

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  
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TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE  
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

February 17, 2021  
1:00 P.M.  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

SENATE BILL NO. 1344  
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 1344. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture (Department), in coordination with the appropriate departmental agency to prepare and periodically update a functional plan for seafood sustainability that expands the State's priority on food by including wild seafood as a viable food source. The functional plan is to be submitted prior to the convening of the 2022 Legislature. The Department offers comments on this measure.

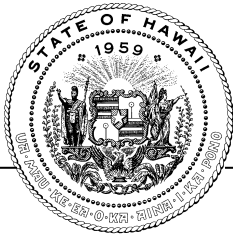
The Department has no role in regulating pelagic fisheries and no authority to set policy, establish objectives or enforcement action on seafood sustainability. These activities would require oversight by an agency well-versed in matters involving wild caught seafood. The Department's expertise and regulatory oversight authority with regards to fish and seafood is limited to net-pen aquaculture and other farm-raised seafood.

This bill seeks to establish a closer working relationship between the fishing and aquaculture industries. Despite utilizing different methods of production, both industries



strive to provide the public the same thing - a consistent, safe, and healthy seafood product. The Hawaii Seafood Council, with the support of NOAA Fisheries, has already established a strong marketing and education foundation that could dovetail with the Department's industry development efforts thereby raising the profile of both industries. The Department concurs that collaboration with other appropriate regulatory agencies to establish objectives, policies, and actions; research the impact that wild seafood has on food self-sufficiency in Hawaii; collect wholesale and retail sales data on wild seafood; and classify and regulate wild seafood as a food commodity in Hawaii, is a worthy objective.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



# OFFICE OF PLANNING STATE OF HAWAII

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DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS  
DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
Director, Office of Planning  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**  
Wednesday, February 17, 2021  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol

in consideration of  
**SB 1344**  
**RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY.**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

SB 1344 requires the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the appropriate departmental agency, to prepare and periodically update a functional plan for seafood sustainability that expands the State's priority on food by including wild seafood as a viable food source. The Office of Planning supports the intent of this measure and offers the following **comments and amendments**.

While understanding Hawai'i's seafood sustainability is an important aspect to the planning of Hawai'i's overall food sustainability and food security, the Office of Planning recommends that the most appropriate functional plan to integrate wild seafood sustainability is the [State Agricultural Functional Plan](#). The State's Agricultural Functional Plan was last updated in 1991 and would benefit from an update sought by this legislation.

The Hawai'i State Planning Act via [§226-55 of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes](#), describes the requirements of the preparation and update of the state's functional plans. In conformance with functional planning update, submittal, and implementation processes described in HRS §§226-55 to -57, the Office of Planning requests the following amendments in SB 1344:

1. Page 1, Lines 1-6:

“SECTION 1. (a) Pursuant to section 226-55, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the department of agriculture, in coordination with the [~~appropriate departmental agency~~] office of planning, shall prepare and periodically update [~~a~~] the agricultural functional plan [~~for~~] to include among other agricultural economic updates, seafood sustainability that expands the State's priority on food by including wild seafood as a viable food source.”

2. Page 1, Lines 7-9:

“(b) As part of the updated agricultural functional plan which shall include among other agricultural economic updates, ~~[for]~~ seafood sustainability, the department of agriculture and the ~~[appropriate departmental agency]~~ office of planning shall consider the following:”

3. Page 2, Lines 5-8:

“Incorporating ~~[the functional plan for]~~ seafood sustainability ~~[, in part or in whole,]~~ into the state agricultural functional plan related to increased food security and food self-sufficiency.

The Office of Planning notes that it will likely take longer than six months to update a 30-year-old functional plan and recommends the extension of the submission of the plan by one-year through the following amendment in SB 1344:

4. Page 2, Lines 9-12:

“(c) The governor shall submit the functional plan pursuant to section 226-56, Hawaii Revised Statutes, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of ~~[2022]~~ 2023.”

