



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education and Technology
Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.

By
Nicholas Comerford, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
And
Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1711 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Clark, and members of the House Committee on Higher Education and Technology:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the intent of HB 1711 relating to the hiring of 3 full-time FTE positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources' (CTAHR) operation on Kaua'i.

The pandemic has had a deleterious effect on the entire University of Hawai'i System, and CTAHR is not an exception. Due to retirements, resignations, and the hiring freeze CTAHR has experienced a decline in faculty and staff numbers.

During this same time, CTAHR has also been engaged in developing a strategic plan with the goal of defining the Grand Challenges for the state that is consistent with our expertise or potential expertise. This plan will determine the college's focus in the next 5-10 years. One outcome from the strategic plan will be a state-wide staffing plan, which will guide requests for hiring to the Mānoa campus administration. This is noted because CTAHR is at a stage where requests for staffing will be developed to align with the college's strategic plan.

There are, however, basic gaps in CTAHR's programs that would be helpful to be filled as the staffing plan is being developed. HB 1711 requests for 3 full-time FTE positions for the Kaua'i Research Station. In response to that request we note:

1. Any position would have to be classified as a permanent position. It can take at least 6-9 months to hire a faculty member, making a position with just annual funding difficult.
2. We currently employ a 4-H Extension Agent on Kaua'i as a temporary hire as this is an important position for the program. This bill would allow us to advertise that position on a permanent basis.

3. The bill requests that one of the positions be a Livestock Extension Agent. During the pandemic we lost the Livestock Agent on Kaua'i to a resignation for personal family reasons. This was one of the positions gained in the 2018 legislative session. We would support the hiring of a Livestock Agent if that was indicated as important in our staffing plan. But we are reluctant to specifically identify any additional position before our strategic planning is completed.
4. Therefore, we would propose that, if the additional two positions were approved, that they be left open as to the nature of the hire until we can identify what would be relevant to the college's strategic positioning and plans for Kaua'i.

In summary, the University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 1711 and thanks the supporters of this bill for their consideration of CTAHR. Full-time equivalent, permanent positions could be useful to the Kaua'i Research and Extension program either as Extension Agents, Extension Specialists or Agricultural Technicians. However, CTAHR wishes to identify the nature of these positions based on the on-going strategic planning. CTAHR understands that passage of this bill should not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1711

February 16, 2022
2:00 p.m.
Room 309 and Videoconference

RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1711 appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds and establishes three full-time equivalent positions for FY 23 for the University of Hawai'i's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources' Kaua'i Research and Extension Station.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

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 HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

FEBRUARY 16, 2022
10:00 A.M.

CONFERENCE ROOM 309 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

HOUSE BILL NO. 1711
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chairperson Takayama and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1717. The bill appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to support three additional positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources Kauai Research and Extension Station. The Department supports the increase of CTAHR personnel to the Kauai Research and Extension program to assist and benefit agriculture on island of Kauai and its farmers and ranchers. The Department supports the intent of this measure and defers to University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to best assess the nature of the positions needed to be consistent with on the college's engagement in developing a strategic plan for the next 5-10 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NALANI K. KAAUWAI BRUN, DIRECTOR



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Testimony of Nalani Kaauwai Brun
Director, Office of Economic Development

Before the
House Committee on Higher Education and Technology
February 16, 2022; 2:00 PM
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference

In consideration of
House Bill 1711
Relating to the University of Hawaii

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Clark, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1711. The County of Kauai's Office of Economic Development (OED) **strongly supports HB1711**, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to support three additional positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) Kauai Agricultural Research and Extension Station (KARES).

In recent years, under staffing and vacancies at KARES have forced current agents to take on additional tasks and duties outside their usual scope of work. While KARES is positioned to leverage unique resources to meet the needs of Kauai's agriculture sector, its ability to do so is hinged on staff members' capacity to fulfill their responsibilities properly. Recent stakeholder interviews and strategic planning sessions conducted by CTAHR staff have identified staffing shortages as the top issue limiting CTAHR's ability to meet sector needs. KARES needs legislative support to fill current vacancies and make these positions permanent.

Top hiring priorities at KARES for meeting sector needs are:

1. Livestock Extension Agent

Ranching is the most significant agricultural land use on the island, and the cattle industry is one of the largest in the state. Kauai's ranchers need access and support to a livestock agent, and the lack of a proper livestock extension agent puts Kauai's cattle industry at a significant disadvantage.

2. Intergenerational/4H Extension Agent

Since the previous agent retired in 2018, this position has been filled by a temporary contract. This is a critical position that directly impacts nutrition, family wellbeing, and youth development.

3. Agricultural Technician

Loss of staff over the past several years and positions not being refilled forces the remaining two permanent technicians to manage the 260+ acres at KARES. More technicians are essential to be able to maintain grounds, facilities, plant collections, goatherd, and research and demonstration projects.

The success of Kauai's agriculture sector depends on access to qualified on-island agents who can focus their efforts in their areas of specialty and deliver critical research and assistance to industry stakeholders. Failure to adequately staff KARES will impede a thriving agriculture sector on Kauai.

