

**SB 869**

**SB 235**

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Acting Chairperson  
Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

FEBRUARY 1, 2019  
1:15 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

SENATE BILL NO. 869  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 869 relating to green coffee certification. This bill reinstates mandatory certification of all Hawaii-grown green coffee, except for shipments of 100 pounds or less. The department offers comments.

Prior to 1997, green coffee certification was conducted on a voluntary basis by users requesting for certification. Following a counterfeit scandal, a coffee dealer was indicted for fraud for selling counterfeit green Kona coffee at depressed prices in the mainland. This prompted legislation that required all Hawaii-grown green coffee be certified prior to leaving the geographic region of production. However, this requirement did not apply to roasted Hawaii-grown coffee and coffee sold within the respective geographic regions. As a result of the reduction in force in 2009, only one full-time Agricultural Commodities Marketing Specialist in the West Hawaii district remained to inspect Kona coffee. This caused a delay of inspections with a turnaround time of up to 3 to 4 weeks, and a subsequent hardship for the Kona coffee industry to export their coffee and limited cash flow needed to pay their coffee producers in a timely manner. Following discussions with various coffee industry members, it was decided that a voluntary certification program, and mandatory compliance to grading standards and origin documentation under changes to the Hawaii Administrative Rules, would provide sufficient protection for Hawaii's coffee industry. Act 328, SLH 2012 was enacted



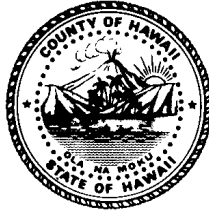
repealing the mandatory certification, implemented voluntary certification of Hawaii-grown green coffee, included false labeling of Hawaii-grown cherry, parchment and green coffee as a class C felony and added the authority for county and state law enforcement agencies to investigate and enforce criminal violations for false labeling of Hawaii-grown coffee.

This bill states that shipments of Hawaii-grown green coffee beans weighing 100 pounds or less are exempt from certification. However, the department questions if Hawaii-grown coffee weighing 100 pounds or less that are not shipped will still need to be certified. During the certification process, it will be difficult for the department to determine which coffee weighing 100 pounds or less will be shipped out or not.

The department estimates that mandatory certification will increase the current workload and cause a delay in certification turn-around time. The department will also require increase staffing and a larger work area/office in the Kona district to adequately service the coffee industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

County of Hawai'i  
Council District 9 -  
North and South Kohala



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**Chair:** Committee on Agriculture,  
Water, Energy, and Environmental  
Management

**Vice Chair:** Committee on Finance

**HERBERT M. "TIM" RICHARDS, III**  
**HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 9**  
25 Aupuni Street, Ste. 1402, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

January 29, 2019

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Honorable Senator Russel E. Ruderman, Vice Chair  
**Submission via online testimony**

RE: **Support of SB 869**  
Hearing Date/Time: February 1, 2019 at 1:15 p.m.

Dear Senators:

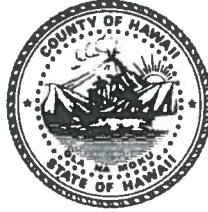
As the Chair of the Committee on Agriculture, Water, Energy, and Environmental Management for the Hawai'i County Council, I thank you for the opportunity to submit **testimony in SUPPORT of SB 869**. It is important that all Hawai'i-grown green coffee beans be inspected and certified for grade and origin, except for shipments of one hundred pounds or less.

Please feel free to contact me should you need to discuss my position and knowledge of this matter further.

Sincerely,

HERBERT M. "TIM" RICHARDS, III  
Hawai'i County Council, District 9

REBECCA VILLEGAS  
Council Member  
District 7, Central Kona



PHONE: (808) 323-4267  
FAX: (808) 323-4786  
EMAIL: [Rebecca.villegas@hawaiiicounty.gov](mailto:Rebecca.villegas@hawaiiicounty.gov)

## HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A  
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

January 31, 2019

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS  
COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON SB869, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Friday, February 1, 2019  
1:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition of SB 869, relating to agriculture. My testimony is submitted by my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai'i County Council.

The purpose of this measure is to require that the department of agriculture inspect and certify all Hawai'i – grown green coffee beans for grade and origin, except for shipments of one hundred pounds or less.

Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill may put an even larger burden on them, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive. Small farmers should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. Instead of adding an additional mandatory requirement, enforcing the existing laws would benefit all without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the Committee on Agriculture and Environment to oppose this measure as well. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Villegas".

Rebecca Villegas  
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:53:02 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lee Sugai	Testifying for Sugaikonacoffee	Oppose	No

Comments:

My name is Lee Sugai and as the owner of a Kona Coffee farm that grows, processes, roasts and sells Kona coffee I strongly oppose this bill. While I support preventing fraud and producing quality Kona coffee this bill would make it impossible to get my Kona parchment milled! The dry mill I use has stated that if this bill passes they will not even mill coffee any longer. This bill's only purpose is to force independent Kona coffee farms to sell cherry to the large corporate coffee processors and blenders who will profit from my Kona coffee and dwindling my profit to nothing..forcing me out of business,

Yours Truly,

Lee Sugai

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 4:00:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lili Rodriguez	Testifying for Paradise Meadows Orchard & Bee Farm	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Proponents of this bill should be compelled to present evidence that the requirements in this bill will do anything at all to prevent the large exporters and large brands from continuing their dishonest practices, and they should be required to conduct an economic impact study to prove that these requirements will not place an undue burden on small and medium sized coffee farmers.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*



**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 4:22:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Roger Kaiwi	Testifying for Kona Coffee Council	Oppose	No

Comments:

The Kona Coffee Council voted unanimously in 2012 for HB280, this was to due away with mandatory certification. We are stongly opposed to changing from a current system that works! We are however wish to come up with a method of enforcement! We would be open to empowering our County of Hawaii Prosicuyors office the ability to assit. SB869 doesnt stop illegal activity , it only places undue burdens on the law abidding citizns of the Industry.

