

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

March 31, 2021
2:30 P.M.

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**SENATE BILL NO. 496 S.D. 2, H.D. 1
RELATING AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 496 S.D. 2, H.D. 1. The purpose of this measure is to instruct the Department of Agriculture to identify the top 10 fruit and vegetable imports to the state that may be commercially grown by farmers in Hawaii, recommend ways to increase their production, and incorporate the findings into Act 151 (2019) for submission to the regular legislative session in 2023.

The Department appreciates the intent of this measure so long as it does not impact our Executive budget and offers comments.

The Department is assuming that this request for import information is sourced directly from the U.S. Mainland and elsewhere from foreign countries. Additionally, we assume the quantitative measure is designated in shipping weight.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





68-3765 MANA HUA PL. WAIKOLOA, HI. 96738
MAIN: (808) 883-9411 CELL: 989-1637
EMAIL: hydrogen@hawaii.rr.com

**TESTIMONY OF JOHN CROUCH ON BEHALF OF ERS,
A HAWAII RENEWABLE ENERGY COMPANY BEFORE THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

In SUPPORT of SB 496, SD2 HD1 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, March 31, 2021 2:30 p.m. Conference Room 308

Aloha, Chairperson Silvia Luke, and Vice-Chair Ty J.K. Cullen and members of the Committee I have been involved in the design and installation of renewable energy projects in Hawaii since the first large unit at Mauna Lani Bay Hotel and Bungalows in 1998 and the first large scale PV project in Hawaii, 2008, on Lana'i composed of 1.5MW of PV to supply 30% of the daytime load. I have also been involved in the refurbishment of Alii Fishpond on Molokai for Mullet culture as well as the production of water melons and snap beans on the plains and valleys of Hoolehua. I developed the Pineapple biomass silage project for the Honolulu Dairy industry and the development of pineapple stubble for biomass power generation on Molokai. I am very familiar with the problems of farming in Hawaii.

This bill will provide valuable information to existing and new farmers to understand the existing specific needs of the agriculture community. Identifying the 10 crops that are of most importance to the health of the agricultural community is valuable information. It will encourage development of products that Hawaii needs to enhance its ability to be self sufficient in food resources.

To encourage the reliance on local produce is totally in line with the State's goal of self-sufficient energy and food resources.

SD2 provided a tax credit that would assist individuals and businesses to invest in food production. I suggest that it should be reinstated to this measure, similar to HB94.

SB 496 SD2 – HD 1 is important as a tool to help us reach our goals of food security sooner than later.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

John Crouch
hydrogen@hawaii.rr.com



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 31, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 496, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 308
2:30 PM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports SB 496, SD2, HD1, which requires the department of agriculture, in cooperation with the office of the governor, to identify the top ten fruit and vegetable imports to the State that may be commercially grown by farmers in Hawaii and recommend ways to increase their production.

About 85-90% of Hawaii's food is imported which makes it particularly vulnerable to disruptions in shipping and the food supply. The "Economic Impacts of Increasing Hawaii's Food Self-Sufficiency".report by Dr, Mathew Loke of HDOA and Dr. PingSung Leong of CTAHR estimates that replacing just 10% of the food we currently import would amount to approximately \$313 million. Assuming a 30% farm share, \$94 million would be realized at the farm-gate which would generate an economy-wide impact of an additional \$188 million in sales, \$47 million in earnings, \$6 million in state tax revenues, and more than 2,300 jobs.

Food import replacement can also have a significant impact on Hawaii's economy by decreasing the risk of introducing harmful invasive pests. These pests could have devastating effects on the island's agricultural economy and its fragile ecosystems. Invasive species such as coqui frogs, red fire ants, CBB, two-line spittlebug, coffee leaf rust, macadamia nut feltid coccid, and varroa mites have severe consequences beyond agriculture and require millions in public dollars to fund eradication or containment programs.

We support efforts to replace agricultural imports with Hawaii-grown products to provide our communities with the fresh fruits and vegetables they want while helping the State's farmers be more successful.

The proposed task force will provide necessary information to help farmers decide what produce they can grow to replace that being brought into Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure of great importance.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, March 31, 2021 — 2:30 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports the intent of SB 496 SD 2 HD1, Relating to Agriculture.

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food; renewable energy and clean transportation; and better management of freshwater and waste.

