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Acting Chairperson
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State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SAFETY,
INTERGOVERNMENTAL, & MILITARY AFFAIRS; WATER & LAND; AND
AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT**

**FEBRUARY 11, 2019
1:15 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 229**

**SENATE BILL NO. 831
RELATING TO URBAN AGRICULTURE**

Chairpersons Nishihara, Kahele, and Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 831, which requires the counties to fully consider urban agriculture principles and policies. The Department of Agriculture supports the intent and defers to the counties to determine what is appropriate to their specific circumstances.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.





O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

DATE: Monday, February 11, 2019

TIME: 1:15 p.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 229, State Capitol

RE: SB 831 Relating to Urban Agriculture

To the Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair, the Honorable Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment; the Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair, the Honorable Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs; and the Honorable Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair, and the Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Water and Land:

My name is Melodie Aduja and I serve as Chair of the O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 831. The O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities (OCCLP) of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i (DPH) hereby submits its testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 831 relating to Urban Agriculture.**

SB 831 requires the counties to incorporate urban agriculture principles and policies in land use planning.

Agriculture in our state must be preserved and its future strengthened. Sufficient prime agricultural lands must be maintained for the health, economic well-being and sustenance of the people. DPH believes in an integrated approach to agricultural innovation and sustainability. DPH encourages the responsible development of ocean resources and aquaculture to achieve sustainability in our State of our marine resources and ensure and improve the health of our reef and marine life.

This approach includes, but is not limited to, the adoption of the Native Hawaiian concept of ahupua`a, an integrated approach to land management. This could also include development of economic, land and ocean use policies that foster sustainable crops both for local consumption and for export, policies to foster agriculture-related infrastructure at shipping points, and increased inspection to protect against invasive species and to encourage reduced holding times. We need to ensure food safety, strive towards food security and strive to set the highest standards for food quality and nutrition. *Democratic Party of Hawai`i Platform (2018), p. 9, ln. 5-16.*

We will promote ethical and safe production of livestock, dairy products, poultry and eggs.

As an island state, securing affordable food for all is a priority. We support healthy, sustainable, and diversified local food production, and “Buy Local” strategies to assure greater food security and food safety.

We recognize the essential link between the availability of adequate and affordable water and low-cost electrical power as essential components of viable agricultural businesses.

We support land use planning and infrastructure development to support sustainable diversified agriculture, including low cost inter-island transportation of agricultural products.

We likewise support publicly funded research and development for agricultural diversification and value-added products.

We support the designation of Important Agricultural Lands as a step towards preserving high-grade productive lands for current and future needs.

We support adequate resources to address the various invasive species on this island beginning at point of entry.

We promote solid waste policies that divert green waste and food scraps for making invasive species-free compost and enhanced mulch available to our farmers, landscapers, and residents.

To support the development of new generations of farmers, we support increased availability of training in agriculture and related business requirements at centers of education around the state. We support making available incentives and low-cost loans to enable new farmers to establish farming operations.

Small farmers are the backbone of Hawai'i's agricultural future. We support the establishment of agricultural parks and clustered farming lots to allow small farmers to share required utilities and utilize fertile land efficiently. We support the establishment of community-supported food hubs for drying, canning, freezing, and distribution of agricultural crops and produce.

We support the development of agricultural land trusts to keep land in farming in perpetuity and to keep land costs down. *Democratic Party of Hawai'i Platform (2018), p. 9, In. 18, 28-51, p 10, 1-7.*

Design and management of an urban agriculture rests on organic practices and application of permaculture principles. Organic production systems are inherently healthy, based on ecosystem nutrient recycling, composting, enlightened tillage, and avoidance of petrochemical inputs. Permaculture is design philosophy that builds energy efficiency, wise resource use and both personal and community awareness into sustainable, long-term land management systems.

Organic urban agriculture speaks directly to living more sustainable by helping to: (1) diminish the 'ecological footprint' of food by producing healthy, good tasting food locally, without use of petro-chemicals, with minimum transportation requirements; (2) reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality as biologically active systems, that also close waste loops by recycling organic wastes and rainwater; (3) promote personal well-being, cultural expression, social discourse and understanding of natural processes by the very act of growing, marketing and distributing food from local sources; (4) provide local employment, significant learning and skills development opportunities, and (5) protect pockets of good farmland, and from a land-use planning perspective, helps to retain land use diversity and biodiversity, and also act as a buffer for natural areas, and as such is entirely consistent with principle of Smart Growth and control of urban sprawl. *Peterson, Brad, Sustainable Agriculture, Urban Agriculture, retrieved from http://www.bradpeterson.ca/sustainable_agriculture.htm, on February 10, 2019.*

For the foregoing reasons, i.e., to adopt the Native Hawaiian concept of ahupua`a, an integrated approach to land management by developing economic, land and ocean use policies that foster sustainable crops both for local consumption and for export, OCCLP supports SB 831 and urges its passage out of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment; Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs; and Committee on Water and Land.

Mahalo nui loa
Me ka `oia`i`o

/s/ *Melodie Aduja*

Melodie Aduja

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Hawai`i

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SB-831

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 8:01:10 PM

Testimony for PSM on 2/11/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Erica Scott	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-831

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 10:39:34 AM

Testimony for PSM on 2/11/2019 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments: