

SB-1416

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 4:12:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I support SB 1416.

Mahalo,

Barbara Barry



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

SB2621
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Monday, February 7, 2022, 1:00 PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, 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 SB1416** to establish provisions within the department of agriculture to enhance farmer equity by ensuring inclusion of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in the development, implementation, and enforcement of food and agriculture laws, rule, policies, and programs. Many farmers and ranchers in Hawaii are from a socially disadvantaged sector of society, and we support equity in access to resources to pursue and maintain agricultural operations. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council is currently partnering with Oahu RC&D, the Oahu Agricultural and Conservation Association, Go Farm Hawaii, Pacific Gateway Center, and the Kohala Center to implement a Farm Service Agency grant to ensure socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers have awareness, access, and assistance to current programs that can assist them.

However, SB1416 and SB2673 are similar bills that accomplish the same task. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





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 7, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 1416
RELATING TO FARMER EQUITY

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, 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 certainly supports farmer equity and recognizes the negative impacts to native Hawaiians and others regarding access to land and resources to conduct farming. We respectfully offer the following comments on SB 1416, which would establish provisions within the state department of agriculture in an attempt to better serve socially disadvantaged groups.

HFB believes that the best way to support these socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, or members of these groups who would like to start agricultural ventures, is to provide funding to help them be in a better position to generate a realistic business plan, to obtain grants and loans, etc. The department of agriculture currently has limited resources to conduct and implement its many responsibilities, much less the extensive new ones proposed by this measure. Rather than provide preferential treatment to those who may not have the qualifications due to lack of experience, knowledge, or resources, it may be more expedient and result in a higher likelihood of success to provide the underserved through a dedicated and funded department position and program to help ensure they achieve their goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments and thank you for your continued support of Hawaii's agricultural community.

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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2022
1:00 P.M.
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 1416
RELATING TO FARMER EQUITY**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 1416 that establishes provisions within the Department of Agriculture (“Department”) to enhance farmer equity by ensuring inclusion of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in the development, implementation, and enforcement of food and agriculture laws, rules, policies, and programs, and requires an annual report to the legislature.

The Department supports the intent of this measure and its laudable goals to ensure that socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers are actively included and considered by the Department in carrying out its mission. The Department notes that we currently comply with Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other nondiscrimination laws and also have implemented a language access plan for farmers with limited English proficiency to ensure that those individuals have meaningful access to state-funded agricultural services and programs in Hawaii.

The Department disseminates and offers all pertinent agricultural information, services and opportunities to all sectors of the Hawaii agricultural community, to the fullest extent possible, subject to the availability of staffing and resources. According to the 2017 Agricultural Census, there are just over 7,300 agricultural producers in Hawaii. This measure’s mandates to provide additional program review and adjustment, statistical data gathering, and reporting for socially disadvantaged members of this



population requires significant staffing and resources which are currently lacking and is the single most limiting factor for maximizing and expanding this effort.

Should this Committee decide to move this measure, the Department respectfully suggests that an appropriation for additional staffing and resources be included to ensure that its purpose can be implemented effectively and fully realized.

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