



‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAI‘I

Legislative Testimony

Hō‘ike Mana‘o I Mua O Ka ‘Aha‘ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education and Technology
Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Anna Wieczorek, Interim Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

SCR 137 SD1 – REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EVALUATE UPDATING ITS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SITES AND TO SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE REGARDING ITS WORK

Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education and Technology:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SCR 137 SD1, which is requesting the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to convene a working group to evaluate updating its Research and Extension stations and to submit a report to the Legislature regarding its work.

Modern agricultural research, extension, and education facilities provide the foundation for cutting-edge research and applied science solutions that address climate change, agricultural profitability, food safety, biosecurity, nutrition, and food security. Nevertheless, we face unprecedented infrastructure challenges due to years of underinvestment and deferred maintenance. Although CTAHR and our clients are hopeful that state and national efforts will result in critical investments in research infrastructure, we are convinced that the situation on our research and extension stations will only become more severe if not addressed with urgency.

Having initiated internal reviews of our research, education, and extension priorities, we strongly support the convening of a working group comprised of a wide section of society, including state and federal agencies, farmer groups, and communities across the state. And we look forward to working as an integral member of the group in producing a comprehensive report of its findings and recommendations.

Thank you for your interest and the opportunity this resolution provides for identifying investments that will spur new economic opportunities and innovations for farmers, ranchers, and producers across the state.



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April 12, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

TESTIMONY ON SCR 137

REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EVALUATE UPDATING ITS EXTENSION SITES AND TO SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE REGARDING ITS WORK

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Perruso, Vice-Chair Kapela, 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 SCR 137, which requests that the University of Hawai'i at Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources convene a working group to evaluate updating its extension sites.

The excellent work performed by UH CTAHR's Extension Service for Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers cannot be overstated. The ongoing outreach and education are unparalleled in the State. Farmers and ranchers rely on this program for their very success. CTAHR has helped develop and improve agricultural technologies pertinent to Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers. This includes intensive cover crop research, promoting the importance of locally grown produce, developing biological and cultural methods for controlling pests without chemicals, and the use of biological nitrogen fixation to significantly increase the production of high protein foods while at the same time reducing the need for commercially produced fertilizers.

Agriculture in Hawai'i has evolved. CTAHR's eighteen research stations need to evolve with the industry. The effectiveness of CTAHR's research network has been seriously curtailed through a lack of investment in modernizing facilities and a long history of deferred maintenance of aging infrastructure.

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