

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 ENVIRONMENT**

**FEBRUARY 5, 2020  
1:15 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2722  
RELATING TO A FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2722, 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.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 10:15:59 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alexandra Kahn	Testifying for Surfrider Oahu	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 8:48:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Megan Fox	Testifying for Malama Kauaï™i	Support	No

Comments:

Not only should we support this, but we should increase the funding level even higher to accelerate the development of food hubs. It's one of the core strategies desperately needed to increase our local food production and distribution.

Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

HEARING DATE:

Wednesday, February 5, 2020 at 1:15 p.m.

PLACE:

Conference Room 224  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

***Testimony in support of SB 2722***

Farm Link Hawai'i is a food hub that directly supports over 100 farmers, ranchers and producers throughout the state of Hawai'i. Since 2015, Farm Link's online marketplace and delivery service have been making it easy to support local farms. Farm Link currently delivers to commercial buyers, including Foodland and Whole Foods Market in addition to 100+ restaurants, caterers, and schools. We also allow household buyers to order for pickup at designated locations around O'ahu.

I am writing in strong support of SB 2722 to establish a five-year food hub pilot program to increase access to local food. Food hubs operate on extremely thin margins. Establishing and growing a food hub require an extraordinary amount of capital and support to have a chance at survival. The proposed SB 2722 would provide grant assistance to food hubs to reduce risk and increase their impact.

Farm Link Hawai'i has relied heavily on federal and state grants to launch and continue to scale. We would not exist without such assistance and are continually looking for additional support in order to reach financial viability. Please consider passing SB 2722 to help us continue to do work to increase local food production and consumption.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R Barreca", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Robert Barreca  
Founder and CEO  
Farm Link Hawai'i

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 1/30/2020 4:00:29 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Joseph Kohn MD	Testifying for We Are One, Inc. - www.WeAreOne.cc - WAO	Support	No

Comments:

Support local sustainable food production. People before profit.

[www.WeAreOne.cc](http://www.WeAreOne.cc)



67-332 Kaiea Pl.  
Waiialua, HI 96791-  
9501  
808-383-4481  
[www.NSEVP.org](http://www.NSEVP.org)

January 30, 2020

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

**SUBJECT:** Support for SB2722 – Food Hub Pilot Program

(Date/Time of Hearing: 2/5/2020 at 1:15 p.m.)

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman 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 SB2722, 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 7,500ft<sup>2</sup> of floor space (2,000ft<sup>2</sup> 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.

SB2722 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



Vincent Mina  
President  
HFUU-HFUF



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

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

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2722 BEFORE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT, WEDNESDAY 1.15PM IN CONFERENCE ROOM 224

David Case  
Secretary

Aloha Chairman Gabbard and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment.

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 SB2722:

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. SB2722 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*

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 8:01:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dr. Jana Bogs	Testifying for Beyond Organic Consulting, Inc.	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 8:58:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dana Shapiro	Testifying for Hawaii Ulu Producers Cooperative	Support	No

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

We fully support SB2722 which would appropriate funds to the HDOA to establish a food hub pilot program to provide funds to establish new and develop existing food hubs statewide. As a food hub structured as a farmer owned entity, the Hawaii Ulu Producers Cooperative strongly recognizes the crucial role that food hubs play in developing local food systems nationwide. In Hawaii, their role is amplified because 96% of our local farms are small scale, according to the USDA's definition - representing farms with gross revenues of under \$250,000 per year. These small-scale operations rely on structure for collective action and mid-tier value chain connectors to realize economies of scale, access lucrative market opportunities, add value to their crops - including basic forms of minimal processing to extend shelf life and seasonality, and to receive technical assistance in food safety, GAP and other best practices that increase their efficiencies and enable them to meet increasingly stringent market and regulatory requirements. Over the past decade, Hawaii State has articulated several ambitious goals to increase food production and enhance self sufficiency, which will not be realized without the facilitation of food hub entities. It is therefore an imperative of the State, that along with mandating food production targets such as the "30% by 2030" and the "Aloha+ Challenge", it create meaningful support structure for food hubs to succeed and flourish on every island.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions about our support for this important measure. The Hawaii Ulu Producers Cooperative represents 85 farmers on Hawaii Island and Maui, and has customers statewide including all 256 cafeterias belonging to the Hawaii Department of Education, 6 state hospitals, and 1 state prison, in addition to myriad restaurants, hotels and grocery stores.

