracts offered by state institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons). Food hubs support existing and new farmers by relieving/sharing the burden of these significant challenges.

Food hubs will expand current efforts and increase government investment in farm to school/farm to state and the regeneration of Hawaii's community food systems toward achieving food security and self sufficiency in Hawai'i.

As a small scale farmer on Hawaii Island, I am in need of such a service in order to make it economically. Food hubs are important to the economics of our state.



LATE

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

February 5, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS

TESTIMONY ON HB 1892
RELATING TO A FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM

Room 309
9:35 AM

Aloha Chair mCkELVEY, Vice Chair Kitagawa, 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 1892, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a five-year food hub pilot program to increase access to local food and provides for the award of grant funding by qualified applicants wishing to establish or expand a food hub.

Small farmers typically do not have access facilities and infrastructure to aggregate, process, and distribute products to local consumers. The challenge to small growers is also complicated by stringent regulations of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), jeopardizing the ongoing viability of many small growers due to the costs of compliance.

In Hawaii, additional challenges to small farmers include high costs in land, labor, and energy, as well as limited access to water supply for irrigation. Food hubs are an important subset of food value chains. Many farmers and ranchers, especially small sized operations, often lack the capacity to access retail, institutional, and commercial foodservice markets on their own, and consequently miss out on the fastest growing segment of the local food market. By offering a combination of aggregation, distribution, and marketing services at an affordable price, food hubs make it possible for many producers to gain entry into new larger-volume markets that boost their income and provide them with opportunities for scaling up production.

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

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 2:36:48 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tasia Y	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha kākou-

I am writing in strong support of this bill. In light of the increasing necessity of food security and self-sufficiency due to climate change-related natural disasters, supporting food hubs is an integral step in creating a safer and more resilient Hawai'i. Food hubs allow farmers to aggregate and distribute their produce on a larger scale such that state institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons) can source locally. As someone who has worked within the Farm-to-School movement, having schools be able to source produce from local food hubs would support our farmers as well as our keiki. Supporting food hubs allows Hawai'i to invest in our small, regenerative farms and community food systems to achieve food security and self-sufficiency, in line with state goals to increase local food production.

Mahalo for taking this testimony into consideration in support of HB1892.

Tasia Yamamura

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 3:11:31 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katie Folio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha honorable members of the committee,

I submit this testimony as a private citizen of Kula, Maui in strong support HB1892.

Food hubs are critical to expanding farm to school/farm to state by allowing small farmers (the majority of Hawaii’s farmers) to aggregate, store, wash/process, pack, market, and distribute produce and other foods and to bid on larger contracts offered by state institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons). Food hubs support existing and new farmers by relieving/sharing the burden of these significant challenges.

These bills will expand current efforts and increase government investment in farm to school/farm to state and the regeneration of Hawaii’s community food systems.

Mahalo nui loa,

Katie Folio

Kula, Maui, HI

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 3:57:06 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Redfeather	Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	No

Comments:

Although it doesn't mention this in the Bill, the DOE's 'Aina Pono Program hopes to eventually procure more locally grown foods for the children's breakfast and lunch service. Instead of procuring products in one Honolulu location, having Island Food Hubs would allow products to be aggregated locally in smaller lots, which would enable MANY more farmers to participate. The total amount of the Bill at \$1,000,000 is much too small for 5 hubs. Consider increasing the dollar amount. Hopefully this adds to our Island's ability to procure locally produced foods.



LATE

Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS
Wednesday, February 5, 2020 — 9:35 a.m. — Room 309

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1892, Relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program.

Dear Chair McKelvey and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amy Hennessey, and I am the Senior Vice President of Communications & External Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve our community's quality of life by creating more locally produced food; increasing affordable clean renewable energy and transportation options; and better managing waste and fresh water resources.

Ulupono supports HB 1892, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a 5-year food hub pilot program to increase access to local food.