The Office of Planning defers to the Department of Agriculture regarding the financing of updating the State Agricultural Functional Plan to include seafood sustainability and wild seafood as a viable food source.

The Office of Planning is actively working on the sustainable development and climate adaptation of the state to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations of Hawai‘i to meet their own needs. The Office of Planning looks forward to supporting the Department of Agriculture to meet these sustainability endeavors as described in this measure to strengthen Hawai‘i’s food security.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**WAIALUA BOAT CLUB**  
*c/o Stephen Lee, President*  
98-820 Moanalua Road, Ste. 151 PMB 223  
Aiea, HI 96701

February 16, 2021

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 17, 2021  
Time: 1:00 p.m.  
Place: Videoconference

**RE: SB 1344 Relating to Food Sustainability**

**WAIALUA BOAT CLUB STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB 1344**

Waialua Boat Club (WBC) is a socially organized club and is the oldest boat club in the State of Hawaii, having its genesis in Waialua, Hawaii and is supported by 45 plus members from all over Oahu. WBC is an active participant in ocean activities, fishing, fishery conservation and management on Oahu.

**WBC STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB 1344 Relating to Food Sustainability.**


WBC has strongly advocated the inclusion of our locally caught fish within the food sustainability umbrella, and has approached the Department of Agriculture and other food sustainability governmental and non-governmental agencies and groups for such inclusion over the years. Although the State has published its 2012 report urging inclusion of our fishery in the food sustainability plan, nothing has been done to act upon the study.

In the past inclusion of fish and seafood as part of the food security and self-sufficiency plan has been noticeably absent much to the detriment of our citizens. As can be seen by the recent accounts of increased fishing to support our community caused by COVID-19, the importance of inclusion of fish and seafood as an integral part of our community sustainability and self-sufficiency objectives. The State has long been recognized as the largest food processing entity, employing many of our citizens and substantially contributing to the economy of the State both in terms of revenue and employment. Fish is food and it should be included in all of the State's food sustainability and self-sufficiency plans.

WBC believes that a strong and vibrant fishery can significantly contribute to the independence, economy, and welfare of the citizens of our State and it is time for the State to recognize and support this bill.

WBC thanks the chair, vice chair and committee for hearing SB 1344 and to afford WBC the opportunity to provide our voices in support of fish as food. We urge you to favorably support this measure.

Mahalo and Aloha,



STEPHEN W.H.A. LEE  
President



February 16, 2021

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 17, 2021  
Time: 1:00 p.m.  
Place: Via Videoconference

Regarding: SB1344 RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

**STRONGLY SUPPORT** SB1344 Relating to Food Sustainability

HFACT is a not-for-profit, IRS 501c(5) organization, that advocates for small boat commercial, non-commercial, and recreational fishermen throughout Hawaii. HFACT board members sit on a number of federal fisheries management and endangered species advisory committees as well as state marine and coastal zone advisory committees; and, HFACT is thoroughly familiar with and participates in ocean and marine resource management in Hawaii and the central Pacific.

HFACT **SUPPORTS** SB 1344 Relating to Food Sustainability. In 2012, the state published a report entitled “INCREASED FOOD SECURITY AND FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY, A STATE STRATEGIC/FUNCTIONAL PLAN”. While HFACT applauds the plan, the 2012 plan did not address fish and seafood. Nowhere in the plan was there recognition of fish and seafood as part of food security and food self-sufficiency.

HFACT asks that the committee support SB 1344 so that a plan could be developed to set forth objectives, policies and actions to increase the amount of locally caught fish that is food consumed by Hawaii’s residents.

It is already recognized by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture that the economic impact of food import replacement is significant. The 2012 report cites that “replacing just 10% of the food Hawaii currently imports would amount to approximately \$313 million dollars which would remain in the State”. The 2012 report further recommends actions to market “Buy Local/It Matters” and to brand and label local food products. HFACT agrees on both counts.

Also identified in the 2012 report is that “a critical factor towards successful implementation will be building partnerships with the increasing number of organizations involved in food self sufficiency/food security.” HFACT stands ready to assist the state in this regard.