Roger Kaiwi

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 4:34:08 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Connie Young	Testifying for Darden-Young Farm, LLC	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am a certified organic coffee farmer who already pays a very high fee for that. I only have 4 acres of coffee and to add any additional fees such as this will put us out of business. We already are dealing with Mother Nature and outside services costs. Please support the small family farmers and make sure that those who harvest under 25000 pounds of coffee cherry are not burdened unnecessarily with extra financial fees and paperwork.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:33:54 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
James Burr	Testifying for Carta Coffee Merchants	Oppose	No

Comments:

*Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges trying to sell and promote 100% Kona coffee, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive. I strongly oppose the bill*

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:41:48 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Debbie Donald	Testifying for Mokulele Farms	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*We have faced huge burdens in these past few years, weather, CBB, Vog, and in my personal case, the loss of my longtime husband. This addition and unreasonable burden placed on my farm will put us out of business.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:43:21 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bruce Cornwell	Testifying for Cornwell Coffee	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause. Thank you for your time. DO NOT PASS.*

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:12:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Westley Cornwell	Testifying for Kona Premium Coffee Co.	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause. DO NOT PASS*

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:52:04 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Shamira Linnett	Testifying for Buddha's Sanctuary, LLC	Oppose	No

Comments:

This measure will devastating effects on consumers, farmers and the people they employ.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 10:59:09 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jean Orłowski	Testifying for Hala Tree	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a board member of the Kona Coffee association and a farmer, I oppose the bill the way it is written for the following reasons :

- we must have a guarantee that the certification will be done in a timely manner. For quality purpose our coffee is baged in Grainpro (plastic bags). The bags need to stay open until certification and the mill will not be able to store all the coffee until done.
- Additional cost with the certification needs to be clarified. Each 'batch of coffee' processed will need to pay for each grade increasing the cost substantialy.

For information I am also a certified Organic farmer, there is only one dry mill that can process my coffee, if the mill decides to stop processing for other farmers I have no way of continuing in the coffee business.

Few bills are linked together, SB869, SB909, SB895, they should be reviewed together.

I am all for improving conterfeits and transparency of labelling but if this is the intention we should also improve the 100% Kona and Kona labelling transparency by adding what is in the bag of coffee sold (%of Kona, what other belnds are used ...).



**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:53:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
G Lucena	Testifying for Maika'i Kona Coffee Co. Ltd., dba Holualoa Kona Coffee	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee roaster, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:47:25 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sharlene Gee	Testifying for Bea's Knees Farm	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am a Kona coffee farmer and a Kona Coffee Farmers Association member. Our farm is small, under five acres. My great-grandparents on down have been involved with growing Kona coffee.

I am in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.

Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:45:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cecelia Smith	Testifying for Kona Coffee Farmers Association	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a small Kona Coffee farmer, **I heartily oppose this bill.** Do not add confusion nor costs to our farming livelihood. **PLEASE do not pass this Bill.**

Mahalo nui,

Cecelia Smith  
smithfarms Kona Coffee-co-owner

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:02:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dee Fulton	Testifying for Mauna Mama Kona Coffee	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha. I can only imagine that the intent of this bill is to enforce certain quality standards for Hawaiian coffee. I know of farmers who don't even have their coffee sorted by size and yet they sell it as 'Fancy' or 'Extra Fancy'. I grow my coffee in compliance with the standards of the organic certifying agency in order to sell my coffee as Organic. Other small farmers label their coffee as Organic when it is not at all organic.

It is very difficult to be a small farmer growing coffee ethically because so many other farmers are competing against you and using labels for their coffee that are inaccurate in making claims to quality.

That said, I oppose this bill. I don't think this proposed legislation will be a cure for the problems which exist because unethical farmers misrepresent the quality of their coffee.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:39:52 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Guy Gostling	Testifying for Kona Lisa Coffee	Oppose	No

## Comments:

As an idea, certifying Kona coffee is fine. But it is extremely impractical at present and will severely hurt small and mid size farmers. Wait times will be very long and this will badly hurt farmers' ability to get product to market. The largest growers will receive priority and the small and mid size farms will suffer as a result. This bill should not go ahead until there is enough staffing at Dept of Ag to handle efficiently. Preserving the integrity of Kona coffee is good - but this is not the way, at this time. 10% Kona blends do far more damage to the Kona Brand.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:03:30 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mark Shultise	Testifying for LavaRock Farm	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am against this bill. It will cause undue cost to my own small farm and that of other farms here in Kona.

It may well cause small farms to resort to selling their coffee as cherry rather than process it and sell as roasted.

A bill such as this seems to help the blenders and hurt small farmers.

Small farms do not import green so why the need to certify?