HB-1711

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 2:17:24 PM

Testimony for HET on 2/16/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Alan Gottlieb	Ponoholo Ranch Limited	Support	No

Comments:

Please support HB 1711



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY
Wednesday, February 16, 2022 — 2:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1717, Relating to Agriculture.

Dear Chair Takayama 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 the 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 HB 1711, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to support three additional positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) Kaua'i Research and Extension Station.

CTAHR Extension Service provides critical boots-on-the-ground support to local producers across the State. With agricultural expertise and hands-on support, CTAHR's extension agents provide expert advice to local farmers seeking to improve operations. Support, to name a few items, can include crop selection and varieties, soil health, invasive species mitigation and control, crop techniques such as rotation or trellis, and irrigation efficiencies. By adding three positions to the Kaua'i Research and Extension Station, the State is directly supporting the future success of local producers on the island.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become increasingly complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



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

February 16, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

TESTIMONY ON HB 1711
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Clark, 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 HB 1717, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to support three additional positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources Kauai Research and Extension Station.

The excellent work performed by UH CTAHR for Hawaii's farmers and ranchers cannot be overstated. The ongoing outreach and education are unparalleled in the State. Farmers and ranchers rely on this program for their very success. CTAHR has helped develop and improve agricultural technologies pertinent to Hawaii's farmers. This includes intensive cover crop research, promoting the importance of locally grown produce, developing biological and cultural methods for controlling pests without chemicals, and the use of biological nitrogen fixation to significantly increase the production of high protein foods while at the same time reducing the need for commercially produced fertilizers.

On Kauai, CTAHR has one active Research and Extension Station (KARES). This 250-acre facility is currently home to over 20 active field and greenhouse-based research and extension projects, each intended to inform or aid our local farming community. For example, current projects include variety trials of breadfruit, sweet potato, ornamentals, turmeric, vegetables, and dwarf coconut to determine optimal cultivars for Kauai and Hawaii. Work is being done to find management options for papaya root rot. A long-term culturally-significant taro cultivar collection is maintained at the Station. Work is underway with pasturing goats and forage crops. The list goes on. In addition, KARES provides a

home for the Kauai Invasive Species Committee (KISC), for the Kauai Master Gardener Program, and aids the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and Kauai Search and Rescue with their community-focused efforts.

Prior to the latest freezing and sweeping of positions, KARES had 5 full-time staff who maintained that supported all active research and extension plot allocations at the Station. They are now down to only two employees. Not having enough good people in the frozen or swept roles is very harmful to the continuity of agriculture extension and research efforts on Kauai, and our ability to serve the agricultural community.

Kauai also currently has a near void in extension support for livestock, since losing their livestock extension agent/position roughly a year ago. Kauai abounds with ranchers and owners of livestock or pastureland who have questions and need answers and support. Refilling this position is critical to the long-term support of ranching and animal husbandry on Kauai.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject.



COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY
Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair
Rep. Linda Clark, Vice Chair

HB1711
Relating to the University of Hawaii

Wednesday, February 16, 2022, 2:00 PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Clark, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB1711** to appropriate fund to the University of Hawaii to support three additional positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources Kauai Research and Extension Station.

UH CTAHR provides important resources for Hawaii's ranchers and farmers. They have the ability and expertise to both conduct academic research and work with producers to ensure that the research matches the needs on the ground. We rely on UH CTAHR extension agents to conduct livestock workshops, give presentations, and collect data for the industry. The Kauai Research and Extension station lost a livestock agent more than a year ago, which was not refilled. In order to cover the tasks of that position, extension agents from other islands filled in, but this stretches them thin for addressing their main duties. The support of a livestock extension agent is vital for Kauai's ranchers to get access to support. Refilling this position is important to supporting the cattle industry on Kauai.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

In Support of HB1711
Relating to the University of Hawaii

House Committee on Higher Education & Technology

Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2022

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Place: Videoconference

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Clark, and members of the committee:

Thank you for allowing the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of HB1711, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to support three additional positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources Kauai Research and Extension Station.

UH CTAHR provides unparalleled support to Hawaii's farmers and ranchers. The program has helped develop and improve significant agricultural technologies that have been critical to farmers' success. Restoring the three additional positions at the Kauai Research and Extension Station will ensure continuity of the agricultural extension and research efforts on Kauai and better serve the agricultural and ranching community.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of HB1711. If you have any questions, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Pono Chong
Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices, and build a healthy economy.



February 14, 2022

Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair
Representative Linda Clark, Vice Chair
House Committee on Higher Education & Technology

Testimony in Support of HB 1711, Relating to the University of Hawaii (UH) College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) (Appropriates funds to the UH to support three additional positions at the CTAHR Kauai Research and Extension Station [KARES].)

Wednesday, February 16, 2022, 2:00 p.m.; Conference Room 309, Via Videoconference

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 1711**.

HB 1711. This bill proposes to make an appropriation out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii for the UH CTAHR to establish three full-time staff positions at the Kauai research and extension station, including one livestock extension agent.

LURF's Position. LURF understands that the ongoing outreach and research being performed for Hawaii's farmers and ranchers by the UH CTAHR has been vital in assisting to develop and improve technologies for these agricultural stakeholders, who rely on this program for success of their operations.

