

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 COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY 4, 2022
1:00 P.M.

CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

SENATE BILL NO. 2288
RELATING TO COMPOSTING

Chairpersons Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2288. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a compost reimbursement program within the Department of Agriculture to provide reimbursements to farmers, ranchers, and landscapers when purchasing compost from a certified processor, dealer, retailer, or wholesaler licensed to do business in the State; establishes a compost reimbursement program manager position; and appropriates funds. The Department supports this bill.

The Department successfully administered a similar program in 2019-2021 and would implement the same controls to ensure the proper disbursement of funds for this program. In order to maximize funds available for reimbursement, the program will be administered by existing staff. The previous program was popular with the agriculture sector and would assist farmers and ranchers with compost costs.

As such, the Department supports this measure as long as it does not adversely impact our priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget. Thank you for the opportunity for testify.





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FEBRUARY 4, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2288
RELATING TO COMPOSTING

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 supports SB 2288, which establishes a compost reimbursement program within the Department of Agriculture to provide reimbursements to farmers, ranchers, and landscapers when purchasing compost from a certified processor, dealer, retailer, or wholesaler licensed to do business in the State and also establishes a compost reimbursement program manager position.

HFB strongly supports the concept of building soil structure and nutrient capacity. Caring for the soil is a cornerstone to having multigenerational farms that continue to provide for the people of Hawaii. Many of our farms add compost made off-site as well as utilize short-term fallow between crop cycles to increase organic content in their soils. HFB recognizes and supports the diversion of discarded food and other useful wastes away from landfills. The benefits of this and of composting are well-known.

Farming is a tough business. High production costs are a major driver of narrow profit margins for Hawaii's farmers. Land, water, labor, taxes, transportation, utilities, inputs, invasive species, and food safety regulations are all costs of doing business that often results in our farmers just being able to break even. HFB supports this initiative that could reduce the cost of production for local farmers by incentivizing, with a 50% match, the use of compost material. This is another mechanism that can help locally produced goods compete with imported products, strengthening our local economy.

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

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 4:42:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Scott Crawford	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Compost is a great way to rebuild soil, and I urge the committee to support this compost reimbursement program.

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 6:42:03 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Helmut Klauer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support



Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB2288

Friday, February 4th, 2022 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee,

HAPA supports SB2288, which establishes a compost reimbursement program within the Department of Agriculture to provide reimbursements to farmers, ranchers, and landscapers when purchasing compost from a certified processor, dealer, retailer, or wholesaler licensed to do business in the State.

HAPA supports efforts to expand composting, which can divert up to 54% of household waste from the landfill and create garden gold for healthy, nutritious plants.

Through encouraging composting programs, we have the added benefit of avoiding the costs associated with hauling waste to other locations for recycling or disposal as well as reducing costs of inputs such as fertilizer or compost.

Composting will reduce carbon dioxide and human-made methane emissions, which are greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change and are also a critically important part of regenerative agriculture.

Please support SB2288.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 6:47:28 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Deborah Umiamaka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB2288.

Sincerely, Deborah Umiamaka.

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 7:45:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
brandon slowey	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Any help for farmers is necessary

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 7:49:14 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Drew Wilkinson	Testifying for Growing Together Edible Landscaping	Support	No

Comments:

To whom in may concern,

As the owner and operator of Growing Together Edible Landscaping, I fully support SB2288. This bill will aid in helping achieve food security by providing reimbursement for one of the key elements to helping plants and trees grow. Compost is a vital part of every landscape and farm planting. Please recognize the financial challenges farmers endure and heavily consider passing this bill to help work towards better distribution of compost into our landscapes and farms.

Thank you,

Drew Wilkinson

Owner and Operator of Growing Together Edible Landscaping

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 8:11:49 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Charles Matthew Shofman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Composting is a critical step in soil rehabilitation on the island and to reduce organic waste in our landfills (which is very bad when decomposing anaerobically). We must take many steps to restore the health of our land and this is one in a list of many initiatives our government should support to empower the people to protect the land. Thank you

Carles Matthew Shofman

Concerned Global Citizen

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 8:33:22 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Timothy Clark	Testifying for hawaii medicinal llc & sunshine farms llc	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support. As a small farmer any and all support and reimbursement is key to our moving forward with our passion. Mulch helps with water usage, microorganisms beneficial insects. Living soil. Please help us get fully reimbursed for mulch and hauling. Mahalo

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 8:36:00 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Somer Wilkinson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Small scale and new farmers need compost and amendments to establish a healthy soil ecosystem in order to grow healthier plants and higher quality food for consumers. This bill would assist farmers and landscapers in their efforts to enrich their soils with an ingredient necessary for everything they plant in the ground.

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 9:49:01 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Harriet Witt	Testifying for Hawaii Farmers Union United	Support	No

Comments:

We need to farm with compost instead of chemicals that end up as pollution, so please support this important bill. Our health depends on it!

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 9:55:04 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Amjad	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of the bill SB2288. During my work, suppoorting the local growers in Hawaii, I have been recommending the application of compost, saince it comes with many benefits to soil, crops, the enviroment, and economy.

Including the application of compost to a rebate program, will definitely, encourage the growers to adopt it much faster and on a wider scale. It also will support the utilizaton of waste, statewide, to making compost, which comes with hiring opportunities, waste management, and imporved economy.

The application of compost is crucial to improve soil health, which will lead to better crop growth and yield. I can go on and on, listing the benefits of compost and the importance of this bill to help move the adoption much faster and wider.

Please support passing this bill, because it comes with great bebefits to Hawaii.

Thanks a lot

Amjad

SB-2288

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 10:33:49 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/4/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ian schiller	Testifying for Pueo Orchards	Support	No

Comments:

Pueo Orchards is in support of this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2288

February 4, 2022
1:00 p.m.
Room 224 and Videoconference

RELATING TO COMPOSTING

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 2288 requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a compost reimbursement pilot program to provide reimbursements to farmers and ranchers for up to 50% on purchases of compost from certified vendors, provided that no single farmer or rancher can receive more than \$50,000 per year. This bill also appropriates \$2,000,000 in general funds in FY 23 for 1.00 temporary Program Manager position, program administrative costs, and reimbursements.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.