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:28:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
keith keffer	Testifying for kcfa	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill appears to be another attempt of the large processors to gain a stranglehold on the Hawaii coffee industry. As a small farmer I have ben subjected to ever increasing costs of production with each passing year. Formerly I could make a profit by selling coffee cherry. At this point I must have my coffee processed so that I can take advantage of the strong market for 100% Kona coffee and benefit by the value added in doing my own marketing. Now ill informed legislators are adding another layer of bueracratic costs and delays. They will also be putting my processor out of business. The language of the bill is extremely vague and the associated costs are unspecified. While the legislature speaks endlessly of supporting small business and agriculture out of one side of their mouth when it gets right down to it they are steadily destroying small business and small farms throughout the state. This bill has not been thought through and threatens an important industry here in Kona.



**RE: Opposition to SB169**  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE  
Green Coffee, Mandatory Certification

Aloha Legislators,

The Kona Coffee Farmers Association stands in opposition of this Bill. We represent over 200 farms in the Kona districts and our mission is to protect the economic interests of our growers.


The language of this bill is too broad and vague. As it reads, it would force certification on all green coffee lots under 100 lbs, even when small processors intend to immediately roast the coffee for direct sale. The costs of certification are punitive to small businesses, and neither our mills nor Department of Agriculture staff are equipped to handle the process. I personally estimate it would add 5% to the cost of my coffee and countless delays in sales.

Mandatory certification has been required in the past, but not in such an onerous way. It was only required when green beans were shipped. Even then, the Department of Agriculture could not keep up with the certification process, and grower/sellers had to wait weeks to complete certification. This was an onerous problem, which is why the industry recently requested the removal of previous mandatory certification regulations.

Should this Bill pass, it would likely force many small farm businesses to cease processing their coffee.

My family has three generations who farm coffee and we support ourselves on 100% Kona. Thank you for considering opposition to this bill. Your attention makes a difference in the lives of hundreds of small farmers.

Mahalo nui loa!

  
Suzanne Shriner  
President





**January 30th, 2019**

Aloha,

I write to you today to oppose SB 869, a bill that calls for mandatory certification for all Hawaii-grown coffee by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA). As a former Hawaii Coffee Association board member and one who remains active in addressing our industry's challenges, I believe in a proactive search for solutions to our problems. I appreciate the efforts of this bill's authors. However, I also believe that the bill, as currently written, may do unintended damage to our industry for the following reasons:

1. Without additional HDOA coffee-certification agents, the industry will very quickly face a backlog of coffee lots waiting to be certified. This would cause damaging delays to the supply chain. Before proceeding with this bill, we need a firm commitment from HDOA to hire more certification agents.
2. This bill, as currently written, is untenable for smaller coffee mills. Currently, small mills can prep and return uncertified green beans to customers within a single day. Requiring certification for all green beans forces mills to store every lot of coffee until the next inspection with an HDOA certification agent -- an impossibility for the mills without adequate warehouse space. At least one mill already has said this law would reduce the number of customers he could service, turning his business unprofitable and forcing him to close. The resulting effect on small farms and businesses would be devastating.

I believe that SB 869 is an important first step for our coffee industry to tackle quality problems. But the bill will need amending before final consideration for passage into law.

Many thanks for your time and consideration.

Ralph Gaston  
Partner  
Rusty's Hawaiian Coffee

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/29/2019 6:50:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Randall Phillips	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer in Holualoa with 2 acres in coffee. I am in strong opposition to SB869 relating to the mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Being a small farmer I already face enough challenges without adding this regulation.

If all dry milling of over 100 pounds needs to be certified this will effectively bring the process to a halt - there are not enough inspectors to certify everything. In Kona we tend to get major flowering several times a year at around the same time in the main coffee producing corridor of the Kona coffee belt. All of this coffee then needs to be picked and processed at the same time. For wet and dry milling already we are stretched to the limit. If you add mandatory certification at this time it will be a disaster. Things will back up as they have in the past and it will just hinder an honest attempt to supply the best 100% Kona coffee.

We are an award winning coffee farm - we placed 4th over all in the November 2018 Kona Coffee Cultural Cupping Competition. I only sell a small amount of green for home roasters and the vast majority of the coffee that we sell is roasted. We roast this coffee on our property. Forced to have it certified does nothing good for the industry and will not do anything to combat counterfeit Kona coffee. The existing laws in place will suffice

This bill is wrong headed and should be rejected.

Mahalo,

Randy Phillips  
Kona View Coffee

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:06:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jacen Ham	Testifying for HKCC LLC	Oppose	No

Comments:

**This bill is absolutely ridiculous. As a coffee miller who custom dry mills coffee for 400 farmers in Hawaii and who has done so since 2001 is is appalling to see a bill get railroaded through without speaking to the farmers it will effect. I grade and process the coffee for 2/3rds of the farmers on the island and I can tell you that this bill if passed will destroy the livelihood of many of them. In the past the mandatory certification proved it was not effective in countering any coffee counterfeiting and slowed the time that the coffee could get milled and certified. It is not only the lack of infrastructure that the department of agriculture has but the storage and time the mills have to process for these inspections. The way this bill is worded I alone would put up around 2000 lots of coffee for inspection in a 9 month season, which would be impossible to do in any reality. Please whoever is responsible for this please contact me to have a discussion because I most likely have a more accurate heartbeat of the grading and certifying for the small and mid sized farmers than anyone. Please think about the repercussions to the average farmer and not make a monopoly again out of Kona coffee.**

**Jacen Ham 808 640-6644**

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 11:06:42 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John Koontz	Testifying for Konaloha Farms	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a small (5 acre) coffee farmer, I object to having to pay to get any coffee inspected and certified. As it is, the mill I take my parchment to will only certify the Prime grade. Having to pay around \$150 to get a bag certified cuts into whatever little profit we make now. Please vote NO.