Ulupono supports the efforts of food hubs statewide as they serve as critical aggregation, food processing, and distribution for small farmers to access local markets. By increasing local market accessibility, small farmers will be able to provide a fresh, healthy product for consumers statewide. According to the 2017 USDA NASS Census of Agriculture, of Hawai'i's 7,328 farms statewide, 66%, or 4,868 farms, are between 1–9 acres and 78%, or 5,701 farms, produce less than \$25,000 in sales. Hawai'i's agricultural producer majority is small farmers. State supported food hubs allow Hawai'i's producers the opportunity to compete with local markets while also remaining financially viable.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Amy Hennessey, APR
Senior Vice President, Communications & External Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 4:07:23 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jesse Lipman	Kokua Kalihi Valley	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Jesse Lipman. For the past decade I've been the Food Programs Coordinator for Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services (or KKV). Among my duties building connections between food, land and health I've been a project officer for federal and foundation food access grants that have brought about \$1.5 million dollars into Hawai'i to support small to mid-sized farmers and primarily low income Kalihi consumers of locally produced fruits and vegetables. One of these grants led to the creation of the Roots Cultural Food Hub which aggregates produce from organic farmers on O'ahu and distributes them through health center and community sites in Kalihi Valley with an emphasis on the healthy traditional foods of the many Hawaiian, Samoan, Micronesian and Filipino residents of the community.

But, I'm not just here to talk about what we do at KKV. I'm here to take you back to 2007 when I served as an O'ahu community meeting facilitator for the development of the state's landmark 2050 Sustainability Plan. That plan was developed to

"serve as a guideline for funding and implementation by state and county agencies".

It remains as the most complete community driven document Hawai'i has produced to direct public spending toward a future that will sustain my daughters and your children and grandchildren to live in Hawai'i. The plan emphasized 9 crucial 2020 benchmarks for our long term future. At that time 2020 seemed a long way off, but here we are. Those benchmarks include:

7. Increase Production and Consumption of Local Foods and Products, Particularly Agriculture
6. Create a Sustainability Ethic
5. Develop a More Diverse and Resilient Economy
3. Reduce Reliance on Fossil (carbon-based) Fuels

These are among the goals those of us farmers, food hub developers and local food system supporters have used to guide our work. Unfortunately, the state and legislature has too often treated our primary sustainability funding directive as an afterthought in appropriations. Even though most of us agree that we must “Increase Production and Consumption of Local Foods and Products, Particularly Agriculture. Create a Sustainability Ethic. Reduce Reliance on Fossil (carbon-based) Fuels and Develop a More Diverse and Resilient Economy,” we barely fund any of these efforts. In 2018 the State Auditor provided a 10 year report on the State’s Sustainability plan and concluded,

“This report found that through the course of the past ten years, the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan was disregarded... these recommendations were either only partially implemented or not implemented at all... A stronger legislative framework focusing on sustainability, the permanent establishment of a governmental sustainability coordinating entity with recognized responsibilities and authorities, and budgetary funding are necessary to develop, coordinate, and implement Hawaii’s sustainability goals, priorities, and planning throughout government.... Future sustainability coordination should include local food security planning and strategies”

This is not the first time I’ve submitted testimony in favor of efforts to strengthen our local food system. It probably won’t be the last. Regardless of what appropriations you make or don’t make, there are many of us working hard to accomplish these sustainability and healthy local food goals that will ensure Hawai’i can better feed itself, develop new young farmers, maintain our connections to the healthy cultural foods of our ancestors and these islands, and not be as reliant on a global fossil fuel driven food system that is helping to sink us into the ocean. But, it would sure be a lot easier if the legislature followed the directives of the people and made the funding of these sustainability objectives a priority. Food Hubs are only one small piece in this effort, and this funding is a tiny fraction of the state’s expenditures, but if we do not fund these modest efforts how do we expect to reach the bigger and increasingly more urgent need for a sustainable Hawai’i.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Jesse Lipman

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 5:13:23 PM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dale Nelson-Floto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS

FEBRUARY 5, 2020
9:35 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 309

HOUSE BILL NO. 1892
RELATING TO A FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM

Chairperson McKelvey and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1892, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a five-year food hub program to increase access to local food. It provides further for the award of grant funding to qualified applicants wishing to establish or expand a food hub, requires reports to the Legislature, and provides funds.

