

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

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**FEBRUARY 28, 2022
12:30 A.M.
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1712, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL LANDS**

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1712, HD 1 that prohibits “waste disposal facilities” on “A” and “B” rated land in the Agricultural District and prohibits the creation of “waste disposal sites” on Important Agricultural Land. The Department of Agriculture supports the intent of this measure that seeks to protect agricultural lands with the highest productivity potential from land uses that are inconsistent with agricultural production.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our testimony on this measure.





MAUI COUNTY FARM BUREAU

PO Box 148, Kula, HI 96790
mauicountyfarmbureau.org

February 28, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1712, HD1

RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL LANDS
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

12:30 PM

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

I am Warren Watanabe, Executive Director of the Maui County Farm Bureau. MCFB supports HB 1712, HD1, which prohibits siting of waste disposal facilities on important agricultural lands and lands with class A and B productivity ratings.

Land is one of the greatest resources in Hawai'i. We believe that policies must be developed and implemented which would ensure long-term viable agricultural use of this resource is used for the general welfare of the people of Hawai'i and reserved for the benefit of future generations.

As our population increases the farming community continues to see an increase in competing uses for agriculturally zoned lands, such as housing, solar, and now waste disposal sites. We believe that the primary use of agriculturally zoned lands is for production agriculture. We understand the need for future landfills, however we need to be cognizant that land use decisions do not become a detriment to production agriculture.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this matter.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
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February 28, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1712, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
12:30 PM

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

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

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1712, HD1, which prohibits siting of waste disposal facilities on important agricultural lands and lands with class A and B productivity ratings.

Land is one of the greatest resources in Hawai'i. HFB believes that policies must be developed and implemented which would ensure long-term viable agricultural use of this resource is used for the general welfare of the people of Hawai'i and reserved for the benefit of future generations. Act 183 (SLH 2005) and Act 233 (SLH) provide policies and mechanisms to identify and protect Important Agricultural Lands as required by the State Constitution, Article XI, Section 3.

As our population increases the farming community continues to see an increase in competing uses for agriculturally zoned lands, such as housing, solar, and now waste disposal sites.

We recognize that in the land category system used today, agriculture was originally the catchall land classification and that some lands included within the agricultural district were not necessarily considered optimal for agriculture.

However, agriculture has significantly evolved. Soil classification is no longer the only determinant of land good for agriculture. Greenhouses, hydroponics, aquaculture, and aquaponics are just a few of the many types of agriculture that can occur on *all* classes

of land (A, B, C, D, E). Some of the best floriculture and hydroponic operations in Hawai'i are on C, D, and E lands. The total environment, including rainfall amount and timing, day and night-time temperatures, wind, and humidity each contribute to whether a particular region is suitable for a specific crop. In many cases, the soil type and even the existing terrain are not determinative of whether farming can exist and thrive.

HFB recognizes the need for future landfill locations, however, we have serious concerns about future waste or disposal facilities being sited on agriculturally zoned land, especially land with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class A and B and lands designated as Important Ag Lands (IAL).

HFB believes that the primary use of agriculturally zoned lands is production agriculture. We should direct nonagricultural uses and activities from agricultural lands to other areas and ensure that uses on agricultural lands are actual agricultural uses. The coronavirus pandemic has underlined the importance of agriculture in our isolated and vulnerable state. We must protect agricultural lands and avoid simplistic solutions to Hawai'i's waste disposal problems.

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

LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC
PO BOX 27
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759
(808) 688-2892

HB1712hd1, Relating to Agricultural Lands
House Finance Hearing
Monday, February 28, 2022
12:30 pm – CR 308 via Videoconference

Testimony By: Larry Jeffs
Position: Support

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House FIN Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. Our family farms grow about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. I am a volunteer director, serving as Chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

We strongly believe land that can be farmed must be protected for agricultural production. Such land must not be taken away for non-agricultural use.

We understand that future landfill locations and other competing needs for land use are many. It makes sense to site non-agricultural purposes on non-agricultural designated lands.

Once the farmland is lost, it is gone forever. That impacts the lifestyle of everyone on the island, both residents and visitors.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Monday, February 28, 2022 — 12:30 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1712 HD 1, Relating to Agricultural Lands.

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 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 1712 HD 1, which prohibits the siting of waste disposal facilities on important agricultural lands (IAL) and lands with class A and B productivity ratings.

Ulupono supports our local producers across the State and believes that maintaining Hawai'i's most productive lands in agriculture will help local communities meet our sustainability and resiliency commitments for generations to come. We understand that competing interests seek similar lands across the State. Lands that, amongst other things, have healthy soils, little to no slope, access to water, utilities and infrastructure, and a favorable location provide an incentive to many that seek land intensive operations, including those in the energy and waste sectors.

Agricultural Lands classified as "A" are considered the most productive in the State. They constitute about 3 percent or about 56,000 acres of the nearly 1.93 million acres of agricultural zoned land in Hawai'i. Class "B" agricultural lands, also highly productive, constitute an about 6 percent or about 112,609 acres of the nearly 1.93 million acres of agriculturally zoned land in Hawai'i. If we are serious about supporting local farmers and ranchers while meeting our food security goals, this small percentage of extremely viable agricultural land should remain in productive agriculture.

The State's IAL lands prioritize agriculture by maintaining agriculturally zoned lands in production in perpetuity. The IAL designation remains a direct commitment to agricultural production and its role for Hawai'i's resilient future. Allowing this designation to reopen for additional uses can threaten currently identified IAL lands and future production as we look to increase our local ag footprint here in Hawai'i. We should be encouraging future generations with dedicated agricultural lands and resources that are best suited for success. This bill seeks to maintain that hope.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

HB-1712-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2022 8:55:48 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/28/2022 12:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Pono Chong	Hawaii Crop Improvement Association	Support	No

Comments:



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

HB1712 HD1
Relating to the Agricultural Lands

Monday, February 28, 2022, 12:30 PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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 HB1712 HD1** to prohibit siting of waste disposal facilities on important agricultural lands and agricultural lands with class A and B productivity ratings.

There are many competing uses for the limited resource of land. However, the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports prioritizing agriculture so that the community can grow towards a more food secure future. We realize that landfills are necessary, but have concerns that agricultural lands that are considered for these sites. We support this bill that will keep agricultural lands for the use of agricultural production.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





Testimony from Scott Dahlman, Senior Director Government Affairs, CropLife America

In support of HB 1712 – Relating to Agricultural Lands

Monday, Feb. 28, 12:30 pm, Via Zoom

House Committee on Finance

Aloha Chair Luke and members of the committee,

CropLife America (CLA) is the national association representing manufacturers, formulators, and distributors of pesticides products used in agriculture production. We support and promote scientific-based policy in the regulation of pesticide products at both the state and federal level. We are in strong support of HB 1712.

This bill would further ensure that Hawaii achieves its food security and sustainability goals by protecting important agricultural lands. We spend more than \$3 billion a year importing 80 percent of our food. So siting landfills on agricultural lands with A and B soil rating is counter-productive to our collective efforts to support farmers and those farmlands. Agricultural lands have already been rezoned for housing. We need to protect what is left.

Mahalo for your consideration.



Biotechnology Innovation Organization

Testimony from Gene Harrington, Senior Director Government Affairs, BIO

In support of HB 1712 – Relating to Agricultural Lands

Monday, Feb. 28, 12:30 pm, Via Zoom

House Committee on Finance

Aloha Chair Luke and members of the committee,

BIO is the world's largest trade association representing biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations. Our key areas of focus are health biotechnology, industrial and environmental biotechnology, and food and agriculture biotechnology. We are in strong support of HB 1712.

This bill would further ensure that Hawaii achieves its food security and sustainability goals by protecting important agricultural lands. We spend more than \$3 billion a year importing 80 percent of our food. So siting landfills on agricultural lands with A and B soil rating is counter-productive to our collective efforts to support farmers and those farmlands. Agricultural lands have already been rezoned for housing. We need to protect what is left.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1712-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2022 12:21:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/28/2022 12:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Mark Phillipson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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

I support HB 1712, HD1, which prohibits siting of waste disposal facilities on important agricultural lands and lands with class A and B productivity ratings.

Land is one of the greatest resources in Hawai‘i. I believe that policies must be developed and implemented which would ensure long-term viable agricultural use of this resource is used for the general welfare of the people of Hawai‘i and reserved for the benefit of future generations. Act 183 (SLH 2005) and Act 233 (SLH) provide policies and mechanisms to identify and protect Important Agricultural Lands as required by the State Constitution, Article XI, Section 3.

As our population increases the farming community continues to see an increase in competing uses for agriculturally zoned lands, such as housing, solar, and now waste disposal sites.

We recognize that in the land category system used today, agriculture was originally the catchall land classification and that some lands included within the agricultural district were not necessarily considered optimal for agriculture.

However, agriculture has significantly evolved. Soil classification is no longer the only determinant of land good for agriculture. Greenhouses, hydroponics, aquaculture, and aquaponics are just a few of the many types of agriculture that can occur on all classes of land (A, B, C, D, E). Some of the best floriculture and hydroponic operations in Hawai‘i are on C, D, and E lands. The total environment, including rainfall amount and timing, day and night-time temperatures, wind, and humidity each contribute to whether a particular region is suitable for a specific crop. In many cases, the soil type and even the existing terrain are not determinative of whether farming can exist and thrive.

I recognize the need for future landfill locations, however, we have serious concerns about future waste or disposal facilities being sited on agriculturally zoned land, especially land with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class A and B and lands designated as Important Ag Lands (IAL).

I believe that the primary use of agriculturally zoned lands is production agriculture. We should direct nonagricultural uses and activities from agricultural lands to other areas and ensure that uses on agricultural lands are actual agricultural uses. The coronavirus pandemic has underlined

the importance of agriculture in our isolated and vulnerable state. We must protect agricultural lands and avoid simplistic solutions to Hawai'i's waste disposal problems.

Best regards,

Mark Phillipson

HB-1712-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2022 1:22:00 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/28/2022 12:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

Strongly support

HB-1712-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2022 2:42:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/28/2022 12:30:00 PM

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

Comments:

February 28, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1712, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
12:30 PM

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

I support HB 1712, HD1, which prohibits siting of waste disposal facilities on important agricultural lands and lands with class A and B productivity ratings.

Land is one of the greatest resources in Hawai‘i. I believe that policies must be developed and implemented which would ensure long-term viable agricultural use of this resource is used for the general welfare of the people of Hawai‘i and reserved for the benefit of future generations. Act 183 (SLH 2005) and Act 233 (SLH) provide policies and mechanisms to identify and protect Important Agricultural Lands as required by the State Constitution, Article XI, Section 3.

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temperatures, wind, and humidity each contribute to whether a particular region is suitable for a specific crop. In many cases, the soil type and even the existing terrain are not determinative of whether farming can exist and thrive.

I recognize the need for future landfill locations, however, we have serious concerns about future waste or disposal facilities being sited on agriculturally zoned land, especially land with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class A and B and lands designated as Important Ag Lands (IAL).

I believe that the primary use of agriculturally zoned lands is production agriculture. We should direct nonagricultural uses and activities from agricultural lands to other areas and ensure that uses on agricultural lands are actual agricultural uses. The coronavirus pandemic has underlined the importance of agriculture in our isolated and vulnerable state. We must protect agricultural lands and avoid simplistic solutions to Hawai'i's waste disposal problems.

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

Frederick M. Mencher

HB-1712-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2022 11:07:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/28/2022 12:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
J Ashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this measure.