

**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE, 2022**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 2990, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: Friday, April 1, 2022

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 308, Via Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): Holly T. Shikada, Attorney General, or
Jodi K. Yi or Bryan C. Yee, Deputy Attorneys General

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments regarding this bill.

This bill would establish and appropriate moneys for a cover crop reimbursement pilot program to reimburse farming operations in the State for the costs of acquiring cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost, on page 1, lines 12-15. This program appears to provide an appropriation of public money, which would be subject to article VII, section 4, of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

Article VII, section 4, of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii provides, "[n]o grant of public money or property shall be made except pursuant to standards provided by law." Because this bill does not include sufficient standards for the Department of Agriculture to distribute the funds to reimburse farming operations, it will not be able to make the reimbursements intended by this bill. We therefore recommend that this bill be amended to insert sufficient standards for the Department of Agriculture to distribute the funds appropriated in this bill. Examples of existing statutes that provide standards for agencies to expend funds are part II of chapter 9, and sections 10-17, 210D-11, and 383-128, Hawaii Revised Statutes, which provide standards for the administrative grant of public money.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

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 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2990, S.D. 1, H.D. 1

April 1, 2022
1:30 p.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

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

Senate Bill No. 2990, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, requires the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to establish and implement a three-year cover crop reimbursement pilot program to reimburse qualified farmers or ranchers up to 75% of the costs for cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost; establishes 1.00 exempt temporary pilot program manager position that may receive a salary not to exceed \$50,000 annually; and requires the DOA to submit interim reports to the Legislature. This bill also appropriates an undetermined amount of general funds in FY 23 to effectuate the program, provided that an undetermined maximum amount may be used for the program's administrative costs.

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.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Friday, April 1, 2022 at 1:30 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 2990 SD1 HD1 – RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the intent of SB 2990 SD1 HD1 on establishing a cover crop reimbursement pilot program to be administered by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA).

Soil health and agriculture sustainability has been shown to be dependent on protecting, maintaining and increasing soil organic matter. Cover cropping is one tool that has shown to be effective in building soil organic matter which results in maintaining soil stability during a fallow period, increasing soil water retention capacity, increasing soil nutrient retention and release capacity, and enhancing soil microorganism biodiversity. Cover cropping can be a tool in a cropping system that has value during a fallow period or can also be an intra-rotation crop with its own economic value. The bill establishes a temporary position to manage the program, recognizing that HDOA is suffering from lack of sufficient personnel.

This bill establishes a three-year pilot program to reimburse producers for some of the costs of cover cropping run by HDOA. We recommend the following concept be added to the purpose of the pilot program: For producers to evaluate the economic cost-benefit of cover cropping to prepare for the time when subsidies end. Further, that producers use this pilot program to evaluate profit producing cover crop opportunities; as it would add to the post-subsidy and economic viability of cover cropping that will be necessary in the long-run.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent and language of SB 2990 SD1 HD1 and have provided comments on additional language. We defer to HDOA as to whether the amount of temporary staff and subsidy funding is sufficient to allow the department to meet the stated goals.

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 COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE**

**APRIL 1, 2022
1:30 P.M.**

CONFERENCE ROOM 308 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**SENATE BILL NO. 2990 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2990 SD1 HD1. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture (“Department”) to establish, implement, and administer a three-year cover crop reimbursement pilot program to reimburse farming operations in the State for the costs of acquiring cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost.

The Department supports the intent of the bill emphasizing the advantages cover crop systems may have to increase soil health and agricultural productivity in the State. The Department recommends adding clear legal criteria and standards for distribution of public funds through a grant or subsidy program that the review panel must consider when evaluating applications submitted for the program to ensure it can be implemented properly and effectively. Examples of such criteria and standards for can be found in Sections 10-17, 201D-11, and 383-128, Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”) and Part II of Chapter 9, HRS.

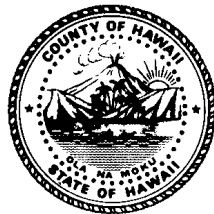


The Department also has concerns that since most cover crops commonly recommended and used in the State are not native to Hawaii, if the cover crop species list is not thoroughly evaluated, there may be unintended adverse consequences of using cover crops, such as: potential increase in the presence of insect pests or plant diseases that may adversely impact successive crops; allelopathic interactions with other crops; release of biochemicals with potentially harmful effects to successive crops; noxious weed problems if poorly or incompletely managed, and susceptibility to newly introduced invasive pests that are actively targeted for elimination or control, such as the Two Lined Spittle Bug. The Department offers assistance to collaborate with UH CTAHR researchers and Cooperative Extension Specialists to assess and address such risks in these matters.