Sincerely,

Dana Shapiro

(808) 238-8869

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 10:00:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Harriet Witt	Testifying for Hawaii Farmers Union United - Haleakala Chapter	Support	No

Comments:

We are dangerously dependent on the mainland for food. Solving this problems requires more farmers and more ways for farmers to get their crops to market. This bill will help farmers accomplish this.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 8:25:37 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sylvia Cenzano	Testifying for Malamalama Farm and Center, 501(c)3	Support	No

Comments:

Access to local foods is a critical item in the sustainability of our lives here on the islands.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 1:50:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Helmut Klauer	Testifying for A'a Li'i Farm	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 7:01:29 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicole K Galase	Testifying for Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 2:08:00 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Azuma Chrupalyk	Testifying for Farmer in Training w/FAM, through the HI Farmers Union and UHMC	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support the creation of local food hubs to support the benefits of farming, which will also lower prices of local products, will boost the local economy, will eventually create more sustainable environmental conditions, help defeat climate change, as we are in an area that will be immediately affected and farmers know that planting tamarinds by the shorelines will produce safe trees, fruits, and prevent shoreline erosion. Farmers know how to properly maintain the environment in manners conducive to our future generations' survival. The food growth will ensure our continued survival as an island people.

Supporting training programs and the formation of these hubs can only be beneficial because farmers cannot afford to fix the environment, if we can't afford to farm. Producing a sustainable paycheck, will fix that, along with keeping more people employed and housed, while reducing crime rates.

I am a student in the FAM Farm Program cohort #5 offered at UHMC, along with my 14 year old son. I hope to open my farm on Moloka'i to produce employment and education, while supporting a productive business model that does not increase tourism on the small, well preserved island.

Growing things comes easy. But I had to learn how to properly manage a farm, build a business plan and learn how to assemble my dreams in a way that will build a future for my community. I am really thankful for this program teaching me all that I am learning, and hope to utilize a food hub model to further unite our communities.





2/3/2020

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2722 BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Aloha Chairman Mike Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

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.

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

**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.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 9:21:47 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jessi	Testifying for Farmers Apprentice Mentoring Program	Support	Yes

Comments:

My Name is Jessi Blaylock, I live in the Moku of Hamakualoa in the Ahu’pua’a of Kuiaha. I have been living on Maui for two years now. I started on the land with my partner, as woofers helping along a market garden. We worked our way up to farm managers of a sprawling River Valley Farm. In the time I have been on island, I have been lucky enough to work a secured spot at the upcountry farmers market. We were introduced to the market by bringing only the produce that the farm we worked on generated. But as we became intermingled with the farmers market community and the regulars who shopped there, we started receiving the questions “Can you come harvest my farm? Do you need mangoes for the market? Avocados? Cows milk?” For many of the questions, the answer was yes, we are always willing to diversify our booth. But after months of this, we have had to continually turn produce down, we’re not able to accommodate it all, or sell 'value added' items that require a commercial kitchen certification or refrigeration. On top of that the market became saturated with similar produce. It became apparent that this was a small sample of a bigger issue, of abundance and no place to funnel it. People come from all over maui for the upcountry market. We meet people from Lahaina to Hana every Saturday, not to mention the many tourists who meander through. This is because the market is one of just a handful of places that people can consistently buy and sell organic products on our island and truly mingle with the people growing and making their food. There is 120 market booth spots but a list of 200 possible vendors. Over 80 excess people waiting with produce and very little alternative avenues to sell. Traveling to another market is futile because they don’t have enough room to accommodate more vendors and creating accounts with grocery stores often drives down return to the farmer. There are over 7,000 family farms on these islands. Which brings me to the necessity for the support and growth of pilot food hubs. There are already a few food hub programs functioning on the islands, in Kona and O’ahu. Which have proven themselves to be beneficial for the family farmer who may have more trouble processing their goods as opposed to producing. Pilot food hubs may allow farmers in the community a space to package, prepare and preserve foods in commercially certified spaces. Or allow a space for small scale farmers or families with abundance to bring or sell their produce or product to the hub, if they don't want to market themselves. By encouraging this space and having it managed we open an avenue to create relationships with hospitals, hotels, schools and the families on the islands. To truly begin to expand the impact of locally grown nutritious food, cultivate its

