



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
And

Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 3:05 p.m.

By

Nicholas Comerford, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 2959 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Kidani, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Senate Committee on Higher Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2959 relating to the University of Hawai'i that proposes a full-time agricultural education coordinator in the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

As mentioned in SB 2959, CTAHR convened the P-20 Agriculture Education Working Group and the major recommendation contained in the group's final report to the 2019 legislature was the recommendation to appoint an agriculture education coordinator. This bill is a continuing attempt to act on that recommendation.

SB 2959 states that developing the agriculture education programs and hiring the coordinator to oversee and enhance them state-wide will result in solving one of the problems associated with Hawai'i agriculture...namely the perceived lack of new farmers.

We believe that the work done by the Working Group was highly collaborative and valuable; and that the need for such a program is justified. If such a bill is passed and funded, the agriculture education coordinator would be stationed in CTAHR. Under that assumption, this would be a full-time staff position, Education Specialist, within the office of the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs in CTAHR. This position would support the on-going work that already exists in CTAHR with outreach to schools within Hawai'i including:

- the Hawai'i OneAg program that includes nearly all community college and 4-year agriculture programs in the UH system,
- Gene-ius Day classes for students in grades 1-12,
- mentoring programs in grades 9-12 at Hawai'i Title I schools, and
- the Hawai'i AgDiscovery program for high school students.

However, it must also be realized that the major outcome of such a program may not be a new breed of farmers, but a much better educated electorate; with a possible interest in post-secondary education in agriculture and natural resource fields.

The CTAHR experience in new farmer training is epitomized by the GoFarm Hawai'i program. This program has for the past 8 years trained and graduated between 50 to 70 certified farmers per year, totaling more than 400 new farmers in the state. Seventy percent of these graduates remain in farming either on their own farms or are employed as farmers.

GoFarm Hawai'i has found over the years that the success of new farmers is a function of real life, hands-on training in the operation of crop production and the agribusiness of farming. All of this is packaged in a passion to do the hard work required of farming given the potentially low profit margin facing most farmers. To be successful even these new farmers need access to land, capital investment and continued education and assistance. GoFarm Hawai'i's experience is that when this is done through a classroom environment, it often does not identify those with the real passion for the job. Expectations should be realistic.

In summary, the University of Hawaii supports SB 2959 as this fits the basic mission of CTAHR, and provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

**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 SENATE COMMITTEES ON  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
AND  
HIGHER EDUCATION**

**FEBRUARY 17, 2022  
3:05 P.M.**

**CONFERENCE ROOM 229 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2959  
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**

Chairpersons Gabbard, Kim, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2959. The bill appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to establish one full-time agriculture education coordinator position. The Department supports the work done by the P-20 working group to develop a coordinated framework of support for preschool through post-secondary agriculture education, a plan for implementation, and the establishment of a coordinator position. The Department recognizes the need to grow new farmers. Agriculture education can spark awareness and interest in a career in our evolving diversified agriculture industry. The Department supports this measure and defers to University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to assess the best assignment of the Education Specialist.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





Date: February 15, 2022

To: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Higher Education

From: Lydi Bernal, Hawai'i Farm to School Hui Coordinator

Re: STRONG SUPPORT for SB2959, Relating to the University of Hawai'i

Hearing: February 17, 2022 at 3:05pm Via Videoconference

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On behalf of the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of SB2959**, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i for the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH CTAHR) to establish one full-time agriculture education coordinator position.

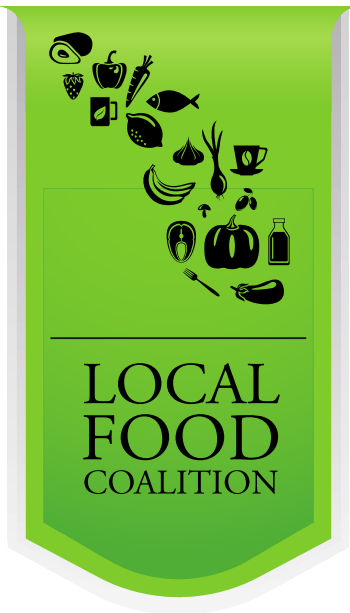
Since the passage of Senate Resolution 80 in 2015, the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui has worked with UH CTAHR to convene the P-20 Agriculture Education Working Group for the purposes developing a **coordinated framework of support for preschool through post-secondary (P-20) agriculture education in Hawai'i**. As outlined in the group's [final report to the 2019 legislature \(DC149\)](#) and provided for in SB2959, **the Agriculture Education Coordinator position within UH CTAHR is essential** for continuing and expanding this work to advance a coordinated statewide approach to regenerating Hawaii's community food systems through regular and equitable access to agriculture and food systems education for all students.