PO Box 168, Kealahou, HI 96750  
808-929-9550

HAWAII STATE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Friday, February 1, 2019  
1:15 p.m.  
Conference Room 224

**RE: Testimony in Support of SB 869**

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman and members of the Committee,

I am Chris Manfredi, President of Hawaii Coffee Association.

At more than \$61MM the Hawaii coffee industry is conservatively ranked by USDA as Hawaii's second highest-value crop. The Hawaii Coffee Association's (HCA) mission is to represent all sectors of the Hawaiian coffee industry, including growers, millers, wholesalers, roasters and retailers located throughout the State of Hawaii. The HCA's primary objective is to increase awareness and consumption of Hawaiian coffees. A major component of HCA's work is the continuing education of members and consumers.

**The HCA STRONGLY supports SB 869**

There is no greater threat to the integrity and protection of Hawaii's brands than the introduction of counterfeit and substandard Hawaiian coffee into the supply chain. It is the number one complaint I receive from our members.

The HCA applauds the introducers and co-sponsors of this measure, by restoring language repealed by ACT 328 of the 2012 Legislative Session.

HB280 of 2012 was introduced in response to wholesale layoffs of commodity inspectors that resulted from the economic downturn of 2008. At that time there were not enough inspectors available to service the industry, creating significant logistical bottlenecks. We understood that voluntary certification would open the door to counterfeiters, which is why we asked to make the act of false-labeling Hawaiian coffee a felony offense at that time. Since roasted coffee was not made part of that law (over our objections) we have asked that it be included in this legislative session.

**This system worked in the past and can work again.**

What SB869 essentially does is bring an "umpire" to the industry that will help enforce minimum grade standards and offer some assurance as to the coffee's origin. This is vitally important to protect

the integrity of Hawaiian coffee in the marketplace, and allow new origins to develop - rather than becoming blending stock to counterfeit Kona coffee.

An often overlooked risk associated with coffee counterfeiting is the introduction of invasive species to Hawaii. Importing green coffee to Hawaii for use by counterfeiters creates an additional vector for invasive pests and disease like Coffee Berry Borer, Coffee Leaf Rust and Coffee Berry Disease.

We also renew our appeal for more enforcement resources for new and existing laws affecting our industry.

**Thank you for your support of SB869!**

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 11:20:37 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ashley Raymond	Testifying for Donkey Mill Art Center	Oppose	No

Comments:

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 6:57:02 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nina Garcia	Testifying for Keei Mauka Coffee	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha. This bill would be very detrimental to our small family farm. We barely make a profit as is as the necessity of fighting the coffee borer beetle SUCCESSFULLY, has been costly. Coffee we process has always had less than 5% beetle infection. Any further costs will hurt.

Additionally, as the DNLR has been chronically UNDERSTAFFED, there will be a back log of inspections that will keep coffee farmers in limbo, unable to see anything but cherry., for probably months. Part of our success as a farm has been the ability to supply coffee at each level--cherry, parchment and roasted coffee.

Please don't put any additional burdens on us farmers. As the product is ultimately roasted, there is not danger of spreading the beetle. What other concerns can there be.



**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 4:08:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Janelle Gomes	Testifying for Absolute Palate, LLC	Oppose	No

Comments:

I Janelle Gomes of Absolute Palate LLC oppose SB869 because as a small farm I know that myself and other small farms can not afford to do our own dry milling and the paperwork for this bill as proposed is far to burdensome for those dry mills who are serving the small farms like ours. If this bill passes the dry mills who serve the small farms will be forced to stop accepting parchment as the workload will become unmanageable. And small farms will be forced into selling the cherry instead of selling direct.

Aloha Chair Creagan and Members of the House Agriculture Committee:

As a small coffee farmer on the Big Island, and member of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association, I am submitting this written testimony in opposition of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture's SB869. Our company owns and maintains two coffee farms and sells only single estate 100% Kona coffee. We believe that Kona coffee is arguably the best coffee in the world. **SB869 would resurrect Mandatory Certification for all coffee**, regardless of whether you intend to roast it, or sell it as green. This bill is littered with extremely vague wording and will add tremendous expense to all farmers that outsource (as we do) dry milling. One dry mill that we frequently use, Holualoa, has already decided that he will be forced to stop accepting parchment as his workload would become unmanageable. This bill is detrimental to small and mid-sized farmers and might force many estate farms to return to selling cherry rather than selling coffee direct.

**Hawaii's coffee farmers ask for you to vote against SB869.**

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

T. Michael Gomes  
Vice President of Operations, Absolutely! Kona Coffee  
[www.absolutely.kona.com](http://www.absolutely.kona.com)  
Absolute Palate, LLC  
(808) 322-0652  
78-7007 Mana Opelu Lane  
Holualoa, HI 96725

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 4:56:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Thomas Greenwell	Testifying for Greenwell Farms Inc & Hawaii Coffee Growers Association	Support	Yes

Comments:

We humbly ask for your support of this bill to assure the continued quality and integrity of the Hawaii Coffee Industry.

