

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Acting Chairperson  
Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY 8, 2019  
11:00 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 312

HOUSE BILL NO. 937  
RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE LOANS

Chairperson Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on House Bill 937. This bill increases the chairperson's authority to approve agricultural and aquacultural loans to \$100,000.00. The Department of Agriculture strongly supports this bill.

The chairperson's approval authority of \$25,000 has not been increased since it was originally authorized in 1982, approximately 37 years ago. Since that time, business costs have increased significantly, and the speed of business has increased. The higher approval authority will allow faster approval of smaller loans and enable the Department to respond faster to assist applicants during times of emergency and allow businesses to take advantage of opportunities that may require immediate funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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February 8, 2019

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 937**  
RELATING TO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE LOANS

Room 312  
11:00 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 1,900 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.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 937**, which increases the chairperson's authority to approve agricultural loans and aquacultural loans from \$25,000 to \$100,000.

We support this change as it will expedite the approval of small loans to Hawaii's farmers and ranchers. Raising the ceiling of the loan approval authority of the Chairperson parallels the ongoing increase in construction and operating costs. This increase will also allow the Board of Agriculture to focus on larger loans that are more complex. Overall, it will make the HDOA more efficient and by reducing the cost and time expended on and by Hawaii's farmers and ranchers waiting for approval for a small HDOA loan.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

**HB-937**

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 1:45:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/8/2019 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Karen Winslow	Hawaii Farmers Union	Support	No

Comments:



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
Friday, February 8, 2019 — 11:00 a.m. — Room 312

**Ulupono Initiative Supports HB 937, Relating to Department of Agriculture Loans**

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Murray Clay and I am Managing Partner of Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and better manage waste and fresh water resources. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

**Ulupono supports HB 937**, which increases the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture to approve agricultural and aquacultural loans, because it aligns with our goal to increase local food production.

One major, persistent and formidable obstacle to expanding, diversifying, and ensuring the sustainability of Hawai'i's local food production is the need for substantial capital investment in agriculture infrastructure, technologies, facilities, workforce training, and production activities. Yet, our local farmers and ranchers have few options for agricultural financing. The agricultural loan revolving fund is one of the many ways the State has been supportive of agriculture in Hawai'i over the years. This bill would give additional flexibility to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture such that DOA may provide additional financial support when necessary.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become increasingly complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Murray Clay  
Managing Partner

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

**HB-937**

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 10:54:08 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/8/2019 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**HB-937**

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 6:50:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/8/2019 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Mulinix	Our Revolution Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

**LATE**

**HB-937**

Submitted on: 2/8/2019 9:54:21 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/8/2019 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
De MONT R. D. CONNER	Ho'omanapono Political Action Committee (HPAC)	Support	Yes

Comments:

WE STRONGLY SUPPORT THIS BILL.