

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2023
10:00 A.M.**

CONFERENCE ROOM 325 AND VIDEO CONFERENCING

**HOUSE BILL NO. 974
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Gates and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on House Bill 974. The purpose of this bill is to establish an fund a full-time program specialist position within the department of agriculture to seek and write grants, provide technical assistance, provide grant program administration, perform needs assessments, make recommendations to the chairperson of the board of agriculture and assist farmers, ranchers and other agricultural operators in applying for and obtaining grants offered by the United States Department of Agriculture and other sources, and to assist them with fulfilling and complying with the requirements of the grants. The Department supports this bill. There is an appropriation requested for the purposes of this measure.

It has been announced that through the efforts of the Hawaii Congressional delegation, the Infrastructure Improvement and Jobs Act allocated \$2.8 billion to Hawaii. These are the opportunities the position will pursue.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

**COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD
SYSTEMS**

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

HB974

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Friday, February 10, 2023, 10:00 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four 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 HB974** which establishes a program specialist position within the Department of Agriculture and appropriates moneys to fund the position and prioritizes assistance for farmers and ranchers who produce local food that is at least partially consumed within the State.

Funding a position within the Department of Agriculture to assist ranchers and farmers to secure funding is important to ensuring access to capital for operations to succeed. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports all forms of agriculture and would like to point out that the opportunity to export goods helps many operations stay economically viable as a business. Every rancher in Hawaii contributes to local food whether it's through a grass-finished branded program or through cull cows and bulls that contribute to the local ground beef supply. Exporting goods is a smart way to diversify operations especially in times of drought. However, we support this measure which gives priority to those who produce local food.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
Friday, February 10, 2023 — 10:00 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative strongly supports HB 974, Relating to Agriculture.

Dear Chair Gates 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 choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono strongly supports HB 974, which establishes and appropriates funds for a program specialist position within the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and prioritizes assistance for farmers and ranchers who produce local food that is at least partially consumed within the State.

Ulupono supports the State's efforts to actively pursue grant opportunities that help local agriculturalists. Many federal programs are dedicated to state departments or agencies who can apply for funding to support local initiatives. Establishing a position at the DOA for this work is extremely timely, not only to meet the needs of local farmers and ranchers, but also due to the funding that has been made available by the federal government.

Ulupono currently funds three grant and loan writer programs with The Kohala Center, the O'ahu Agriculture and Conservation Association (OACA), and the Hawai'i Farm Bureau. From 2020 to 2021, these three grant and loan writer programs were able to secure more than \$15 million in federal funds via USDA agricultural programs. In 2022, Ulupono funded a grant writer to enable UH CTAHR's USDA Climate Smart Commodities grant application. UH CTAHR was awarded a massive ~\$40 million USDA Climate Smart Commodities grant that will provide direct funding to Hawai'i farmers and ranchers that practice climate smart agriculture. Similarly, Ulupono believes a dedicated DOA grant writer will be well worth the investment, and result in millions of dollars in federal funding to further support the State's agricultural efforts.

We appreciate this committee's effort to hear important measures that look to establish long-term support for our local farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



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February 10, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 974
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
10:00 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 supports HB 974, which establishes a program specialist position within the Department of Agriculture and appropriates moneys to fund the position. HB 974 prioritizes assistance for farmers and ranchers who produce local food that is at least partially consumed within the State.

The decrease in direct Federal appropriations for agriculture has resulted in an increased level of dependence on grants. Many federal programs have turned into competitive grant programs.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are finding it difficult to secure the financial support necessary to build capacity. Grant writing for USDA, State, County, and other grants usually involves a very complex application process that can be difficult to navigate through. This often deters farmers and ranchers from applying for USDA and other grants. A well-trained and skilled grant writer would be able to assist farmers and ranchers obtain USDA and other grants by assisting them with applying for and fulfilling the requirements of the grants.

Access to USDA and other grants can result in increased capacity, new business opportunities, increase employment opportunities and address Hawai'i's goals of increased self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-974

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 12:12:01 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support