Thank You,

Thomas Greenwell

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 10:49:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Brian Miyamoto	Testifying for Hawaii Farm Bureau	Support	Yes

Comments:

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 6:44:52 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
james Kimo Falconer	Testifying for Hawaii Coffee Growers Association	Support	No

Comments:

On behalf of the HCGA, we ask for your support on this bill. The HCGA represents over 70% of the coffee acreage here in the state. The mandatory certification of our product is very important to maintain our high status in the market. Keeping a voluntary status only promotes counterfeiting, mislabeling and abuses one of the best systems to guarantee quality that our Hawaii Department of Agriculture has built and is uniquely recognized world-wide.

We ask for your support to move this forward.

James Kimo Falconer, President, Hawaii Coffee Growers Association

**KAPOHO LAND PARTNERSHIP**  
(A Hawaii limited partnership)  
**Kapoho Management Company, Inc.**  
(General Partner)  
**Kapoho Land & Development Co. Ltd.**  
(808) 282-0448 (808) 935-5810  
P. O. Box 374  
Hilo, Hawaii 96721-0374

LATE

February 1, 2019

Subject: Senate Bill 1148, Relating to Agriculture

Aloha Senator Gabbard, Chair, Senator Ruderman, Vice Chair, and Committee Members

I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 1148 related to funding for the State Department of Agriculture to provide grants and loans to ranchers and farmers through a state-wide disaster funds program.

I ask that the bill's Committee report explicitly state that the funds be used for ranchers and farmers directly impacted by the disasters with a preference for those ranchers and farmers who are remaining in the immediate vicinity of where they were when the applicable disaster occurred.

I have attached a map showing the Kapoho companies' lands and the area impacted by the 2018 eruption in Kilauea East Rift Zone. We recognize that many others lost more or everything. My family is the largest landowner impacted by the 2018 KERZ eruption. Based on the County of Hawaii's geographic information system, we had 1,265 acres covered by lava, including two of the fissures on our lands. Our direct losses are estimated to be in the low-eight figures, over \$10,000,000.00.

Our papaya farmers lost or do not currently have access to an estimated 650 acres of papaya fields, and our rancher has had to relocate to other pasturage. Our farmers and ranchers are families, they want to return to lands we own, and they need disaster funds preferably as grants.

During the eruption, and in the vicinity of the flow, we had papaya farmers who asked to expand their acreage, and we allowed them to do so without seeking any compensation from them. During the eruption, our rancher immediately moved their cattle to pasturage in Ka, however due to ash fallout from Kilauea Crater they were forced to move again.

Now that we are in a recovery phase, we are in discussions with our rancher and farmers to return and are working with our farmers so they can get access, via Highway 132, to papaya and noni fields that are currently "lava-locked."

Mahalo a nui loa,



A. Lono Lyman, Manager KLP and KLDC President KMC

LATE

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 12:46:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathryn Hickey	Testifying for Sunshower Farms	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Kate Hickey and I own Sunshower Farms, an 8 acre Kona Coffee Farm in Holualoa. I am extremely disappointed that this bill was even introduced as if passed, it will be so hurtful to small farms like mine.

We sell all of our coffee direct to consumer through our website. We have it milled at Holualoa Kona Coffee Co. where they mill it to USDA grading standards and we only sell the highest grades at our farm. We typically do not sell any green, and if we do it is only the lowest grades that would not really be affected by this bill anyway. For our farm, this would offer no benefit to our customers, no benefit to us as a business and will only help to increase our costs (which already have razor thin margins as it is) and increase wait times at the mill. I do not understand who this bill is supposed to be helping - other than to maybe weed out the little guys like me who are competition for large corporate farms.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 12:13:56 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benjamin Frizzell	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer and miller, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*I personally mill coffee in the Kona region for over 300 individual farms. Many have been in business for generations, some are new but all take pride in the coffee they produce.*

*The beauty of our great state and the Hawaii coffee industry lies in it's unparalleled diversity. Almost nowhere else on earth can one find such a melting pot of like minded individuals working together to create a truly unique and world renowned product.*

*It is no secret to anyone who lives on and farms our aina that the microclimates in hawaii are genuinely unique. Much like the wine industry, our varied terroir defines us. By grouping cherry sales together to large processors we will lose many of the specialty coffee varieties we have worked so hard to grow.*

*Currently there are no agricultural standards for what Coffee varieties define Kona or Hawaii, However the biodiversity of what we may lose to this bill is clear. Including but not limited to;*

*Typica*



*Liberica*

*Robusta*

*Cattuai*

*Cattura*

*Marogogype*

*SL28*

*Geisha*

*Bourbon*

*Mokka*

*Pointu Lareina*

*It is my firm belief that this bill, if implemented will effectively undermine and destroy the relationships, jobs and reputations of hundreds of small farmers and families. All the while lining the pockets of a few larger and more well off processors.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*

Benjamin R Frizzell

Farmer, Miller

Holualoa Kona Coffee Company

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:44:53 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
KATHLEEN DIXON	Individual	Oppose	No

## Comments:

My name is Kathleen Dixon and as a member of KCFA and a small Kona coffee farmer, I strongly oppose this bill. This bill will make it impossible to process green coffee for small and medium Kona coffee farmers. Once again, only the Corporate and large farms would benefit because the only avenue that would be left to small Kona coffee farmers would be to sell our cherry coffee to them! Unfair!!!