***Hawai'i Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition, Inc.***  
***75-796 Hiona Street, Holualoa HI 96725***

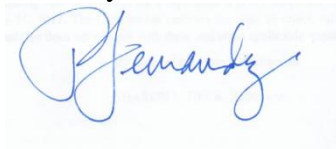
In 2017, sustainability and self-sufficiency discussions focused on agriculture and omitted the **state's largest food producing entity**, *which is fishing*. Hawaii's commercial fishing vessels land about \$110 million of seafood. Eighty to 90 percent of the locally caught fish stay in our islands as food for our people and visitors. By comparison, according to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, cattle production is valued at about \$65 million with only 24 percent kept in the state. Sugarcane is valued at about \$54 million with less than 5 percent kept for local consumption. Algae production is worth \$33 million with 0 percent retained locally. Papayas are worth \$11 million with half of the production staying in the state. All of the banana, milk, lettuce and taro produced in Hawaii are consumed locally, but together these local products are valued at about \$31 million, which is less than a third of the value of local commercial fish landings.

The alternative to a viable local fishery is increased dependence on much less regulated foreign imports. Up to a third of these imports are considered to be from illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries and less than 2 percent of the imports are inspected.

HFACT believes that the argument to create and publish a functional plan for seafood sustainability is very compelling, therefore, we ask the committee for your support.

HFACT thanks the chair, vice-chair, and committee members for this opportunity to provide comment and to assist in providing food to the people of Hawaii and to assist in the conservation of Hawaii's natural resources.

Sincerely and Aloha,



Phil Fernandez  
President



# **FISHING TALES**

with **Mike  
Sakamoto**

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment  
Wednesday, February 17, 2021  
Via Videoconference

Testimony in support of SB 1344, Relating to Food Sustainability

To: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair  
Members of the Committee

My name is Stefanie Sakamoto, and I am testifying on behalf of Fishing Tales with Mike Sakamoto, a company that was founded by my father in 1985.

We are in support of SB 1344, Relating to Food Sustainability, which would require the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the appropriate departmental agency, to prepare and periodically update a functional plan for seafood sustainability that expands the State's priority on food by including wild seafood as a viable food source

Food security and sustainability have long been a concern to our island state. Although we are surrounded by the ocean, many don't view the fishing industry as crucial to our survival. Seafood is a huge part of many of the different cultures that make up Hawaii, and locally caught, fresh seafood is something that is often taken for granted. This bill would recognize the hard working men and women of the fishing and seafood industry, as well as the importance of seafood to Hawaii's future and security.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 6:11:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
William K. Chang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill.

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 9:35:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

As we have learned from this pandemic, we need locally derived food from farms and fishing. It is time to focus on recognizing that those who provide food must be included in a sustainability plan. Fishing has always been an important food source for locals that deserves a place at the table for planning Hawaii's future.

Mahalo nui loa,

Joni Kamiya

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/5/2021 10:35:32 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

## Comments:

It is absolutely essential to recognize wild seafood as a viable food source, anything less would be criminal. Wild Seafood has been a staple for mankind's existence since the beginning of time. It is perplexing to me that it is just now being considered and identified as important to recognize and support.

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/5/2021 12:02:44 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

The recognition of locally harvested, non-commercial marine species as a vital component of the food security network in Hawai`i is imperative. Since late March 2020 when state-mandated restrictions due to the pandemic were first initiated, the dependence upon local resources - particularly nearshore marine resources - was evidenced by a noteworthy increase in shoreline fishing activity throughout the state. Local fishing tackle shops had a difficult time keeping supplies on the shelves as many residents turned to fishing to help supplement food supplies for family, friends and neighbors who became unemployed. Even prior to the onset of the pandemic, many residents, particularly those living in remote areas, have traditionally relied upon subsistence hunting and fishing practices to feed family and community members. The increase in fishing activity during the onset of the pandemic just accentuated the cultural connection and dependence of our residents upon the ocean for food.

