

HB-8

Submitted on: 2/13/2021 12:57:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kelsey Amos | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

We need to take our food security seriously

HB-8

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 8:18:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| brandi corpuz | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Brandi Corpuz and I reside in Kihei on the island of Maui. I am strongly in favor of this bill that would require the state to be better prepared for the future and our food security. There are many very large corporations in Hawaii that grow food but not the kinds of foods that we eat. During this pandemic our shelves were empty many times because they couldnt keep up with the demands. Many staple foods could not be found on any islands. This was the scariest part of going through this pandemic. We need to be secure with the amount of food that we grow on our islands. We can not be dependant on the barge or airplanes for our most basic needs to be met. Thank you, Brandi Corpuz

HB-8

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 8:39:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jonathan Kissida | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Aloha Hawaii Legislature/House AGR Committee,

Please support HB8 Food Security, which establishes the Hawaii food security initiative. This will implement the necessary push to make a plan to make progress toward permanent food security for the State and includes the goal of deriving a majority of Hawaii's food supply from locally-produced, sustainable, and regenerative sources by 2035.

Imagine the effect on future generations and all the positives of a sustainable, less dependent on outside sources Hawaii. Our keiki will thank us.

Mahalo,

Jonathan Kissida, Kilauea EI School on Kauai teacher, and father to a 2nd grade student at the same school

HB-8

Submitted on: 2/15/2021 12:53:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/17/2021 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ted Bohlen | Individual | Support | No |

Comments:

Support for a food security initiative within the Department of Agriculture. Hawaii is increasingly vulnerable to food insecurity with climate change and the more intense storms that it brings. Mahalo!



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

By
Nicholas Comerford, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 8 – RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of the intent of HB 8.

Food security is a critical need for our island state. By food security, we understand it to mean a sustainable mix of locally produced and imported food that provides sufficient quantities of affordable, safe and healthy food to the citizens of Hawai'i. We do not include it to mean food for the purpose of tourism (although that is also important and goes to the need for increased food production).

An integral implied part of this definition is the need for food security during disasters such as a pandemic, hurricane, and volcanic activity. Food security includes not only the production of healthy safe food, but also the food chain that makes possible that production and subsequent post-harvest processing and distribution.

The 2017 Agricultural Census by the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) clearly lays out the challenge facing Hawai'i:

1. Just 1.2% of Hawai'i farms produced over 63% of all agricultural sales. Since these are farms that represent over \$1M in sales, it shows that commercial agriculture is a business of scale.
2. 87% of Hawai'i farms, which had less than \$50K in sales produced less than 10% of all agricultural sales.
3. Since we are concerned with food sales to local markets, 96% of local sales came from just 14% of all farms – farms that had over \$50K in total sales. Therefore 86% of farms produced only 4% of local sales.
4. Assuming that Hawai'i farms produce just 10% of the food sales in the state (as stated in the bill), the vast majority of Hawai'i farms (87%) produced less than 1% of the total food sales in the state.
5. The pandemic made the situation worse.

The clear and present need for an integrated plan around food security is needed. It should also be noted that, given the geographical nature of the state, that plan should also be island specific as well as state-wide. It should be a plan that recognizes the need for commercial farms of significant size as measured by local sales and other metrics to be determined; as mentioned in the bill.

Such a plan should be based on the input from a diverse array of experts from state, county, university, and commercial farmer experiences. The bill as outlined includes the opportunity for input. We recommend that the data collection be accomplished by providing funding to NASS because of their long experience and network of doing such work. It would also make the data produced for Hawai'i comparable with that collected for other states.

Speaking for the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, given our expertise in food science, dietetics, animal science, horticulture, general agriculture and agricultural economics, we would welcome the opportunity to join the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) in this discussion and in the overall development of such a plan.

We also recognize the difficult economic situation that the state in general, and the HDOA specifically, face in the next budget year. While we testify in strong support of the intent of this bill, we defer to HDOA as to their priorities due to personnel and budgetary limitations.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 17, 2021; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 325
Via Videoconference**

RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 0008, RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY.

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** House Bill No. 0008, RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY.

As received by your Committee, House Bill No. 0008, would establish the Hawaii Food Security Initiative Program within the Department Agriculture to:

- (1) Identify a plan for permanent food security in the State, including deriving a majority of Hawaii's food supply from locally-produced, sustainable, and regenerative sources by 2035;
- (2) Recommend additional steps necessary to help increase food security; and
- (3) Develop an assessment system to accurately determine how much food is locally produced in the State and how much food is imported into the State.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

Over the past four years, HPCA has served as a member of the Obesity Prevention Task Force, and as such has joined the Hawaii Public Health Institute and other advocates in support of efforts to promote healthy diets and the increased consumption of locally-grown vegetables and fruits in our schools and communities.

The HPCA also asserts that the COVID-19 pandemic has severely threatened the health and welfare of our citizens, especially Hawaii's underprivileged and rural communities. With so many people unemployed, entire families are struggling to put food on the table on a consistent basis. All one needs to do is visit one of our member FQHC's food distribution events and see the line of cars stretch for miles and the large number of people who wait for hours to receive some surplus food.

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly exacerbated the need for a program like this. Our over-reliance on tourism has weakened our ability to bounce back from COVID's dire economic realities.

The only way for us to protect ourselves from the next global pandemic is for Hawaii to diversify its economic base and become more self-sufficient. And for us to do that, we need to grow more food.

The HPCA understands that the State is experiencing its worst financial crisis since the Great Depression and appreciates how difficult your job will be in deciding where very limited resources will go over the next two years. But to merely perpetuate the status quo will fail to address the underlying problems that created the situation that we currently find ourselves in.

Support for agriculture is bold. Support for this bill in our time of crisis is bold.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Wednesday, February 17, 2021 — 10:00 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 8, Relating to Food Security.

Dear Chair Hashem 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 HB 8, which establishes the Hawai'i food security initiative program within the Department of Agriculture.

Ulupono believes that Hawai'i's food security is lacking, especially in times of disaster. The economic crisis resulting from this pandemic has shown that local producers are extremely important in meeting the needs of those who struggle to put food on the table for their families. Throughout the pandemic local food producers have found ways to support vulnerable communities in times when shelf-stable food and canned good donations were scarce across the nation. As our state continues to experience ongoing, varied emergencies, food security will remain critical to serve our community – local producers will need to be supported.

We recommend adding the University of Hawai'i, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to serve with the Department of Agriculture and the Office of Planning to design and implement the program.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

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 AGRICULTURE

February 17, 2021
10:00 A.M.
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

HOUSE BILL NO. 8
RELATING TO FOOD SECURITY

Chairperson Hashem and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 8. The purpose of this measure is to increase food security in Hawaii by establishing a Hawaii food security initiative program within the Department of Agriculture. The Department appreciates the intent of this measure provided that the measure does not impact the Executive budget and offers comments.

Article XI, Section 3 of the Hawaii State Constitution affirms that the state shall conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency, and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands. Since the legislation was drafted in 1978, the concept of food self-sufficiency has evolved into food security and beyond.

Food security is a complex concept that incorporates different dimensions, with three core ones -- Availability, Access, and Utilization. All outcomes will depend on which



component is measured. The initial formal food security definition accepted internationally came with a supply side focus and read as follows:

“Availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices.” (World Food Conference 1974)

In subsequent years, additional works on food security have led to an increasing focus on the demand side with the inclusion of individuals and households. Food security access and utilization are now measured conventionally with household expenditure surveys with variables consisting of income, food price, diet quantity, diet quality, social services, and sanitation.

The Department is focused on measuring food production on the supply side and has little role in measuring food consumption of individuals, households, and institutions beyond marketing on the demand side. Currently, the USDA conducts an annual survey to assess household food security at the federal and state levels. While the Department can contribute to assist in the measurement/reporting of Availability in the core food security paradigm, it faces severe limitations in using existing staff expertise and resources to undertake the other tasks and responsibilities as outlined in this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.