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:54:12 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Paul Uster	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*There are laws already on the books to prevent these problems. You need to choose to enforce those laws rather than force many -- if not all -- small farmers out of business.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*

My family and I own a two and a half acre coffee farm. While our annual production is not very much we already face a number of challenges. We want to ensure that pure Kona coffee is offered to the world. SB869 by providing mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee would enable large coffee corporations to be less selective of the quality of their coffee.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:24:09 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michelle C Johnson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Our family has been farming for over 100 years in Holualoa. We have generational pride in what we do which profits are already so low but we continue for the love of the land and the industry. Please consider our small contribution joined together creating a large part of America's star Kona coffee product.

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:30:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tari Sparks	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha As a small coffee farmer on the big island I am strongly recommending that this bill not be approved. This is a thinly veiled ploy by industrial farmers to increase their profits and drive the family farmer out of business. The ancestry of this state is exclusively built on family. Our ancestors were keenly aware of the risks of selling out to mainlanders, hence the creation of the Kamehameha trust.

I strongly implore you to oppose this bill to help preserve the integrity of this land and our ancestors.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:37:24 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha

My wife Cheryl Merrick and I are small estate coffee farmers in Captain Cook. We oppose this bill as it will place an extra and undue burden on our endeavors to produce Kona Coffee. Please leave things as they are.

mahalo, randy merrick

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:45:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bob Smith	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This is a really bad bill! As a small farmer I should not need to jump through any hoops or incur added expense and delays for unneeded certification to get my small amount of parchment milled.



**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:48:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Deniz Tek	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a small estate coffee grower in Hawaii, I oppose SB869. The bill will place an unbearable burden on small farms, which are already under maximum stress. The quality of our green coffee is self evident and is already subject to the regulation of a free, competitive marketplace.

Thank you for listening.

Best regards

Deniz Tek

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:58:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kathleen Vass	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am a small farmer on the Big Island growing Kona coffee. I earn very little money from my coffee but I depend on that income. If this bill is passed it will cost me additional time and money that I cannot afford. I request that this bill **not** be passed.

Thanks you for your attention and for your work to support small Hawaiian farmers

Kathleen S Vass

78-6647 Road One

Holualoa, HI 96725

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:59:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jordan J Warners	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

I hereby oppose proposed bill SB869. We have a 5 ha farm in Holualoa which will produce more than 100lb of green coffee beans. We are members of the Kona Coffee Farmers Associateion. The cost associated with having all coffee inpected for grade would impose an addition cost to an already very competitive industry.

Please oppose this bill.

Sincerely,

Jordan Warners

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:24:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Robert Butlar	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This will bankrupt my small family farm.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:37:05 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bud Shark	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I fear that this bill is designed to benefit larger companies at the expense of destroying the livelihoods of hundreds of small coffee farmers and family coffee farms.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:30:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cynthia Maryanoff	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Representatives,

**Please represent Kona small farm coffee growers and oppose SB869**

SB869 would resurrect Mandatory Certification, this time for all coffee, regardless of whether we intend to roast it, or sell it as green.

My husband and I own two small Kona coffee farms. Our special interest is premium, single-estate 100% Kona coffee. Our company grows, processes, roasts, and sells high-quality, single-estate 100% Kona coffee, with a focus on artisanal, premium brands to satisfy the interests of coffee connoisseurs. The trees are dry-farmed (i.e., not irrigated). We process and roast at Honalo Farm, our headquarters, and offer brands that represent the flavor profiles of specific terroirs. As a small coffee farmer we do NOT have the resources to hull and sort: rather we support our local dry mills! We custom-roast in small batches with a fluidized-bed air roaster. Our flagship brand is designated "Private Reserve", which is available from both farms. We work HARD!. **Our batch size is tiny in comparison to large corporate farms. We cannot afford to dry mill on-site.**

**SB869 would resurrect Mandatory Certification, this time for all coffee, regardless of whether you intend to roast it, or sell it as green.** HCA introduced this bill with vague language. The way it is written it would add a tremendous expense to all farms who dry mill more than 100 lbs at a time. **Normally the dry mills require 200lb parchment to even hull a batch!!** Moreover, one of the dry mills we utilize has said they would be forced to stop accepting parchment as the workload would become unmanageable. This bill is unworkable for small and mid-sized farmers and might force many estate farms to return to selling cherry rather than selling direct.

We thank you for your past support, especially with the CBB problems.

We work hard! We are proud of our 100% KONA coffee products.

Please continue to support small farms in Hawaii and **oppose SB869**

We are members of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association.

Sincerely

Cynthia A Maryanoff

**[Absolutelykona.com](http://Absolutelykona.com)**

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 2:49:52 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
phil Hodson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This will be cost prohibitive to run my coffee farm we are a small farm. Phil Hodson Ulu offer farm



**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 4:05:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Eileen Kiyoko Nanni	Individual	Oppose	No

## Comments:

My family in Kona has been growing coffee on a small acreage for over 65 years and this bill, if passed will cripple them and all small local Kona coffee farms/farmers. This bill threatens the small farms! Please oppose it! Mahalo!

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 4:08:44 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laurie Llanes Mattos	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 5:05:45 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dana Mattos	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 6:31:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John Miller	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This is an unreasonable requirement. Many of us small farmers will be hurt by this rule. I can understand the need to maintain quality of Kona Coffee, but 100 lbs seems to be an unreasonably low threshold. Perhaps 1,000 pounds would be more reasonable. If you drive the small dry mills out of business due to an all encompassing requirement where will the small farmers get their coffee milled? I do everything on my farm and the ONLY process that I outsource is dry milling. Is this new restriction really necessary?