This bill addresses the pressing need for **immediate and sustained investment by the state in agriculture and food systems education** in order to advance Hawaii's food security and food self-sufficiency through the development of agriculture educators, future farmers, and a society that understands, supports, and actively participates in regenerating Hawaii's community food systems.

The **Hawai'i Farm to School Hui** is a statewide network comprising five Island Networks and over forty public-private entities with a collective mission to strengthen Hawaii's farm to school movement. The three pillars of successful farm to school programs are: 1) school gardens and on-campus farms, 2) food education, and 3) school food improvements through local procurement. The Hui formed in 2010 and is a program of Hawai'i Public Health Institute.

The Hawai'i Farm to School Hui appreciates the Committees' strong support of agriculture education, and respectfully requests that the Committees continue this support by passing SB2959.

Me Ke Aloha,  
Lydi Bernal  
Hawai'i Farm to School Hui Coordinator



Hawai'i Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association

Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council

Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation

Hawai'i Farmers' Union United

Hawai'i Food Industry Association

Hawai'i Food Manufacturers Association

Kohala Center

Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i

Maui Farm to School Network (Maui F2SN)

Ulupono Initiative

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources - University of Hawai'i at Manoa

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
February 17, 2022 – 3:05 p.m. – Via Videoconference

**RE: SB 2959 – Relating to the University of Hawaii – In Support**

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

The Local Food Coalition **supports** SB 2959, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to establish one full-time agriculture education coordinator position.

With the average age of a farmer in Hawaii being approximately 60 years old, it is important that we develop the next generation of farmers.

One of the main recommendations that came out of the P-20 Agriculture Education Working Group's Report to the Legislature in 2019 was to establish and fund an agriculture education coordinator position to create and foster a plan for those interested in the noble profession of agriculture, in becoming our next generation of farmers. CTAHR has already proven to be successful in educating and training new farmers through its GoFarm Hawaii program. It is also important to provide agriculture education across the P-20 spectrum to create interest in this vital industry.

The Local Food Coalition is an organization comprising of farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations working to provide Hawaii's food supply.

We respectfully request your support of SB 2959. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Kendall Matsuyoshi  
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February 17, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2959**  
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Conference Room 229 & via Videoconference  
3:05 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice-Chairs Nishihara and Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

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 2959**, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii for the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to establish one full-time agriculture education coordinator position.

It is commonly known that the average age of a farmer in Hawaii is approximately 60 years old. For agriculture to be sustainable, and to produce more local crops we, as a society, must cultivate the next generation of farmers and ranchers.

The Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations undertook a series of facilitated meetings with farmers, ranchers, educators, and a diverse group of stakeholders across the state between 2007 and 2011 to address Ag Labor. The Hawaii Agriculture Skill Panel Report was the result of the stakeholder meetings. The report made a number of recommendations, of which several common themes emerged. #1 of those themes was "Increasing youth education and training".

In 2013, the Hawaii State Legislature saw fit to establish the Agriculture Workforce Advisory Board via HB 749 of that year. This Board convenes, in part, to execute the recommendations of the Hawaii Agriculture Skill Panel Report. This board established a program by which educators and school administrators can be exposed and incentivized

to adopt existing broad-based agricultural curriculums. This was an important step toward the future of agriculture in Hawaii.

In 2015, Hawaii State Senate Resolution No. 80 requested that the UH-Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) develop an “implementation strategy and recommendations for the creation of a statewide coordinated framework of support for P–20 agriculture education, including any proposed legislation.” SR 80 sought to build upon the expertise of CTAHR and create a coordinated effort to address Ag education. It bears mentioning that CTAHR currently serves on the Ag Workforce Development Advisory Board.

HFB supports initiatives that help to educate and reconnect our children with agriculture. Through agriculture education programs, our children will gain an understanding and appreciation for agriculture which will result in healthier eating habits, stronger support for Hawaii’s agriculture industry, and will contribute to Hawaii’s food security. We still have a long way to go to educate our children about agriculture. Creating an agriculture education coordinator position is another tool that will help in the education process. It is an investment to have well-informed consumers and supporters of Hawaii’s agricultural industry in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure



Date: 2/16/22

To: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee for Higher Education (HRE)

From: Hawai'i Youth Food Council

Re: **SUPPORT for SB2959**

Hearing: 2/17/22, Thursday, 3:05pm

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On behalf of the Hawai'i Youth Food Council, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SB2959**, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i for the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to establish one full-time agriculture education coordinator position.

As Hawai'i students, we believe that the establishment of a P-20 Agriculture Education Coordinator position would decrease the average age of farmers in Hawai'i while increasing food security and in-state self sufficiency. By expanding the state's capacity to train educators in the field of agriculture and food systems more students will be exposed to agriculture education and will thus have the knowledge, opportunity, and capacity to advocate for sustainable food systems and/or pursue professions in such fields.