The Department supports this measure provided it does not adversely impact the Department's priorities in the Executive Supplemental budget and offers supporting comments.

Food hubs, as centrally located facilities with a business management structure that facilitates the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution and marketing of locally grown produce, are an integral but missing piece of agricultural infrastructure required to achieve and sustain the doubling of local food production in Hawaii.

The sugar and pineapple plantations had the luxury of focusing on single crops and built the required infrastructure to effectively and efficiently process and package their production. Supporting diversified crop production requires a more flexible and coordinated operation of a magnitude and complexity which no small, local farmer can afford on their own.

The Agribusiness Development Corporation's Whitmore Food Hub Master Plan illustrates the complexity of the food hub concept as evidenced by the need to support the scale and scope of the farming operations of the central Oahu community that it will



serve. Timing is critical to ensure that production and processing/packaging support are provided effectively and in synchrony.

Additionally, the grant funding process will ensure that the required planning and community facilitation are conducted before project implementation when establishing new or improving existing qualifying food hubs on Oahu and the Neighbor Islands.

- The Department is aware of four food hubs on Oahu, four on Hawaii Island, and one each on Maui and Molokai, identified as follows: Oahu: Kahumana Farm Hub (Waianae), Farmlink Hawaii (North Shore), Kokua Kalihi Valley Cultural Food Hub (Kalihi), and Oahu Fresh (Honolulu);
- Hawaii Island: Adaptations (Kona), The Ulu Producers Cooperative (Kona), The Food Basket (Kona), and The Kohala Food Hub (Kohala);
- Maui: Local Harvest Food Hub (Kula); and
- Molokai – Sustainable Molokai.

These food hubs are providing jobs, representing hundreds of small to medium sized farms, serving thousands of customers, and producing over \$2.5 million in annual gross income.

This measure will improve the visibility of food hubs, and advance the hopes of establishing food hubs on Kauai and Lanai by assisting with planning and encouraging community involvement..

The Department agrees that food hubs may become a more important link in the supply chain to channel more local food to the consumers and institutions of the State. This measure addresses the challenge of local small farmers to scale-up production by providing a pathway to the larger purchasers of safe and marginally processed, locally grown, fresh fruits and vegetables.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



67-332 Kaiea Pl.
Waialua, HI 96791-
9501
808-383-4481
www.NSEVP.org

February 5, 2020

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

SUBJECT: Support for HB1892 – Food Hub Pilot Program

(Date/Time of Hearing: 2/5/2020 at 9:35 a.m.)

LATE

Dear Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Kitagawa and members of the committee,

On behalf of the North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership (North Shore EVP), I would like to extend our full support of HB1892, which will establish a five-year food hub pilot program within the Department of Agriculture.

The North Shore EVP was formed in 2015 as a result of a comprehensive, community-based economic analysis that identified the need for a food hub to fill serious gaps in the food supply chain of the North Shore region of Oahu. Our non-profit organization worked with community leaders to develop realistic strategic plans focused on securing that critical infrastructure and providing new opportunities for ag and ag-tourism businesses and creation of new jobs in agriculture in the region.

As we started planning for a food hub we became aware of the Food Safety & Modernization Act (FSMA) and the impact that law would have on the operations of the facility. Specifically, we anticipated that the target markets of the food hub (schools, hotels, etc.) would eventually require documentation of food safety practices from the growers. USDA and Hawaii Department of Agriculture data indicated that very few farms in Hawaii had such training and documentation.