The Department would need additional resources to administer a cover crop reimbursement program. Furthermore, the Department notes there is another measure, SB 2288, SD1, that establishes a compost reimbursement program and if adopted, this measure may duplicate the reimbursement of “green manures” or compost.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

REBECCA VILLEGAS
Council Member
District 7, Central Kona



PHONE: (808) 323-4267
FAX: (808) 323-4786
EMAIL: Rebecca.villegas@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy. Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

March 29, 2022

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS
COUNCIL MEMBER, HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL
ON SB 2990 SD1 HD1, RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE
Committee on Finance
Friday, April 1, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2990 SD1 HD1. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai'i County Council and Chair of the Hawai'i County Council Climate Resilience and Natural Resource Management Committee.

The purpose of this Act is to establish and appropriate moneys for a cover crop reimbursement pilot program to reimburse farming operations in the State for the costs of acquiring cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost.

The use of cover crops, green manure, and compost increases agricultural productivity and aligns with the State's integrated sustainability goals. Plants used for this purpose, including grasses, legumes, and forbs, add nutrients to the soil, act as windbreaks, assist with water retention, provide habitats for beneficial insects, and help to prevent soil erosion.

It is in the interest of the State to incentivize the use of management practices that enhance the quality and sustainability of Hawaii's agricultural lands.

For the reasons stated above I urge the Committee on Finance to support this measure as well. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (808) 323-4267.

Mahalo for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Villegas".

Rebecca Villegas
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 12:54:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai women's caucus	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Supporting cover crops is supporting regenerative agricultural practices which is supporting carbon sequestration and climate action as well as assisting farmers in more sustainable, cost saving methodology.

LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC
PO BOX 27
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759
(808) 688-2892

SB2990sd1,hd1 Sustainable Agriculture
House FIN Hearing
Friday, April 1, 2022 – 1:30pm
CR 308

Testimony by: Larry Jeffs
Position: Support

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House FIN Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. Our family farms produce about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. I am a volunteer director, serving as Chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

As a soil conservation participant and from my own farming experience, I know that cover crop planting is an important and effective method of increasing crop production. Cover crops replenish soil nutrients, prevent erosion and nonpoint source pollution. Establishing the proposed pilot cover crop reimbursement program will increase the number of farmers who can afford to buy cover crop seeds. This fits in well with overall farm production best practices.

Your support of this program is appreciated and needed. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 5:11:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeannette Gurung	WOCAN	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention. They also prevent nitrogen pollution in water and erosion to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer. Healthy soils are critical for our sustainability!



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

April 1, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2990, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Room 308 & Videoconference
1:30 PM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, 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 SB 2990, SD1, HD1, which establishes a cover crop reimbursement pilot program to provide up to seventy-five percent cost reimbursement to farming operations in the State for acquiring cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost and creates a cover crop reimbursement pilot program manager position within the Department of Agriculture to administer the program.

HFB agrees that the use of cover crops and green manure increases agricultural productivity and is a beneficial management practice. We strongly support 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 Hawai'i. 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 Hawai'i'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 75% match, cover crops seeds, green manure, and 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.



House Committee on Finance

Friday, April 1st, 2022, 1:30p.m. Conference Room 308

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action Supports: SB2990 SD1 HD1

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee,

HAPA strongly supports SB2990 SD1, relating to sustainable agriculture, which would establish a cover crop reimbursement pilot program to provide up to 75% cost reimbursement to farming operations in the State for acquiring cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost.

HAPA believes that SB2990 SD1 is part of the solution to establishing a sustainable, profitable and regenerative agriculture system for Hawai'i while improving our land management practices for the better.

SB2990 SD1 will help encourage the use of cover crops which create closed loop systems and eliminate the cost of synthetic inputs while recycling, and even fixing, nutrients within the soil. Good healthy soil is one of the important factors to increase local food production and support regenerative farming practices.

Cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention and preventing nitrogen pollution in water and erosion—to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer ^[1].