Hawai'i Youth Food Council Member, Tyler Levine (a 17 year-old homeschool student) was given the opportunity to learn about the process of food production in elementary school through the unique lessons taught by her 6th grade science teacher. Within the living laboratory of her school's garden she participated in the cultivation of food, gaining both awareness and appreciation for the practice of working with the earth to grow sustaining connections through the catalyst of food. This experience has inspired Tyler to become a farmer so that she may plant seeds to preserve the living legacy of food sovereignty.

From the plantation era that summoned thousands of people across the world with a destination of cultivating cane fields, to the rise of specialty export crops that now employ machinery and biocides, the agricultural industry of Hawai'i has endured dramatic changes with its systematic structure. With the average age of farmers in Hawai'i being over sixty years old equating to an inadequately sized agrarian workforce, the state is faced with an obstacle limiting the attainment of aspirations for increased local food production and revenue streams.

*(Continued on next page)*



As members of the Hawai'i Youth Food Council we believe that the position of a P-20 Agriculture Education Coordinator is crucial to the engagement and participation of present and future generations in the process of transforming Hawaii's local food system.

The **Hawai'i Youth Food Council** is a program of the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui and Hawai'i Public Health Institute, and includes students from public, charter, and independent high schools across Hawai'i. The council was established in 2020 to engage and empower youth in the process of rewriting the present narrative of Hawaii's food system. Members identify and address systemic issues that exist throughout various dimensions of the food chain to promote community participation in the formation of resilient, equitable local food economies.

Thank you very much for your support of agriculture education in Hawai'i. We respectfully request that you please pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Bao Nguyen, Punahou School  
BJ Miranda, West Hawai'i Explorations Academy  
Chay Cunningham, Maryknoll High School  
Gigi Kiyabu, Mid Pacific Institute  
Grace Monaco, 'Iolani School  
Hannah Apostol, Waipahu High School  
Jaden Joy Rosabia, Kealakehe High School  
Marianel Carmen, Maui High School  
Mia Torres, James Campbell High School  
Rona Lei Duldulao, McKinley High School  
Tyler Levine, Oak Meadows Homeschool  
Yewon Julie Jeong, Hanalani Schools

**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 3:33:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Lynn Murakami Akatsuka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To Members on the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Senate Committee on Higher Education,

I strongly support the passage of SB 2959 to establish one full-time agriculture education coordinator position in the UH - College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. I base this on the agriculture education working group's annual report recommendations to develop a coordinated framework for preschool through post-secondary agriculture education. It is time to move forward on their recommendation to establish this coordinator position. We need to increase the number of farmers who will increase our food capacity to become self-sufficient as a state and not dependent on outside sources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2959.

**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 3:55:20 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Senate,

As owner and operator of a small farm and agriculture landscape business, Growing Together Edible Landscaping, we fully support SB2959. Education is a foundational practice within our business and this bill will help to serve that need throughout Oahu. CTAHR does an incredible job with the limited funding they receive. This position will enable them to reach out and educate more people and help increase food security in the islands.

thank you,

Drew Wilkinson

**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 3:56:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Michelle Matson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support funding the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources full-time agriculture education coordinator position.

**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 1:36:42 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Jimmy Gomes	Testifying for Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	No

Comments:

Stsand by Hawaii Cattlemen's Council testimony

**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 2:11:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Ming Wei Koh	Testifying for Center for Getting Things Started	Support	No

Comments:

Center for Getting Things Started strongly supports SB2959 as a way to #fixourfoodsystem.

Unlike other R-1 universities (such as UC Davis, Texas A+M) the University of Hawai'i (which is an R-1 university) does not have an agriculture education program, or certification, or major. Most of the trainings and professional development and curriculum development for agriculture education in Hawai'i's PreK- 12 schools has been led by grassroots organizations such as the Hawai'i Farm to School Hui and funded externally by grants. It is time the State commits fully to this work.

- This bill implements the primary recommendation of the [University of Hawaii System Report to the 2019 Legislature \(DC149\)](#) to establish a P-20 Agriculture Education Coordinator in UH CTAHR.
- The UH CTAHR Agriculture Education Coordinator will provide leadership in carrying out the Implementation Plan as set forward in the report, focusing on teacher development, curricular integration, and increasing the number of trained, paid agriculture educators at the state, regional, and school levels.
- Regular and equitable access for all students to agriculture and food systems education is key to regenerating Hawaii's community food systems to advance food security and food self-sufficiency.

Mahalo nui loa,

Koh Ming Wei, PhD.