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:27:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
rodriguez armando	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

SB869 would create another expense for us struggling kona coffee farmers and put more burden on our short staffed dept. of Ag . Please say no to SB869

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:39:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Deborah Fine-Ferreira	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Kona coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee.*

*Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*

Deborah Ferreira

Kona Bliss Coffee Farm

Captain Cook, HI

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 9:08:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Howard Hill	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am writing in opposition to this bill requiring mandatory inspection of all coffee milled in Hawaii. We have a system in place now that works. That is.....to the effect that shipments in excess of 10 pounds must be inspected by the State.

I, as a Kona coffee farmer and KCFA member, am one of several hundred small farmers in the Kona area who would be negatively effected were this bill to come into law. I do small shipments with no problems. This bill would require a trip of more than 20 miles each way to the airport for inspections. This would severely impact my ability to continue my coffee business in its present form. Don't force me to go back to the cherry selling business. Due to high costs and wages, that is no longer a viable alternative.

As things stand now, there are no problems. I oppose this legislation as the main result would be to make it more difficult for small Kona coffee farmers to survive.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:42:56 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Colehour Bondera	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair and Members:

Please accept this testimony in opposition to SB869 from a long-term small-scale farmer who works extensively with Kona coffee including efforts to promote and protect not only our own farm, but also the broader agricultural community through education and outreach and public relations in Hawaii, nationally and internationally. As a member of the Board and President emeritus of Kona Coffee Farmers Association, it is important to always be looking out for the best interests of Kona coffee farmers as the foundation of the Kona coffee industry (remember that there are nearly 700 of us!)

With the language in the Bill the way it is written, the HDOA will be trying to enforce required regulations which are not attainable and that have the most significant negative impact on small-scale producers. The exception language of the Bill does not follow through, and is left in the writing to be determined in ways that can be interpreted to make requirements for inspections that will delay coffee and restrict services that are already not easy for the vast majority of users.

Please do not support this piece of legislation and instead, please ask the authors (HCA) to take it back to the table and incorporate input received already in testimony and furthermore to request actual input and review from HDOA and coffee farmers directly prior to submitting something similar in the future. That HCA has not truly already done that is a clear communication of to what degree they as an organization are communicating with others directly involved -- not appropriately and not in a timely manner.

Finally, small-scale coffee producers like our family will be hindered enough by this piece of legislation that we will have to curtail our primary agricultural income source (Kona coffee) and that will mean that consumers will have less total and lower quality total product to select from, which will further negate the Kona coffee name and recognition.

Thank you in advance for recognizing that what is put forth does not serve the primary actors in the overall coffee industry -- the farmers -- and instead is an attempt to result in a few coffee processors having yet more total control over management and therefore income from coffee, leaving farmers unable to continue. HDOA can and



should be heard and determine in advance what is achievable and how to attain with such regulations.

Sincerely,

Colehour Bondera

KANALANI OHANA FARM

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 8:24:06 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Franny Brewer	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This seems an undue burden on farmers. Hawaii lacks enough inspectors for goods coming into the state - requiring additional inspections for goods going out doesn't seem like the best use of resources. Perhaps the state, and the Hawaii coffee brands, would be better served by limiting and tracking the amount of coffee bean brought IN to the state, rather than try to determine origin on the way out. Fewer imports of coffee bean would also decrease risk of introduction of new pests and diseases, as happened with the Coffee Berry Borer. There are multiple potential solutions to the problem of "counterfeit" Hawaiian coffee - have they all been evaluated?

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 7:36:28 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
tambut	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I'm a coffee farmer with a small operation. This bill would force me out of business. Please do not pass this bill. Thank you.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 7:43:01 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Darcy Ames	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Honorable Representatives:

I, Darcy Ames, am a Kona coffee farmer, and a member of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association. I strongly oppose bill SB869 requiring mandatory certification of coffee green beans. I believe this process would greatly hinder small operators as myself, and would delay us the use of our coffee in excess of three weeks. For those of us who do not sell or ship green coffee beans, certification seems an unnecessary burden. Our coffee undergoes the same scrutiny at the dry miller with regard to size, and defects, so the idea of mandatory certification makes no sense.

If the idea of mandatory certification is to try to stymie the import of unknown origin coffee beans and then those beans being pawned off as Kona coffee, I don't believe that small coffee farmers have the wherewithal to upfront the cost to undertake such a fraud. Do not punish the small farmers for those things they aren't doing. We're just trying to survive.

The waiting time to have one's coffee certified is way too long for a small farmer on a shoestring budget. We need access to our coffee in a timely manner that we may store it appropriately in our own facility, not left at the dry miller waiting for certification. Having my coffee sit for weeks at a time waiting for a Department of Agriculture Inspector to finally certify it would greatly affect the operation of my business. Also of note is that as a small farmer I may very well lose my dry miller due to the fact a backlog will ensue due to this new rule of mandatory certification. This bill will greatly affect my dry miller as well, as now he has to have excess warehousing to store all the coffee waiting to be certified.

Not that long ago, we lost one of our Department of Agriculture Inspectors for West Hawaii. This tells me that this sector of our government is already stretched to its limit and capacity and that now mandatory certification for all small farms will put the wait period into possibly one or two months. This wait is unacceptable.

A lot of the small Kona coffee farms have already lost some of our field workers to the large coffee farms. Please do not further micromanage us small farmers out of business!

Respectfully submitted,

Darcy Ames

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 6:44:36 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
George M. Peavy	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am a Hawaii coffee farmer, and member of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association, who is in strong opposition to SB869 that relates to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee.