Covered crops are considered a Best Management Practice (BMP) widely used in agriculture for nutrient loss reduction and soil conservation ^[2].

Cover crops are crucial to the nutrient cycle and the development of fertile soil and because of this trait are sometimes referred to as "green manure." This is because cover crops are used to manage a range of soil macronutrients and micronutrients ^[3]. Of the various nutrients, the impact that cover crops have on nitrogen management has received the most attention from researchers and farmers, because nitrogen is often the most limiting nutrient in crop production ^[4].

In the same way that allelopathic properties of cover crops can suppress weeds, they can also break disease cycles and reduce populations of bacterial and fungal diseases and parasitic nematodes. For example, species such as mustards, have been shown to suppress fungal disease through the release of naturally occurring toxic chemicals.

Similarly, some cover crops are used as so-called "trap crops", to attract pests away from the crop of value and intentionally toward the cover crop.

The many benefits of cover crops include that they:

- Grow our agriculture sector through cover crop seed production;
- Support sustainable farming practices and healthy soil;
- Remediate depleted soil from industrial farming systems;
- Build organic matter (soil quality) and improve soil fertility (nutrients);
- Reduce the need for synthetic fertilizers and save farmers money in inputs;
- Support native species and biodiversity;
- Increase water infiltration and water retention;
- Suppress weeds resulting in less herbicide use;
- Provide disease and pest management;
- Reduce wind and water erosion and conserves top soil; and
- Prevent runoff from impacting sensitive environments, water sources, nearshore reefs and fisheries.

Similar cover crop reimbursement programs to SB2990 SD1 have been successfully implemented in other states and work to incentivise cover crop planting and growth^[1,2].

HAPA strongly supports SB2990 DS1 and believes it is part of the solution to growing our local food production and economy and a more regenerative agricultural system for Hawai'i.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Anne Frederick
Executive Director

[1] Civil Eats: Held, Lisa (2020) *Two States are Leading a Cover Crop Revival*

<https://civileats.com/2020/02/11/two-states-are-leading-a-cover-crop-revival/>

[2] NASDA (2019) *Innovative State-Led Efforts to Finance Agricultural Conservation*,

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/nasda2/media/innovative-state-led-efforts-finance-agricultural-conservation.pdf>

[3] USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service; *Healthy Soils: Are Covered All The Time*

<https://nrcspad.sc.egov.usda.gov/distributionCenter/pdf.aspx?productID=1026>

[4] The New York Times: Strom, Stephanie (2016) *Cover Crops, a Farming Revolution with Deep Roots in the Past* https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/07/business/cover-crops-a-farming-revolution-with-deep-roots-in-the-past.html?_r=0



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

SB2990 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Friday, April 1, 2022, 1:30 PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, 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 **offers comments on SB2990 SD1** to establish a cover crop reimbursement pilot program to provide up to seventy-five percent cost reimbursement to farming operations in the State for acquiring cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost and creates a cover crop reimbursement pilot program manager position within the Department of Agriculture to administer the program.

Ranchers are very aware of the detriment of invasive species, but one key factor to note is under what circumstances a species becomes invasive. In the case of Bermuda grass as a ground cover, it would not be ideal if left untended, but as a forage that is grazed upon it is controlled and does not take on the properties of an invasive plant. We warn against including language that excludes grasses, as these grasses could be suitable cover crops in addressing Twolined Spittlebug damage or fire damage. We are concerned that this language would also potentially prohibit the inclusion of mulato and signal grass, which are varieties that are showing resistance to Twolined Spittlebugs and are quality forage for cattle.

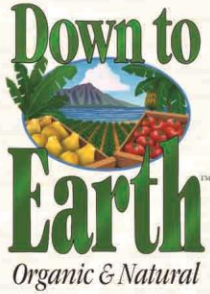
Agricultural lands have the ability to benefit the environment while feeding the community. Hawaii's ranchers are always looking for ways to ensure that the health of the land is prioritized, as stewarding the land is paramount in ensuring their operations can remain productive for future generations. Any assistance to help with increasing soil quality, sequestering carbon, and preventing erosion is welcome. As Hawaii Island ranchers combat the Twolined Spittlebug and Maui Nui ranchers contend with invasive deer, cover crops will continue to be an important tool to cover any bare soil caused by these invasive species.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



Love Life!



SB2990 SD1 RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE
House Committee on Finance
April 1, 2022, 1:30pm State Capitol

Aloha Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair, Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair, and Committee Members.

Down to Earth *Organic and Natural* testifies in support of SB2990 SD1 HD1.

Down to Earth Organic and Natural has six locations on Oahu and Maui. Since we opened in 1977, we have supported healthy lifestyles and preservation of the environment by selling local, fresh, organic and natural products, and by promoting a healthy, plant-based and vegetarian lifestyle.

We are strongly in support of SB2990 SD1 HD1, establishing a cover crop reimbursement pilot program to provide up to 75% cost reimbursement to farming operations in the State for the acquisition of cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost.

Down to Earth is dedicated to the long-term sustainability and health of the people in our communities as well as the land. This bill is crucial to encourage and incentivize our farmers to utilize in cover crops, green manure, and compost. Please pass this measure to enhance the quality and sustainability of Hawaii's agricultural lands.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.

Alison Riggs
Public Policy & Government Relations Manager
Down to Earth

2525 S. King St., Suite 309
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www.downtoearth.org



To: The House Committee on Finance
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Friday, April 1, 2022, 1:30pm

In strong support of SB2990 SD1 HD1

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and members of the Finance committee,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org is in **strong support of SB2990 SD1 HD1**.

This bill will support farmer adoption of conservation agriculture practices. Cover crops are an essential step in regenerative agriculture which is the most promising avenue to sequestering carbon and addressing the climate crisis. Cover crops reduce the need for fossil fuel-based soil amendments, and preserves water and prevents run offs which protects the reefs. Cover crops are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health. Healthy soils make healthier food. Every farmer who learns about and adopts cover crops helps mitigate the climate crisis.

Please support this important bill towards healthy soils, healthy food systems, and carbon sequestration. We will all benefit!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this very important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:49:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Climate Protectors Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair, The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

Re: Hearing **HB22990 SD1 HD1 RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE.**

Hearing: Friday, April 1, 2022, 1:30 p.m., CR 308 and by videoconference

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i is a group focused on reversing the climate crisis and encouraging Hawai'i to lead the world towards a safe and sustainable climate and future. The Climate Protectors Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB2990 SD1 HD1** because it would encourage regenerative agriculture with a pilot program to reimburse farmers for using cover crops.

This bill would establish a cover crop reimbursement pilot program to provide up to seventy-five per cent cost reimbursement to farming operations in the State for acquiring cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost. The bill also would fund a cover crop reimbursement pilot program manager position within the Department of Agriculture to administer the program.

Soil health and agricultural sustainability are dependent on protecting, maintaining, and increasing soil organic matter. Cover cropping is one tool that has shown to be effective in building soil organic matter, resulting in soil stability during a fallow period, increased soil water retention capacity, increased soil nutrient retention and release capacity, and enhanced soil microorganism biodiversity. This measure will incentivize the use of management practices to improve the quality and sustainability of the State's agricultural lands.

Cover crops, green manure, and compost should be encouraged as they reduce carbon emissions, replenish the soils, and reduce erosion and non-point source water pollution.

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)



Officers

Vincent Mina
State President

Anabella Bruch
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Dash Kuhr
Kohala, Hawaii

Drake Weinert
East Hawaii

Steve Lund
Puna, Hawaii

Andrea Drayer
Ka'u, Hawaii

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawaii

Robert Boudreaux
Hana, Maui

Reba Lopez
Haleakala, Maui

Bobby Pahia
Mauna Kahalawai, Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Brynn Foster
North Shore, Oahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, Oahu

Vincent Kimura
Waimanalo, Oahu

Anabella Bruch
Kauai

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports the intent of SB2990 and seeks amendments** to best incentivize conservation agriculture practices.

SB2990 as written is a copy of outdated prior bills ([SB2704 \(2020\)](#), [SB337 \(2021\)](#)). Following input from producers and technical assistance providers, the updates in [SB2675 \(2022\)](#) employ the cover crop reimbursement approach used by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and multiple other states.

In lieu of seed cost share in SB2990, **we recommend the program provide reimbursement per acre** at set rates for single- and multi-species cover cropping. Cover crop seed is only a small fraction of total costs (labor, machinery, etc) and thus may not provide sufficient incentive for adoption of this conservation agriculture practice.

Furthermore, the amendments on the following pages would allocate funding based on the distribution of farm sizes, bolstering farm equity in access to state subsidies. HFUU supports this program and approach as means to support small and family farmers as well as any producer seeking to support their soil health.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Vincent Mina President HFUU/HFUF

SECTION 2. (a) The department of agriculture shall establish and implement a three-year cover crop reimbursement pilot program to reimburse farming operations in the State for the costs of [~~acquiring~~] cover cropping [~~seeds, green manure, or compost~~].

(b) Each application for cost reimbursement shall be submitted on a form furnished by the department of agriculture and shall be accompanied by documentation of the costs incurred [~~of items purchased~~], pursuant to subsection (c); provided that:

(1) The applicant shall indemnify and hold harmless the State and its officers, agents, and employees from all claims arising out of or resulting from the cover cropping [~~seeds, green manure, or compost purchased~~]; and

(2) The department of agriculture may request that the applicant provide additional information for the purposes of verifying the costs claimed are directly related to cover cropping [~~volume of cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost purchased~~].

(c) Applications for reimbursement under the cover crop reimbursement pilot program shall be filed for costs incurred [~~cover crop seeds, green manure, and compost purchased~~] within the fiscal year immediately preceding the filing and shall be effective for costs of the purchases incurred after June 30, 2022, and before July 1, 2025. Each application shall include a certification that the amount for which the applicant seeks reimbursement has not been nor will be reimbursed by any other governmental cover crop incentive program, including the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service's environmental quality incentives program and the conservation stewardship program.

(d) Reimbursement for cover cropping costs incurred [~~if an application is approved, funds shall be disbursed upon approval by the department of agriculture on an annual basis to the farmer or rancher for up to seventy five per cent of the costs incurred for cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost purchased~~] after June 30, 2022, and before July 1, 2025, shall be as follows: [.]

(1) For a single-species cover crop, the farmer or rancher shall be reimbursed \$
multiplied by the number of acres upon which the cover crop is planted; or

(2) For a multi-species cover crop, the farmer or rancher shall be reimbursed \$
multiplied by the number of acres upon which the cover crop is planted.

(e) Moneys shall be disbursed by the department to the farmer or rancher based on the United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service's 2017 Census of Agriculture's typology of farm size as follows: [~~The department of~~

~~agriculture shall convene a review panel comprising knowledgeable representatives from the department of agriculture, University of Hawaii at Manoa college of tropical agriculture and human resources, and industry organizations. The panel shall screen and rate applicants on the quality and appropriate use of their cover crops and green manure and their composting practices. The department shall aggregate the total reimbursement applications pursuant to this section and distribute the available moneys based on a ranking scale as determined by the review panel; provided that a higher ranked applicant shall receive a higher rate of reimbursement than a lower ranked applicant.]~~

(1) Sixty-three per cent to farms and ranches that are less than ten acres in size;

(2) Twenty-seven per cent to farms and ranches that are at least ten acres and up to fifty acres in size;

(3) Six per cent to farms and ranches that are at least fifty acres and up to one hundred eighty acres in size;

(4) Two per cent to farms and ranches that are at least one hundred eighty acres and up to five hundred acres in size;

(5) One per cent to farms and ranches that are at least five hundred acres and up to one thousand acres in size; and

(6) One per cent to farms and ranches that are at least one thousand acres in size.

(f) The department shall aggregate the total reimbursement applications pursuant to this section and divide and distribute the available moneys on a first come, first served basis; provided that no farming operation shall receive a total reimbursement of more than \$ _____ per year.

(g [f]) There is established within the department of agriculture a cover crop reimbursement pilot program manager position, which shall be a full-time temporary position exempt from the requirements of chapters 76 and 89, Hawaii Revised Statutes. The cover crop reimbursement pilot program manager shall receive a salary not exceeding \$50,000 per year. The cover crop reimbursement pilot program manager shall possess a requisite level of knowledge and expertise in the area of program management necessary to carry out the duties of the position. The cover crop reimbursement pilot program manager shall:

(1) Facilitate the division and distribution of available costs for reimbursement; and

(2) Manage the day-to-day coordination of the cover crop

reimbursement pilot program.

(~~h~~ [~~g~~]) Any action taken by the department of agriculture pursuant to this section shall be exempt from the rulemaking requirements of chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

(~~i~~ [~~h~~]) The department of agriculture shall submit an interim report of its findings and recommendations relating to activities conducted pursuant to this Act, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2025 and a final report no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2026. The report shall include: [~~the department's recommendation on whether the pilot program should be extended, with or without modifications.~~]

(1) The number of acres of land upon which cover crops are grown under the pilot program;

(2) The total amount spent by the pilot program, broken down by category; and

(3) The department's recommendation on whether the pilot program should be extended, with or without modifications.

(~~j~~ [~~i~~]) As used in this section:

~~["Compost" means a product of a composting process.~~

~~"Compostable materials" includes pre and post consumer food waste, waste from animal food processing operations, green waste, crop residues, and waste from vegetable food processing operations and similar materials.~~

~~"Composting process" means a process in which organic compostable materials are biologically decomposed under controlled conditions to produce a stable humus like mulch or soil amendment, and includes:~~

- ~~—(1) The receipt of materials;~~
- ~~—(2) Primary processing;~~
- ~~—(3) Decomposition activities; and~~
- ~~—(4) Final processing for sale and marketing.]~~

"Cover crop" [~~and "green manure"~~] means the plants listed in the cover crop [~~and green manure~~] database maintained by the University of Hawaii at Manoa college of tropical agriculture and human resources, except bermuda grass and other invasive or fast-growing grasses.

"Cover crop" means the plants listed in the cover crop database maintained by the university of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources. "Cover crop" does not include any invasive or fast-growing grasses, or both, including Bermuda grass.

"Department" means the department of agriculture.

"Farming operation" has the same meaning as in section 165-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes.



Food+ Policy Internship 2022

food@purplemaia.org

February 22, 2022

To: House Committee on Finance

Subject: Support for SB2990

Aloha Hawai'i State House Committee on Finance,

Investing in the health of our soils is essential to ensuring the longevity of our environment & local agricultural production. Cover-cropping is specifically important for mitigating erosion, increasing organic matter, improving soil structure, and nutrient holding capacity.

This cost-reimbursement pilot program for cover crops, is not only a great incentive for farmers to transition towards making healthier land management practices, but will help to alleviate the financial burden for local farmers who already integrate & utilize cover-cropping techniques to reduce erosion & improve soil health.

By subsidizing the costs of cover-crops, SB2990 ensures that farmers have the option to integrate healthy soil management practices into their overall land management strategies. Food+ Policy stands in full support for proposed bill SB2990 relating to Sustainable Agriculture.

Mahalo,
Kelsey Amos & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2022, the cohort of interns are undergrads and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2022 2:27:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Datta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB2990.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 4:36:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John & Rita Shockley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

The effort to save water and improve soil quality needs subsidy if the effort is to catch on and lower locally produced food cost. We support this Bill.

Mahalo for your time.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 4:48:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Millicent Cox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention. They also prevent nitrogen pollution in water and erosion to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 4:54:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
mary drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support SB2992 SD1 HD1

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 5:22:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Absolutely important to the wellbeing of Hawaii.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 6:06:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet L Pappas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear FIN Chair and committee members,

I strongly support SB2990 SD1HD1, a bill to incentivise the planting of cover crops by Hawaii farmers. First, planting cover crops (plants that are grown and then tilled into the soil to provide nutrients for the crops to be grown) saves farmers money because they then require less fertilizer or other additives. Second, cover crops can encourage pollinators to a field which can increase crop yields. Third, cover crops retain moisture so that soil is not lost through wind erosion between plantings. Fourth (but not least), cover crops absorb CO2 and thus reduce pollution in the atmosphere bringing Hawaii closer to its clean energy goals.

For all these reasons, Hawaii needs to encourage our farmers to plant cover crops. I encourage you to support this important bill (SB2990). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jan Pappas

Aiea, Hawaii 96701

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2022 6:17:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention. They also prevent nitrogen pollution in water and erosion to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:09:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
carol lee kamekona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention. They also prevent nitrogen pollution in water and erosion to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 9:20:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Stolte	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I supports this program as means to support small and family farmers as well as any producer seeking to support their soil health. By reimbursing up to 75 cents per cost to farming operations in the state for the acquisition of cover crop seeds, green manure, or compost, farmers can better produce quality crops and soil.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

James Stolte

Farmer, Hana, HI

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 10:38:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsey A Drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Thank you

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 10:52:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I support this measure because cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention. They also prevent nitrogen pollution in water and erosion to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer.