KARES is the sole active research and extension station on Kauai, and despite the 250-acre facility serving as home for over 20 active field and greenhouse-based research and extension projects and programs, the operation currently has only two employees. Prior to the latest freeze of positions, KARES employed five full-time staff to support and maintain all active research and extension efforts. Moreover, since the loss of Kauai's only livestock extension agent/position a year ago, practically no extension support for

livestock exists on that island, despite it being proliferated with ranchers, and livestock and pastureland owners who critically need such support.

Adequate funding is therefore required to address this critical workforce shortage, as more research, outreach, and support is necessary to assist these farmers and ranchers, and to avoid damage to the profitability and long-term sustainability of local agricultural production industries.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports** **HB 1711** and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this measure.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2022

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair

Rep. Linda Clark, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 16, 2022 2:00pm
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 309
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

[HB 1711](#): RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

My name is Eric S. Tanouye and I am the President for the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association. HFNA is a statewide umbrella organization with approximately 300 members. Our membership is made up with breeders, hybridizers, propagators, growers, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, educators, and the allied industry, which supports our efforts in agriculture.

The Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association (HFNA) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS House Bill 1711**

The current demand for Hawaii's tropical flowers and ornamentals is higher than we can currently meet. This is due to the high quality, high service and diverse products that is provided by Hawaii. Crops that are healthy and disease free, that can serve as a symbol for high quality. To be able to have healthy crops it helps to have talented resources such as ornamental and landscaping entomologist specialist, plant pathologist extension agent, and pesticide specialist positions.

We have had the privilege to work with the UH CTAHR specialists and agents in the past and they are considered an important part of our industry for the help and guidance they give to our industry. Knowledge should be shared and we look forward to the benefit of such knowledge for our members, agriculture and community.

We have experienced many pests and diseases that have impacted our yields. All aspects of our floriculture industry have had to deal with their own unique types of pests and



diseases. For example, Anthurium has faced challenges with new thrips, bacterial blight and nematodes. Orchids have had to contend with thrips and viruses, while tropical flowers such as red ginger, currently have multiple new viruses. It is important to combat these threats as soon as possible and having resource to turn to is a tremendous help for our agriculture community.

We ask for you to support CTAHR, which supports our industry and agriculture, and the Island of Kauai, so that we may continue to bring the beauty of Hawaii to others through flowers and ornamentals.

If you have any questions at this time, I would be happy to discuss them and can be reached by phone at 808-959-3535 ext 22, cell 960-1433 and email eric@greenpointnursery.com.

Supporting Agriculture and Hawaii,



Eric S. Tanouye
President

Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association

HB-1711

Submitted on: 2/11/2022 4:01:02 PM

Testimony for HET on 2/16/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gerard Silva	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

No more Political JOBS!! Wast of Time and Money!

HB-1711

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 5:46:16 PM

Testimony for HET on 2/16/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
John R. Gordines	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Alohas Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Clark, and Members of the Committee:

I support HB 1711, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to support three additional positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources Kauai Research and Extension Station.

The excellent work performed by UH CTAHR for Hawaii’s farmers and ranchers cannot be overstated. The ongoing outreach and education are unparalleled in the State. Farmers and ranchers rely on this program for their very success. CTAHR has helped develop and improve agricultural technologies pertinent to Hawaii’s farmers. This includes intensive cover crop research, promoting the importance of locally grown produce, developing biological and cultural methods for controlling pests without chemicals, and the use of biological nitrogen fixation to significantly increase the production of high protein foods while at the same time reducing the need for commercially produced fertilizers.

On Kauai, CTAHR has one active Research and Extension Station (KARES). This 250-acre facility is currently home to over 20 active field and greenhouse-based research and extension projects, each intended to inform or aid our local farming community. For example, current projects include variety trials of breadfruit, sweet potato, ornamentals, turmeric, vegetables, and dwarf coconut to determine optimal cultivars for Kauai and Hawaii. Work is being done to find management options for papaya root rot. A long-term culturally-significant taro cultivar collection is maintained at the Station. Work is underway with pasturing goats and forage crops. The list goes on. In addition, KARES provides a home for the Kauai Invasive Species Committee (KISC), for the Kauai Master Gardener Program, and aids the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and Kauai Search and Rescue with their community-focused efforts.

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Kauai also currently has a near void in extension support for livestock, since losing their livestock extension agent/position roughly a year ago. Kauai abounds with ranchers and owners

of livestock or pastureland who have questions and need answers and support. Refilling this position is critical to the long-term support of ranching and animal husbandry on Kauai.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject.

Mahalo,

John Gordines

Kauai Farmer

HB-1711

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 12:13:06 AM

Testimony for HET on 2/16/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Frederick M. Mencher	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Clark, and Members of the Committee:

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of livestock or pastureland who have questions and need answers and support. Refilling this position is critical to the long-term support of ranching and animal husbandry on Kauai.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject.

Mahalo,

Frederick M. Mencher

HB-1711

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 8:11:56 AM

Testimony for HET on 2/16/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Randy Cabral	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly support