

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
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TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2024
9:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

HOUSES BILL NO. 2146
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2146 that makes State agricultural tourism applicable to all counties, instead of only counties that have adopted an agricultural tourism ordinance pursuant to Chapter 205. The measure also requires the Land Use Commission to adopt rules that establish requirements applicable to all farms seeking to implement agricultural tourism. The Department of Agriculture (Department) offers comments.

The Department supports the concept of agricultural tourism and overnight accommodations as an opportunity for qualified agricultural operations to diversify their income stream beyond the sale of their food and non-food agricultural products. The Department also supports county home rule with respect to planning and zoning for their agricultural lands. The Department is concerned about repealing the existing



county authority to establish ordinances to permit agricultural tourism and overnight accommodations and requiring the Land Use Commission to create rules governing details such as road width, days and hours of operation, requirements for gift shops and restaurants, and revenue verification.

Only Hawaii County has an ordinance allowing agricultural tourism where it is accessory to agricultural activities and agricultural processing facilities (Section 25-4-15, Hawaii County Code), however it does not allow certain activities including overnight accommodations unless approved by Special Permit.

While the Department supports the concept of agricultural tourism, we defer to the Land Use Commission and the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



WENDY L. GADY
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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**TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
& FOOD SYSTEMS**

Wednesday, February 7, 2024
9:30 a.m.

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING
Conference Room 325

HOUSE BILL NO. 2146
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Chairperson Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 2146, which makes state agricultural tourism requirements applicable to all counties, instead of only counties that have adopted an agricultural tourism ordinance, and requires the Land Use Commission to adopt rules that establish requirements applicable to all farms implementing agricultural tourism.

Agritourism comes with economic benefits for farmers and ranchers. From generating additional income and direct marketing for to preserving farms, farmland, and local culture and traditions, agritourism diversifies farmers' income streams, meaning they are able to make money outside of their regular planting season. By allowing farms to offer agritourism opportunities, surrounding areas

and local communities will see an increase in people visiting or passing through. This of course means an economic boost for Hawaii's rural areas.

While ADC supports the intent of the measure to promote agritourism, it will defer to the Land Use Commission with regards to the establishment of the rules and requirements for all farms and ranches implementing agritourism.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



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February 7, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 2146
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, 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 provides comments on HB 2146, which makes state agricultural tourism requirements applicable to all counties, instead of only counties that have adopted an agricultural tourism ordinance and requires the Land Use Commission to adopt rules that establish requirements applicable to all farms implementing agricultural tourism.

We strongly support agritourism as it represents an excellent revenue enhancement opportunity for farmers and ranchers as well as an educational opportunity for the public. Fostering the profitability of farmers and ranchers will significantly contribute to the State's goal of increased self-sufficiency.

We believe the primary purpose of the Agricultural District is production agriculture. Agricultural tourism operations should be subordinate to bona fide agricultural operations. We believe that other loosely related activities that merely use agriculture as a justification belong in the rural district. Counties should be encouraged to move in this direction, thereby protecting agricultural lands.

We believe that the details of agricultural tourism to be a Home Rule issue and we request that the requirement that a County adopt ordinances regulating agricultural tourism operations remain in statute. Counties may differ in their opinions of what they allow. Different counties may have different opinions of what comprises agricultural tourism. This should be duly respected and remain within the purview of County Zoning.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

HB-2146

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 11:05:14 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Bateman	Hawaii Coffee Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 6, 2024

Aloha Chair Gates and Vice Chair Kahaloa and Committee Members,

The Hawaii Coffee Association (HCA) strongly supports the proposed revisions to the current ag-tourism law. Many Hawaii farmers, including coffee farmers, struggle to make their farms profitable. They constantly deal with weather, volcano, pest, fungus and economic issues which adversely impact their gross revenues. Ag-tourism is often a very important part of their revenue stream. The current laws regulating ag-tourism are onerous, unnecessarily legally complicated and not evenly enforced throughout the state. This measure helps correct that inequity and makes the regulation of ag-tourism more equitable .

To make the proposed bill simpler, less costly for farmer compliance and to enhance voluntary farmer participation, I recommend a few changes to the proposed bill. First, I recommend this committee delete Section 1, sub-section 205- , (f) which requires an EA for any ag-tourism activity. This is unnecessary as, at least in the coffee farming context, it merely entails visitors to the farm for a tour, educational opportunities, sampling and purchasing farm products. These typical activities would invariably result in a FONSI. Farmers should not have to undergo the unnecessary cost of hiring experts to help complete EA applications and site plans for County Planning. If construction of new buildings is proposed, those plans can be reviewed in the normal course of existing farm structures planning and submittal processes already in place under state statute and county ordinance.

Second, I strongly recommend that Section 2, Subsection (d)(15) be amended to add new (F) Agricultural Tourism, to include the new language set out in Section 1, above. This would add ag-tourism to the list of agricultural-based commercial operations registered in Hawaii, that can be self certified by the farmer. This resolves the issue of state registration of ag-tourism activities with minimal adverse financial impact on the farmer.

Thank you for your consideration. Strongly recommend that the above changes be made and the proposed Bill HB 2146, as amended, be passed out of committee.

Mahalo nui,

Dave Bateman,

Heavenly Hawaiian Farms, Holualoa HI

Director, Hawaii Coffee Association

LATE



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Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kauai

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports HB2146.**

This bill is poised to provide clear and consistent guidelines for any farms considering agricultural tourism. By requiring that agritourism is an accessory use to farm operations, it helps to protect agricultural districts and ensures the productive, not just consumptive, use of our farmlands.

Agricultural tourism has proven to be a tremendous opportunity for many farmers to showcase their hard work and dedication. It allows them to connect directly with consumers and creates a platform for educating visitors about sustainable farming practices, local food systems, and the importance of preserving Hawaii's agricultural heritage. However, in some cases tourism comes first, with agriculture only an afterthought. This bill is an important step to ensure production is a key component of any agritourism activities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

HB-2146

Submitted on: 2/6/2024 11:09:55 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2024 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of agricultural tourism. I believe that this kind of industry is a win-win for all, as we are still dependent on tourism as a main industry but are in dire need to become more self-sufficient in feeding ourselves. I am glad that this bill is focusing on food products, and hope that by having agricultural tourism we can start focusing on smallholder famers, ranchers and aquaculture, which will help mitigate big-ag and begin to create a more sustainable agriculture and economy for ourselves. Mahalo.