We subsequently started a USDA GroupGAP program that allows groups of farms to work together to obtain their USDA Harmonized GAP certification and spread the cost savings across all members of the group. In December 2019 we certified 2 more farms on Oahu and in January 2020 the program successfully passed its USDA Harmonized GAP audit. We are now working with farms on Oahu, Hawaii Island, and Kauai. We are the 15th GroupGAP program in the country and are currently the only food safety training program focused on farm certification and FSMA compliance in the state.

With the GroupGAP program now operating statewide we have recently turned our attention back to the North Shore regional food hub. Our research indicates that in Hawaii a viable food hub will require approximately 7,500ft² of floor space (2,000ft² refrigerated), 7-10 employees, 1-2 trucks and gross revenue of ~\$1.5 million or more. Contrary to the legislature's findings, there are in fact several avenues of federal funding available for construction of such facilities including USDA Rural Business Development grants, USDA Community Facilities grant/loan packages, and USDA Rural Energy grants to name but a few. In addition, the state has several programs that would directly benefit a food hub project including Enterprise Zones and DBEDT's Manufacturing Assistance Program (MAP).

While we applaud the legislature for its recognition of the role food hubs can play in meeting state goals of doubling the food supply and promoting food resiliency in Hawaii,

we also recognize that regions across the state have similar challenges and that there is not a silver bullet that will address the needs of every community. We therefore ask that this bill be amended to include funding for food hub planning as one of the initial start-up grant priority areas. As alluded to above funding and construction of a food hub at the scale needed to insure profitability requires significant coordination of stakeholders and resources. It requires feasibility studies and master planning. And, because of the competitive nature of some awards and grant funding cycles, the entire process can be expected to take from 2-3 years before construction begins.

HB1892 is a positive step in the right direction for establishing a network of food hubs across the state that can open new markets for small farms, increase the availability of fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables and expand the tax base through new job creation and import substitution. North Shore EVP strongly supports this bill.

Sincerely,

Kevin M Kelly

Kevin Kelly
President & CEO
North Shore EVP

LATE

HB-1892

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 7:49:54 AM

Testimony for EDB on 2/5/2020 9:35:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
NANCY JONES	Jones Family Farm - Wai`anae	Support	No

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1892

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and Honorable Committee Members:

My family and I submit this testimony in support of HB 1892 to establish a food hub pilot program beginning in fiscal year 2020 and extending until 2025. In particular, we support the idea of increasing access to locally grown food and improving Hawai`i's food security via this food hub pilot program through HB 1892's proposed grant-award process.

As small-family farmers, we experience many difficulties along the path to our final markets. These include lack of: market intelligence, pricing information, proper crop selection based on market trends, technical support, and post-harvest handling facilities (packing, grading, food-safety certification, packaging, etal.) However, qualified small-scale food hubs like those servicing a limited number of growers – for example, Kahumana Organic Farm – provide many of these otherwise unavailable services and market opportunities to local farmers.

A typical small farmer cannot access major local supermarket chains or even small supermarkets as they may lack of sufficient quantities to approach these markets AND also due to competition from other small farmers in a 10-mile radius. Secondly, these farmers may have no way of knowing about fair pricing. In addition, many of these same farmers also do not have access to the all-important cold-chain to preserve produce quality and shelf-life. It is not unusual for farmers to lose up to 30-percent of their harvested crops due to lack of cold chain facilities. Packaging and specialty markets that pay higher prices for locally-grown produce are also key features of food hubs that can assist Hawai`i's local growers and improve food security for the State.

Accordingly, there is a definite need to financially support existing food hub facilities like Kahumana and potential food hubs in counties like Kaua`i that could benefit local growers tremendously. For all of the above reasons, we respectfully urge your committee to pass this bill, but perhaps increase the \$1 million grant funding for qualified applicants allocation to -- \$1 million or more per County. Thank you very much

for this opportunity to present this testimony supporting HB 1892 and Hawai`i's small farmers.