This is a solution looking for a problem. It is burdensome, adds expense to production narrowing the already thin margin of profitability, and creates more work and expense for the State to implement.

Truth in labeling, especially the abused and misused labeling of "blended" coffees is a much more important and efficient approach to protecting the regional branding of one of Hawaii's most important agricultural products.

Small farmers are not the enemy. The State would benefit more from promoting the regional branding of this agricultural commodity rather than economically burdening its producers.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 7:10:06 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Judith Shuster	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a small Kona coffee farmer, and Kona Coffee Farmers Association member, I vehemently oppose this bill. We would never be able to shoulder the added expense this bill would force on us, and all of our fellow small coffee farmers. We would have to just sell our cherry only, and probably then just quit coffee farming-as we operate at almost a loss now. We are struggling with the loss of crop due to the CBB, and the volcano issues, as well as the lack of rain. Please do not throw further obstacles in our path.

Judith Shuster

Kona Kaffee Farm

Captain Cook

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 6:39:00 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
bryce bateman	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

*I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on us, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.*

*Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.*



**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 4:33:24 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lawrence Ford	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This is an unwarranted burden on mid sized and smaller coffee farmers.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 1:39:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Franz Weber	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill will force many small farmers to discontinue, or to sell cherries. Some mills won't be able to accept parchment any longer. This bill needs to be refined and changed

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 4:51:30 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mark Wessels	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a small coffee farmer in Kona - I wish to Oppose this bill. I am a member of the Kona Coffee Farmers Assoc. SB869 is vaguely written and it will require Mandatory certification for **all** Kona coffee. This will add considerable expense to my business of sell 8 ounce and 16 ounce bags of coffee direct to consumers. Kona coffee is already one of the most expensive coffee produced and this added expense is unnecessary and burdensome. In fact, if this bill is passed, I foresee no longer being able to sell roasted coffee direct to the consumer - I will be forced to sell my crop as Cherry at \$2 pound instead of as roast coffee at \$40 pound. This would cause me to sell my farm in the near future. Please do NOT pass SB869.

Mark Wessels - Domain Kona Coffee - Captain Cook HI

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 5:26:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Peter Bresciani	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am writing to you as a small Hawai'i coffee farmer. I am strongly opposed to SB869 relating to Mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii Coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers will be hurt by this legislation and a number will be driven out of business. Please defeat this bill.

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 6:04:12 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ross	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am writing to you as a small-scale Kona coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii Coffee. This bill obviously will benefit large-scale Kona Coffee operations, and will adversely affect bottom line profit margins of small farms. This bill will add taxes, and slow the coffee processing time, which both negatively affect the profitability of my current business. This bill will now force me to sell coffee cherry rather than the added value of selling quality roasted coffee. I believe that the bill will put the price of our raw product (cherry) in the hands of a few processors instead of allowing an entrepreneur like myself the opportunity to dictate my own price points, thus diversifying the marketing potential of the entire Kona Coffee industry. As a grandson of coffee farmers, I am well aware of marketing mistakes made in the past in the Kona coffee industry, and in my opinion this is another big mistake.

Sincerley,

Ross Bean

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 7:49:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Janet Kunitake	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/30/2019 11:41:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gunnar Hillert	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am writing to you as a Hawaii coffee farmer, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee.

A major drymiller in Holualoa (Kona) already indicated that she would no longer accept parchment in case this bill passes as this would add too much of a burden. Coffee farmer here in Kona are already at the limit in regards to profitability. It is my understanding that most coffee farms in Kona at this point are NOT profitable and many operate solely out of love for the profession. Any additional burden may cause farmers to exit the profession altogether. This cannot be in the interest of the State!

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 7:18:49 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
kathy gedeon	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

SB869 would resurrect Mandatory Certification, this time for all coffee, regardless of whether you intend to roast it, or sell it as green. HCA introduced this bill with vague language. The way it is written it would add a tremendous expense to all farms who dry mill more than 100 lbs at a time. Moreover, one dry mill (Holualoa) has said that he would be forced to stop accepting parchment as the workload would become unmanageable. This bill is unworkable for small and mid-sized farmers and might force many estate farms to return to selling cherry rather than selling direct. PLEASE DO NOT PUT US OUT OF BUSINESS. SELLING CHERRY WOULD PUT US OUT OF BUSINESS. WE MAKE VERY LITTLE MONEY NOW.



**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 11:24:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
lili tokuda	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please let the little farmers be independent

I am opposing this bill for the small people. Do not let the rich fat company get fatter and oppress the poor coffee. Farmers. Lili tokuda

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 1/31/2019 12:28:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
William Burns	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to you as a Hawaii resident, in strong opposition to SB869 relating to mandatory Department of Agriculture Certification for all Hawaii coffee. Small and mid-sized coffee farmers and family farms already face a large number of challenges, and this bill puts an even larger burden on them, making it nearly impossible to compete and survive.

Small farmers are not the enemy, and should not be penalized because of the few counterfeiters and dishonest operations that exist. I hope, instead, that the existing laws can be better enforced for the benefit of all, without the delays and roadblocks that mandatory inspection will cause.

Respectfully,

William Burns

**SB-869**

Submitted on: 2/1/2019 7:23:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/1/2019 1:15:00 PM

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

Comments:

The Hawaii coffee industry needs better protection against the constant onslaught of coffee counterfeiters.

Thank you!