Mahalo for helping small farmers,

Diane Ware, 99-7815 Kapoha Pl, Volcano Hi 96785

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 10:53:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pamela burrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I support this bill concerning covercrops and the need to assist farmers in using sustainable agricultural practices.

It is healthy for the soil, the climate and the farmers. Relizing and promating healthy soil is key to our success in agriculture. Let's make Hawai'i Agricultural practices a model for the world.

Mahalo,

Pamela Burrell

Kilauea, Kaua'i

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:12:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tlaloc tokuda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha FIN Chair, Vice Chair and Committee,

I strongly support SB2990 SD1 HD1 because

I support Bill SB2992 because it establishes a cover crop reimbursement pilot program that reimburses local farming operations for up to 75% of cover-cropping-related costs.

I have seen peripheral mention of Hawaiian farmers converting/using regenerative agriculture. Cover cropping is part of the regen process. Most sustainable agriculture processes use cover crops to gain better soil profiles, improve the microbiome of the soil, improve the nitrogen content of the soil as well as retain moisture, produce on farm inputs, reduce run off of soil, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. This is a great carrot (not a stick) to induce farmers to see the benefits of cover crops. This is a great way to expose farmers to gain new more sustainable agricultural practices and to give these farmers subsidies to experiment.

There are other bills that have farmers using compost or producing compost...these companion bills will lead the farmers down a more sustainable organic model of food production and get Hawaii off the *biocide* (pesticide, herbicide, fungicide) *treadmill!* Other bills that are working their way through both houses is identifying staff who will assist the farmer (hopefully) in sustainable regenerative farming. Staffing experts in regenerative/sustainable farming is a needed change. The ADC's (Agribusiness Development Corporation) model of chemical intensive monoculture agriculture has led to poisoning people and animals as well as dead soils. Hawaii has used this dead model back to the plantation days. Lets try something different! Rachel Carson concluded that DDT and other pesticides had irrevocably harmed animals and had contaminated the world's food supply.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Tlaloc Tokuda

Kailua Kona HI 96740

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:27:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Arbeit	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The temptation to keep land in constant production is strong when profits are slim. But in the long run leaving a field in fallow rotation is a benefit for the life of the soil and its productivity. Please support this bill so our farmers have a better chance at prospering. Best for them, best for the environment, and best for us (the consumers of their labor).

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 11:27:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anita Yokota	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote in support of SB2990. This bill could really help the sustainability of farming in Hawaii and help protect delicate Hawaiian eco systems from unnecessary pesticides and runoff.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 3:57:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa M Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill.

Theresa Thompson

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 6:40:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Boudreaux	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cover cropping is integral to a good program of soil health improvement. Too few farmers are availing themselves of this practice in part due to the financial burden it places on already maxed out operating budgets. Incentivizing such a program will give a much needed boost to this critical component of Hawaiian agriculture.

Mahalo

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2022 7:32:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harrinette Holt-Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill. It is imperative to help Hawaii become more sustainable. We can not continue to rely so heavily on others outside of Hawaii for our food and materials. The rising cost of living, food and energy, pending epidemics has crippling effects on our people. Supporting agriculture, improving our soil so we can continue to better the quality of our aina is important to sustainable living and quality of life.

I support this action.

Aloha,

H. Holt-Hansen

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 6:29:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I come from Papakōlea, O‘ahu. I'm a Kanaka Maoli born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom. I'm writing in full support of SB2990 SD1 HD1.

Cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention. They also prevent nitrogen pollution in water and erosion to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer.

Support SB2990 SD1 HD1.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 6:43:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Sylvia Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita and Committee on Finance,

I support SB2990 SD1 HD1,

SB2990 SD1 HD1 establishes a cover crop reimbursement pilot program that reimburses local farming operations for up to 75% of cover-cropping-related costs.

cover crops reduce the need for fossil fuel-based soil amendments, and preserves water and prevents run offs which protects the reefs.

Cover crops are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health. Healthy soils make healthier food. Every farmer who learns about and adopts cover crops helps mitigate the climate crisis.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB2990 SD1 HD1. Thank you for taking the time to review this matter.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 7:49:25 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Seikai Darcy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support cover crops SB 2990.