importance, make it our normal. We would nurture the idea of a food secure Hawaii, while putting some well earned dollars back into the hands of family farmers. We need support backing projects like this, because small farms are the backbone of moving towards food secure Hawaii, they are the ones truly concerned with feeding our neighbors. Foodhub would be host to the meeting of many in our communities. And if we do it properly, as I'm sure the five years of statistic reports will show, we can strengthen our agricultural industry and local economy as well. Food hubs are a step towards the regeneration of community, security of food and agricultural integrity.

Thank you



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 Sb2722 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

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 1:06:29 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2722

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Ruderman and Honorable Committee Members:

My family submits this testimony in support of SB 2722 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 SB2722'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 SB 2722 and Hawai`i's small farmers.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 9:15:28 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lee Mackessy	Testifying for FAM	Support	Yes

Comments:

As a current student of the FAM (farming apprentice program on Maui), the Food Hub would provide the necessary support to help me and I can safely say most of the other 25 students in this program to "hit the ground running" and bring our produce to the market sooner than later. This will enable more of our community to be able to partake in the healthy and delicious bounty new farmers can provide to our community at large.



**HAWAII APPLESEED**  
CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
In Support of SB 2722 -- Relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Environment  
Wednesday, February 5, 2020, 1:15 PM, in conference room 224

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Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of SB 2722, 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 SB 2722.

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*Hawai'i Appleseed is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.*





Date: February 4, 2020

To: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Russell Ruderman, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment

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

Re: SUPPORT for SB2722, Relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program

Hrg: February 5, 2020 at 1:15pm at Conference Room 224

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Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SB2722**, 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 Force<sup>1</sup> and the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui<sup>2</sup>.

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'i<sup>3</sup>) 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 11:43:46 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kyle Clarkin	Testifying for The Collective Cycle LLC	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 a 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 SB2722 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 goverment and the opportunity to have my voice heard on this subject is very meaningful. Mahalo Nui loa



February 4, 2020

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair

Re: SB 2722 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



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)

February 5, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2722**  
RELATING TO A FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM

Room 224  
1:15 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, 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 SB 2722**, 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.



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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
Wednesday, February 5, 2020 — 1:15 p.m. — Room 224

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2722, Relating to a Food Hub Pilot Program.**

Dear Chair Gabbard 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 SB 2722**, 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*

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 4:08:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jesse Lipman	Testifying for Kokua Kalihi Valley	Support	Yes

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



**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 4:38:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 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:

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.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 5:48:49 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Simon Russell	Testifying for Farm Maui LLC	Support	Yes

Comments:



**MAUI**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**LATE**

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 224  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020 AT 1:15 P.M.**

To The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair;  
The Honorable Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair; and  
Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Environment,

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2722 RELATING TO  
A FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM**

Aloha, my name is Pamela Tumpap and I am the President of the Maui Chamber of Commerce, with approximately 650 members. I am writing share our support of SB2722.

The farming community is changing and in the past, we had stronger co-ops who assisted with marketing, production and distribution. We appreciate and support this bill to create a food hub pilot program and that the requirements include food hubs for all counties. Food hubs would help local farmers and ranchers, food manufacturers and the community.

However, the \$1,000,000 appropriation for the whole state equates to \$250,000 per county. We feel it will be difficult to build the type of facility described in the bill for this amount. This is also dependent upon what types of local foods are being processed in this facility as meat, fruits and leafy greens are all handled differently.

Further, since this is a 5-year pilot program, we believe it would be valuable to include a deadline to have a facility up and running earlier in the pilot. For example, if it takes 4 years to build a facility, that would only give 1 year to assess the operation and effectiveness of the program.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this matter and ask that this bill be passed.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 10:08:31 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Springer Kaye	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this measure, which will provide the necessary structural support to increase local food production. The Ulu Cooperative has demonstrated how effectively this model can work, and we now see young breadfruit plantations popping up everywhere on Hawaii Island as growers know they have a way to aggregate and sell their product. Your support for local farming is greatly appreciated. -Springer Kaye, owner, Kaye Family Farms

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 9:27:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Fern Anuene Holland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 1/30/2020 7:28:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Hunter Heavilin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The food hub model provides a necessary intermediary to connect the many farms across the state with new markets. While hundreds of farms across the state already benefit from existing food hubs, recent analysis ([supersistence.org/pie/](http://supersistence.org/pie/)) has found gaps in current spatial coverage of food hub operations to meet the needs many growers.