Ulupono supports the intent of SB 496 SD 2 HD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Office of the Governor, to identify the top ten fruit and vegetable imports to the State that may be commercially grown by farmers in Hawai'i and recommend ways to increase their production.

Ulupono supports import replacement efforts to increase local food production for local consumption, which helps bolster our state's food security. While we support the idea of expanding Act 151, SLH 2019, to include information on import replacement, we believe that more substantive support should be provided outside of a strategic plan that the Department has already begun disseminating through stakeholder outreach and engagement. Previous drafts have looked to incentivize growing the state's most imported crops by providing a tax credit to local producers. By providing this direct support, farmers will be more likely to produce those fruits and vegetables.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

SB-496-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2021 10:49:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair, The Honorable Ty Cullen, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing **SB496 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Hearing: March 31, 2021 2:30 pm, by videoconference

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and members of the House Finance Committee.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i is a group focused on reversing the climate crisis. The Climate Protectors Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB496 SD2 HD1!**

As a tropical island State, Hawai'i will be among the first places harmed by the global climate crisis, with more intense storms, food insecurity, loss of protective coral reefs, and rising sea levels destroying our shorelines. We must do all we can to reduce our carbon footprint and become carbon negative as soon as possible.

The purpose and intent of this measure is to reduce the State's reliance on imported produce. More specifically, this measure:

(1) Establishes within the Department of Agriculture a task force to identify the top ten imported fruits and vegetables that may be commercially grown in the State, and invites representatives from private organizations to serve on the task force; and

(2) Creates an agricultural import replacement tax credit to incentivize local production of these fruits and vegetables.

Facilitating more local food production, as this bill would do, will reduce greenhouse gas emissions released in transporting food to Hawai'i, reduce our food insecurity, and help local farmers.

Please pass this bill! Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

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Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Beau Oshiro, C&S Wholesale Grocers, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

TO:
Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 31, 2021
TIME: 2:30pm
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: SB496 SD2 HD1 Relating to Agriculture

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

Our local agriculture sector has tremendous potential for growth. Increasing local food production has been a goal for a wide range of stakeholders for a long time but making significant progress has proved challenging. Researching and identifying which products can be successfully produced locally will help focus efforts to increase local food production.

We believe that providing tax credits is a powerful way to incentivize local growers to prioritize these products and we encourage the committee to consider restoring language to that effect in the measure. This system will maximize these products' potential to be successfully produced in quantities that can minimize or eliminate the need to import them.

We urge you to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-496-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 1:30:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Kawamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is John Kawamoto, and I support SB 496 SD 2 HD 1, which encourages the production of locally grown food by requiring the Department of Agriculture to identify the top 10 fruits and vegetables imported to Hawaii that may be grown locally, along with making recommendations to grow them locally.

Climate change is accelerating, and human-induced global warming has already led global temperatures to rise an average of one degree Centigrade over preindustrial levels. Further temperature increases would lead to widespread drought, crop failures, floods, wildfires, energy blackouts, infrastructure breakdowns, supply chain breakdowns, and infectious disease outbreaks that would be devastating and irreversible. Hawaii must do much more to reduce its consumption of fossil fuels in order to do its share to control climate change.

Hawaii is currently importing roughly 90% of the foods consumed in the state. All of these imported foods have an element of fossil fuel embedded within them because transportation to Hawaii -- whether by air or by sea -- burns fossil fuel. The State has a goal of doubling local food production by 2030, and this bill helps move Hawaii toward that goal. In addition, this bill helps to move Hawaii toward food security.

This bill should be one of multiple bills passed by the Legislature to enable Hawaii to do its part to control climate change.

SB-496-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 8:05:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Janet Pappas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Finance Committee members,

I strongly support SB496 SD2 HD1.

It is a worthwhile endeavor to determine the top 10 fruits or vegetables imported to Hawaii and then incentivize local farmers to grow what people most want to buy. Local produce will be fresher and therefore more eye-appealing and healthier than imported produce. Fewer food imports mean greater food sustainability for Hawaii and fewer greenhouse gases emitted because less food will be delivered to our state.

I also support the financial incentive (an income tax credit) for farmers who choose to grow the most popular produce.

One caveat: The success of this measure (SB496) may be greatly dependent on passage of the food hub bill (SD338) as the bills taken together should help resolve any food distribution issues that currently exist.

Please pass this bill.

Thank you for listening and for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jan Pappas - Aiea, Hawaii