Mahalo,

Lisa Darcy

Maui county

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:36:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
P Noel Bobilin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stongly support this bill which will support farmer adoption of conservation agriculture practices. Cover crops are an essential step in regenerative agriculture which is the most promising avenue to sequestering carbon and addressing the climate crisis.

Furthermore, Cover crops reduce the need for fossil fuel-based soil amendments, and preserves water and prevents run offs which protects the reefs. Cover crops are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health. Healthy soils make healthier food. Every farmer who learns about and adopts cover crops helps mitigate the climate crisis.

Mahalo

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 8:48:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dale Jensen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Member of Finance Committee:

I want to offer my strong support for SB 2990. This bill will support farmer adoption of conservation agriculture practices. Cover crops are an essential step in regenerative agriculture which is the most promising avenue to sequestering carbon and addressing the climate crisis.

We are in the midst of state wide drought conditions that will have major consequences for agriculture statewide. Cover crops preserve water and prevent run off while also reducing the need for fossil fuel-based soil amendments.

Cover crops are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health. Improvements in crop yield, soil health and maintenance of top soil have been achieved anywhere that cover crops and regenerative agriculture practices have been used. Let's take the lead in the use of these practices, as our farmers try to improve total food production and reduce food imports into our state.

Sincerely,

Dale Jensen

Prof. Engineer

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 11:11:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am testifying in favor of SB2990 SD1 HD1, which establishes a cover crop reimbursement pilot program that reimburses local farming operations for up to 75% of cover-cropping-related costs.

Cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention. They also prevent nitrogen pollution in water and erosion to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer.

Ensuring optimal soil health with help to maximize our potential to feed ourselves in a regenerative and sustainable way. Cover crops will not only prevent soil run-off, but also to keep moisture and nutrients in the soil to help feed the soil that feeds us.

Please do what you can to advance this bill.

Mahalo for taking the time to listen to my views and for your hard work in ensuring the health of our land, people and biodiversity.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:31:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diana Bethel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB2990 SD1 HD1 will help increase the quality of agricultural soil. Healthy and rich soil is the basis for the health and productivity of our entire food system. Building a healthy soil will help to make Hawaii more sustainable and resilient to the impacts of climate change.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 12:44:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruby Pap	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cover crops improve water quality, soil health, and build resiliency in the face of climate change. They are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health and water retention. They also prevent nitrogen pollution in water and erosion to the benefit of both the environment and the farmer.

-- This bill will support farmer adoption of conservation agriculture practices. Cover crops are an essential step in regenerative agriculture which is the most promising avenue to sequestering carbon and addressing the climate crisis.

-- Cover crops reduce the need for fossil fuel-based soil amendments, and preserves water and prevents run offs which protects the reefs.

-- Cover crops are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health. Healthy soils make healthier food. Every farmer who learns about and adopts cover crops helps mitigate the climate crisis.

Please vote yes! Thank you, -Ruby Pap (Lihue, HI)

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 1:09:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

-- This bill will support farmer adoption of conservation agriculture practices. Cover crops are an essential step in regenerative agriculture which is the most promising avenue to sequestering carbon and addressing the climate crisis.

-- Cover crops reduce the need for fossil fuel-based soil amendments, and preserves water and prevents run offs which protects the reefs.

-- Cover crops are one of the most common, accessible agricultural strategies for improving soil health. Healthy soils make healthier food. Every farmer who learns about and adopts cover crops helps mitigate the climate crisis.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2022 3:50:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tierra Bartolotti	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Hawai'i State House Committee on Finance,

Cover cropping is an essential land & soil management technique because cover crops allow the soil to remain covered -- preventing erosion, while depositing nutrients back into the soil after the land has been stressed post-harvest. Mitigating the loss of erosion & organic matter is critical in maintaining healthy soil structure. SB2990 *Relating to Sustainable Agriculture* would help SUPPORT healthy land management practices by reimbursing farmers for the costs associated with planting cover-crops. Without proper soil structure, the soil loses its ability to hold nutrients & drain properly. Therefore this leads to massive amounts of runoff during storms & soils end up losing their fertility, while heavily polluting coastal & marine habitats. I stand in strong support for SB2990.

SB-2990-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2022 8:50:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2022 1:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis F Lokmer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge strong support for this bill.