Most farms in Hawaii are small and mid size and food hubs are a key tool to improve the viability of our farms. Support for expanding existing food hubs and increasing the number of such operations will help ensure that more food sales benefit these farmers.

The capacity of farm-to-school and farm-to-state programs to serve as anchor purchasing entities for local farmers is often mediated by food hubs which aggregate and market produce. Without food hub aggregators State contracts will likely go to the many new large scale operations with out of state financial backing and ownership. While these large operations can produce at a scale well beyond that of most other farms the profit from their sales is more likely leave the islands instead of circulating in our islands' economy.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 1/31/2020 6:16:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 1/31/2020 9:57:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Noa Lincoln	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Noa Lincoln, and among other things am the president of a small farm in south Kona. 100% of our sales are made possible by two local food hubs, which provide an accessible market for us and many other farms and take on the challenge of getting that food to market. While much of the emphasis on increasing local food has been on production, I sincerely don't think that production is the bottle neck, but rather the inability of the average farmer to access and engage in the markets. This is particularly true for small farms. Food hubs that aggregate small farms production, and often also engage in value adding, start to behave more like large farms that can secure contracts because of the volumes and consistency of supply. If we really want to increase the share of truly local food, that is food produced by farms whose owners actually live in Hawai'i, then I would not only fund this bill, but greatly increase its appropriations. Thank you.



**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 5:43:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Thomas Craig	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/1/2020 8:40:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Raphiell Nolin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill which will help Hawaii become food secure in these uncertain climate change times.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 5:31:09 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 7:58:24 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments:

Yes, please. We need this! Food is life. Local food is local life.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 8:26:10 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
C. Kai Lucas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 8:46:30 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dennis F Lokmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 6:44:42 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha, the majority of farmers in Hawaii are small scale farmers. Meeting the demands of distribution, (time, capital for infrastructure such as washing and packing facilities, cold storage, marketing, distributing, meeting demands for buyres) is challenging and can discourage people from becoming producers and contributing to the food system of Hawaii. Food hubs allow small scale farmers to participate in the food system by providing the necessary infrastructure, marketing, customer base and distribution. From the consumer side; food hubs enable buyers to access more quantity and variety through a single source, thereby making it easier to procure locally produced food. Food hubs, therefore, help move Hawaii along the path to sustainability by making it easier to be a farmer and easier to buy locally produced food. As a beginner farmer on the Hawaii I am excited to work with a local food hub to contribute to the food system of Hawaii. Please pass this bill.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 12:32:52 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Peter deVries	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This seems like an excellent way to increase local production and community engagement. Do it.



**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 12:08:03 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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**



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 is 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 its appropriate funding 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. I can 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 not imported. In spite 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 support 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 educate ourselves. As said that in traditional Hawaiian culture, 'the life of the community was predicated on the health of the land.' In our current 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 legislation for proper stewardship of the land to make Hawaii as bountiful and healthy as it ever has been. Mahalo for your knowledge.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 1:44:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Terry Kristiansen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 1:49:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cindy Evans	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 3:30:13 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
valerie Lasciak	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 2:00:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Manon Pretre	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a current student of the FAM (farming apprentice program on Maui), the Food Hub would provide the necessary support to help local farmers with the costly processing, storing, distributing and marketing costs. This will enable more of our community to be able to partake in the healthy and delicious bounty new farmers can provide.

By giving local food production a greater priority, we will be creating a much more healthy environment and less reliance on imported processed and packaged foods. It would also provide our visitors with true local food, which I believe would be greatly appreciated & desirable.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 2:21:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
megan powers	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

An effective long-term solution to food security in the Hawaiian islands will be to support the creation and continuation of local food hubs throughout the islands. These will serve as outlets for our growing population of farmers and farm related businesses. This is a vital and nesccesary next step towards food security.

Please vote in support of this bill.