Executive Director/Ecoliteracy Educator

mingwei@c4gts.org

**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 2:53:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Testifying for Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	No

Comments:

It was my great pleasure to work with agriculture education leaders from around the State for 3 years to create consensus on recommendations that could help build the food and agricultural economy in the State of Hawai'i. This Bill brings together years of work, and a shared recommendation that if there was an Ag Ed Coordinator at UH/CTAHR they could work together with the Farm to School Hui, and the many other community organizations, non-profits, and state institutions that already know each other through the Ag Ed Working Group chaired by the Dean of CTAHR, to strengthen programs, teacher training, and support for the State Farm to School Program. This is the time to move forward on this idea. CTAHR is already embracing the Farm to School concept, and this position could leverage those resources across the state.

**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 2:57:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Sam Kakazu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The general public is beginning to understand the need to increase agricultural capacity in Hawaii. Many government and non-profit entities are now connecting, communicating their needs and offering support towards this goal. e.g. The UHCOE is poised to hear from the HIDOE that there is a need for agriculture science teachers.

The UH Community Colleges office, that develops career exploration websites, is dependent on industry to list career titles in the green workforce.

Finally, a key player in this partnership is UHCTAHR. An Ag Education Coordinator in this college would play an integral role in sustaining, evaluating and building relationships within UHM and the system schools. Then ultimately, develop curriculum, methodology and help certify teachers for the HIDOE.

Its all part of a critical loop. I strongly support this bill.



**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 7:23:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Zoe Kosmas	Testifying for Mala'ai/The Hawai'i Island School Garden Network	Support	No

Comments:

This bill implements the primary recommendation of the [University of Hawaii System Report to the 2019 Legislature \(DC149\)](#) to establish a P-20 Agriculture Education Coordinator in UH CTAHR.

The UH CTAHR Agriculture Education Coordinator will provide leadership in carrying out the Implementation Plan as set forward in the report, focusing on teacher development, curricular integration, and increasing the number of trained, paid agriculture educators at the state, regional, and school levels. As a small non-profit attempting to achieve similar goals, it would be extremely helpful to have a paid employee of CTAHR to support our efforts and coordinate them across the islands. Our current Farm to School Hui state-wide coordinator, who is employed by another non-profit agency, is tasked with too much and we need to build support in government agencies and offices to ensure that these efforts are sustained.

Regular and equitable access for all students to agriculture and food systems education is key to regenerating Hawaii's community food systems to advance food security and food self-sufficiency. We need to support this position. This work has been on the backs of non-profits for too long.

**SB-2959**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 8:43:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/17/2022 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Kerstyn Afuso	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Subject: In support of SB2959

Aloha e Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Clark, and Members of the HET Committee,

**I stand in full support of SB2959** which would designate a full-time agriculture education coordinator through the University of Hawai‘i’s College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. I am 23 years old and grew up going through Hawaii’s public school system. I experienced the disconnect to our ‘āina that was perpetuated throughout these school years. I stand here in support of SB2959 for our future keiki who should be granted a different narrative around agriculture.

With the average age of farmers more than 60 years old, it is apparent that young people are not interested in farming. Lack of exposure to anything agriculture-related can play a part in this. From kindergarten through high school, I did not receive a single class related to agriculture. I don’t think I even knew how potatoes grew, let alone that they were what made up the smiley faced french fries on my school lunch plate.

While attending the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, studying dietetics (nutrition) in CTAHR, which seems almost a complimentary subject to agriculture, I was not exposed to agriculture education there either. I was being taught what foods were good for our bodies yet never taught where those foods were coming from or how they were grown. Not one single class. I was frustrated having this vital part of nutrition shunned throughout my schooling. I imagine someone not studying nutrition wouldn’t notice this fact. So, I am here to stand up for our keiki, our middle schoolers, our high schoolers, and our college students who may not realize what is missing from their education.

After graduating from UH Mānoa, I went on to UH West O‘ahu to study sustainable food systems. This opened my eyes to a whole new view on nutrition with a much deeper appreciation and understanding for agriculture. It is vitally important that we make children aware of the integral part that agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource management has in our lives, and it should start at a young age and continue throughout their schooling. Without the young generation’s value for agriculture, compounded with climate change’s effect on crop production, food security and sustainability will be near impossible. I therefore fully support SB2959 to create an agriculture education coordinator through UH CTAHR.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Kerstyn Afuso



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

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

**SB2959**

Relating to the University of Hawaii

Thursday, February 17, 2022, 3:05 PM  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Clark, 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 SB2959** to appropriate funds to the University of Hawaii for the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to establish one full-time agriculture education coordinator position.

Agricultural education will help to develop the next generation of farmers and ranchers. We need this education to perpetuate access to opportunities in agriculture in Hawaii and to generate interest in careers that feed our communities.

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

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

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 COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT AND  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 2959

**February 17, 2022**  
**3:05 p.m.**  
**Room 229 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

Senate Bill No. 2959 appropriates \$300,000 in general funds and establishes one full-time equivalent agriculture coordinator position for FY 23 for the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

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.