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/5/2021 1:34:25 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Troy A. Ogasawara	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB1344. In Hawaii we are blessed with clean water, warm weather, sunshine, large tracts of agricultural lands and vast bountiful oceans. Unlike, many States, we have great potential to produce and harvest from both the land and sea. Additionally, unlike other States, we are not able to drive a truck to neighboring States or Countries, to supplement our food supply. We are currently dependent on ocean and air freight to feed our population. We currently import most of our food products from out of state and foreign countries. It is a shame that we currently do not include wild seafood as a viable resource in the development of food sustainability plan. During this Covid-19 pandemic, haven't we learned how fragile our imported food distribution network is? It is imperative that we utilize our local resources in a more responsible manner for the benefit of our local communities. Thank you for your consideration. Troy Ogasawara

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 12:07:55 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Brian F. Funai	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I am in support of SB1344 and ask that you please pass this bill to recognize wild seafood as an important part of our diet as an Island people. Our fisheries need to be recognized as essential to the State's Sustainability and Food Security Plans. The tradition, heritage and culture of depending on wild caught seafood here in Hawaii needs to be perpetuated, protected and maintained as a sustainable source of food. The Star Advertiser and other news media outlets, along with fishing tackle shops, are reporting that fishing in the State of Hawaii is experiencing a notable increase, especially among the non-commercial fishing community. Many are fishing to supplement meals at the table during this economic crisis caused by the COVID19 pandemic. While not everyone is suffering during this disaster, please do not wait until we experience another type of natural disaster, one that will put ALL of us in danger such as a major hurricane, to realize how important fish are to our sustainability.

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 2:25:44 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Wasn't aware fish was not recognized that fish was not recognized as a sustainable food source in Hawaii. to me this is a no brainer, hopefully it was just over looked. We have the highest percapita food consumption in the country!!!! Geoffrey Walker commercial fisherman in hawaii since 1981

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 11:34:09 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gary P. Beals	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this Bill. We live in a State where the residents consume three times the average amount of seafood when compared to the national average and must include seafood as a sustainable food source.



**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/9/2021 8:11:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support the long overdue recognition of wild seafood as a viable and important part of Hawaii's food self-sufficiency and the inclusion of wild seafood in Hawaii's sustainability planning.

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 9:23:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose this SB1344. Kewalo park should not be authorized for any kind of development whatsoever. There are not enough greenspace and parks to recreate in Oahu. We fought to protect Kewalos years ago and won so there should be no authority to take these public lands back from the people.

Mahalos,

Heidi Hirsh

3721 Kanaina Ave

Honolulu HI 96815

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 4:44:24 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Strongly support our own food resources, we live in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 5:16:47 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Support!

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/13/2021 12:59:41 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Wild seafood is important to Hawaii and should be managed sustainably

**SB-1344**

Submitted on: 2/16/2021 8:58:25 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2021 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Adapting and incorporating locally sourced wild seafood is important for our culture and self-sufficiency. If this is passed any aquaculture must be done without introducing invasive species to the native fauna and flora to protect biodiversity.

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
February 17, 2021 1:00pm

SB 1344: Relating to Food Sustainability

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and members of the Committee, my name is Brooks Takenaka, General Manager of the United Fishing Agency, Ltd., aka the Honolulu Fish Auction.

We support the intent of SB 1344 to include seafood sustainability in Department of Agriculture's functional plan.

We do however, have concerns regarding the Department of Agriculture's ability to address:

- the sustainability of wild seafood;
- "collecting data on the wholesale and retail sales of the wild seafood in the State" as stated on page 2, item (3); and
- "wild seafood as a food commodity in the State" as stated on page 2, item (4) of the bill.

Currently there are mechanisms in place where daily fish auction sales data are forwarded to National Marine Fisheries Service and subsequently to the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources.

We look forward to a collaborative effort to work on this functional plan and objectives.

Mahalo for allowing us to share our viewpoint.