Thank you,

Megan Powers

Haiku, Maui

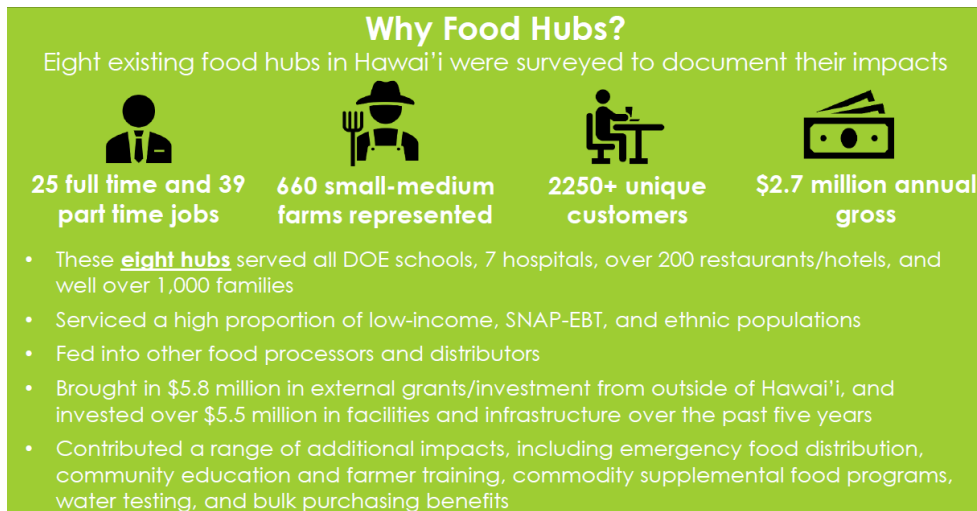


2/3/2020

Public Testimony in Strong Support of SB2722  
Before the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Aloha Chairman Mike Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

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 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](mailto:azizi@hawaii.edu)

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 8:04:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Yes to SB 2722,

Mahalo,

Barbara Barry

Katie Romanchuk  
1401 W Kuiaha Rd  
Haiku, HI 96708  
[ohialani@gmail.com](mailto:ohialani@gmail.com)  
Jan. 27, 2020

## Testimony to Support

Dear Senators whom this concerns.

I am writing to you to offer my SUPPORT for SB2722 for Food Hubs in Maui County.

This is Katie Romanchuk from the moku of Hāmākualoa and ahupua'a of Kuiaha, a student of the FAM (Farm Apprentice and Mentoring Program), cohort 5. I hope to see Maui as a much more self-sustainable county in the future, with healthy, productive and abundant land and clean resources to feed a thriving community.

I have been selling fruit on a small scale, and working on a native Hawaiian plant restoration project for many years on my own land with the help of an NRCS grant. Thanks to the FAM program, I will be able to increase my food production of locally grown, high nutrient food, with all of their support and guidance, to help feed the habitants of Maui.

One obstacle for beginning and experienced farmers is not having the resources to store, refrigerate produce, or prepare food in a commercially approved kitchen (very expensive), as well as have a venue to sell their crops and get their food out to market and the public, thereby avoiding food waste. "Value Added" crops would help many farmers and small businesses to be able to sell jam for instance, or candy made from locally grown food, body products etc. But these require the use of a certified commercial kitchen to make these recipes.

I for one, could greatly benefit by having a "Food Hub," in the nearby proximity of where I live, where I could store crops when they ripen, often all at once, so I could have a greater window for selling before food spoiling. I have lost food due to lack of storage and refrigeration. A Food Hub would help me and other farmers with food distribution and get more food to market, as well as helping farmers support and educate one another. I would possibly make a value added product if I were to be able to access a commercial kitchen that I could share with others. Having access to a food hub would be good for business.

Making healthy, local, organic produce more available to more of Maui's people, would contribute to a healthier alternative and populace, than obtaining food that has sat on a barge for several days, grown 2500 miles away from here at the very least. I aspire to have Maui (and all of Hawaii) increase our own production and feed our own people more readily with healthier food, in the near future. Food Hubs would be a game changer in this regard.

Thank you for your consideration of SB2722, for Food Hubs in areas of largest population on Maui.

Aloha, Katie Romanchuk



**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 9:51:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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 hub 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.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 10:51:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jared Burkett	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Jared Burkett. I live in Wailuku, HI. I am a graduate of the second cohort of the Farm Apprentice Mentorship program through the Hawaii Farmers Union United. I am in support of this Bill. As an apprentice in the program, I learned not just how to farm sustainably using natural practices but I also learned about programs I would never have known about that would set me on my future path of operating a sustainable agriculture operation. I am currently in escrow for a lot located in Kula where I will soon be operating a farm. The loan I am receiving is a direct ownership loan through the USDA Farm Service Agency. When my farm is operating, I will also have to continue to work as a land use planner for the County of Maui while the farm transitions into operation. A food hub is the perfect solution for me to bring the produce that I grow and have the services of the hub at my disposal to sell my produce so that I can continue working at my job to support the fledgling farm. The Saturday morning farmers market as the common venue for fledgling farms would limit my farm labor time and require me to specialize in sales when that is not an area I am strong in. I would not have to have equipment to setup displays and to keep it fresh in the hot sun. I would also love to have a food hub where I can support fellow farmers instead of international factory farms, which are the majority of the products available to us in the grocery stores. We live in the best environment to produce food. Let's use that gift to produce our own food and support that with local market venues like the food hub. Please support this Bill and support new generations of farmers that return to traditions, that innovate, that cultivate our agricultural heritage and sustenance that we all desire to be pure, healthy, and nutritious. Mahalo.

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 SB2722 BEFORE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

As an active apprentice of Kahumana's Farm Hub I strongly support SB2722. 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 SB2722 should pass in order for small farms and families to improve their lives.

Sincerely,

Andre de Almeida  
(808)670-4804



**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 9:06:47 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John Douvris	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 9:51:26 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 10:42:44 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melissa Reickert	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 2, 2020

Dear Members of the Senate,

My name is Melissa Reickert, I live on the island of Maui, and I am writing in support of SB 2722 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 SB 2722. 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

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 10:54:19 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lauren Loor	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee, my name is Lauren Loor and I am a resident of Maui County. I ask that you please support SB2722 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.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 11:30:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Paul Marshall	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 12:09:00 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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



**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 12:58:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 1:08:44 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments:

Small to medium-scale farms are a real and potential source of nutritious food throughout Hawaii. Food hubs are a method to aggregate and distribute agriculture produce from small to medium- scale farms, which enables these farmers to increase their income while providing more sources for distribution of their products. I therefore support SB 2722 to support a five-year pilot food hub program.

Mahalo,

David S. Case

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 1:16:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Robert M Petty	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support S.B # 2722 related to Food Hub Pilot Program.

I live in the moku of Lahaina and the ahupuaa of Launiupoko. I have completed the Farm Apprentice Mentoring (FAM) Program through UH-MC and Hawai'i Farmers Union United.

I strongly feel that we need centrally located facilities with a business management structure that facilitates the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, or marketing of local produced food products for new and existing farmers.

Please pass this legislation and funding to support future farmers in Hawai'i. Thank you.

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 2:37:34 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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 SB2722.

Tasia Yamamura

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 3:12:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
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

**SB-2722**

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 1:23:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Meg "Sunshine" Roberts	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Megan 'Sunshine' Roberts. I have been farming for 4 years and have been fortunate to work in the Hawaii ag industry for over 2. In that time I've graduated from the Kohala Center's Beginner Farmer Rancher Development Program, studied 24 hours of food safety with Luisa Castro and other local experts, coordinated half a dozen community farming education workshops, and worked with a hui of Kohala farmers to aggregate data on sales, seasonality and crops to inform their buying practices of state institutions, like the DOE. I graduated from HIP Agriculture's apprenticeship program and went on to work for them as a farm manager, Farm to School Coordinator, Food Safety Officer, and currently am managing and developing the Kohala Food Hub.

I'm writing to support SB 2722 in favor of allocating funds for food hubs through the DOA. Many other Hawaii food hubs are managed by folks who started as farmers, and I think this is integral to highlight for several reasons. Not only are we committed to increasing health and community wellness through increased food production, we are also committed to the regeneration of ag land that has been historically ravaged by the plantation era. Additionally, this immersive connection to our local farming communities makes us well positioned to facilitate the flow of food from small-scale farms to larger markets. We know the concerns of farmers first hand: what is there a market for, where can I find the resources to level up skills and operation, and what should I be growing to maximize my profit so I can re-invest in my farm and community? As aggregators and distributors we are then able to advocate for our farmers while addressing the systemic needs of larger markets, including distributors and state institutions like the DOE.

Our pressing issue is the ability to scale to meet the demands of these larger markets and expand our services to the local community. We are working to build a critical piece of community infrastructure that will increase self-sufficiency, reduce reliance on imported products, employ more up and coming farmers in the ag sector, and keep more community money in the local economy while increasing the health and wellness of our neighbors. The ability to access grants specifically designated to food hubs will be a catalyst for sustained local food production.

**HIP Agriculture has been a partner in the development of the state-wide Farm to School initiative, working with and growing food for the DOE since 2017. There were myriad challenges for our area's small to mid-sized farmers trying to sell**

**into state institutions: lack of access to cold storage, large order sizes, slow DOE payments, stringent liability criteria, lack of consistency or contracts to enable long-term crop planning, etc. To overcome these stumbling blocks, we created a hui of local farmers to collectively better meet the needs of our district.**

**We launched an aggregation and distribution site, the Kohala Food Hub (KFH), in August 2019 with the help of investments by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, the State of Hawaii, and the Dorrance family. The project has two tandem missions: expand and pilot Farm to School in Kohala, and support local farmers. Our team worked with Kohala Wishing Well to renovate existing infrastructure, formerly the Big Island Poultry farm, creating a community wash/pack and bringing inexpensive cold storage online. At present, the facility offers a wash-pack, 2 large walk-in chills, ag water testing, community education space, and technical and food safety support to local farmers.**

**The impact has been dramatic. In 2018, there was a small group of interested farmers and only 2-3 producers contributing produce infrequently to the farm to school alongside HIP Ag's Farm. The number of farmers participating increased to 15 unique producers (80% increase), 9 of whom we consider "anchor producers." The ability to aggregate more from the community and utilize cold storage meant an immediate boost in Farm to School sales and community investment. Producers also sell directly to the community through a new software platform that functions both as an online midweek farmers market and allows the Kohala cafeteria to shop from weekly offerings by local farms. Due to support from the Hawaii Agricultural Research Center, we've been able to establish an ag water testing lab at the Kohala Food Hub which will allow us to provide this service to farmers for free while boosting farm and food safety education in Kohala.**

**The opening of the Kohala Food Hub created more opportunities for local farmers to sell into the schools. The amount of produce sourced from local farms grew from 17% to a 55% majority, representing \$3,457 in revenue (51.5% majority) from the DOE to our local food producers and local economy in just one semester.**

**We share the same challenges as our peer food hubs: access to grants and support to expand the scope of our operations and infrastructure, grow our workforce, and ultimately provide larger market access and economic stability to our local agriculture community and food system. Our goals for the coming year span from infrastructure improvements, a community use commercial kitchen and value-adding facility, expanded educational programming, fundraising, and**

**staff additions to support both Farm to School and the community farm network. All of these goals are in service of doubling food production in Hawaii and working toward state-wide food security.**

**Value-adding is an integral piece of the agricultural and food economy puzzle. Access to funding for infrastructure upgrades, such as commercial kitchen and commercial processing equipment, will help us to better support Farm to State by being able to produce and supply minimally processed fresh and frozen foods. Farm to School provides a key example of this immediate need. The scratch-cooking methodology at Kohala Complex is in service of improved health and wellness outcomes for Hawaii youth, but requires an intensive amount of work to the cafeteria staff. This work often exceeds their capacity, creating a bottleneck, and they often don't have the budget for additional staff to be cost effective and to utilize a broader range of local crops. The DOE is looking to source more local foods that are minimally processed to remedy this issue. A successful example of this strategy implementation is our peer organization, the Hawaii Ulu Coop. They have demonstrated that by minimally processing ulu and co-crops they are able to meet the needs of larger institutions like the HDOE and reinvigorate cultural staple Pacific foods. Food hubs provide the mechanism to fit this niche in our community to support the success of the Farm to School Initiative and development of Farm to State, simultaneously opening the door to economic stimulus for local food producers to expand their businesses and food production.**

**I ask your support on the Food Hub Pilot Program bills to enable us to collaboratively meet the growing demands for local food and food security.**