

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023
ROOM 312
2:20 P.M.**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 308
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**

Chairperson Gates and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 308. There is a companion measure, Senate Bill 420. HB308 requires the Department of Agriculture (Department) to establish a 23-member "Sustainable Food Systems Working Group" that is responsible for creating an "Interagency Food Systems Plan" linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for a more sustainable, resilient local food economy that enhances and sustains the environmental, economic, and social health of the community. The Plan is to focus on the following issues:

- (1) Food as a human right and healthy food for all;
- (2) Social equity and food justice;
- (3) Food system resilience;
- (4) Agriculture and food system sustainability;
- (5) Food at the center of a circular economy;
- (6) Sustainable education, workforce development, and fair labor; and
- (7) Good food governance.

The Department supports efforts to raise awareness of agriculture in Hawaii.

The Department is to provide necessary staff support. There are two appropriations to the Department in support of the Working Group and its efforts, and



the hiring of an unspecified number of sustainability specialist positions. The Plan is to be submitted to the 2025 Legislature. The Department offers a comment and a recommendation.

The Department comments that including farmers in the working group strengthens the scope of opinions within the group.

The Department has been directed by the legislative and executive branches to focus on increasing local food self-sufficiency. Perhaps the issues that are the focus of the proposed 23-member Sustainable Food Systems Working Group could be best approached first by a smaller group who can better define deliverables for this effort and make action item recommendations to the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group before incorporating it into a plan that will need to be funded and implemented. Additionally, while the measure proposes the creation of additional specialist positions to the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, the Department currently lacks adequate staffing to host and support a working group of this size and importance at this time.

Further, SB84 is very similar to HB420, but the former assigns the responsibility of the Working Group to the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 308, RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

DATE: Monday, February 13, 2023 **TIME:** 2:20 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 312

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Jodi K. Yi or Bryan C. Yee, Deputy Attorneys General

Chair Gates and Members of the Committee:

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

This bill would establish and appropriate funds for a sustainable food systems working group. The working group will be within the Department of Agriculture. The bill delineates the membership of the working group and, at page 3, lines 14-16, states, "[t]wo members of the Native Hawaiian community, to be selected by the chairperson of the board of agriculture," shall be included as members of the working group.

Article I, section 5, of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii provides, "[n]o person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor be denied the equal protection of the laws, nor be denied the enjoyment of the person's civil rights or be discriminated against in the exercise thereof because of race, religion, sex or ancestry." This provision could be subject to challenge for treating members of the Native Hawaiian community differently than non-members.

There are different ways in which this issue may be addressed. One way is to amend the bill by deleting the wording at page 3, lines 14-16, and replacing it with the following, "[t]wo persons with familiarity, experience, or expertise in the Native Hawaiian community, to be selected by the chairperson of the board of agriculture; . . ."

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.



Ke'ena Kuleana Ho'okipa O Hawai'i
Hawai'i Convention Center
1801 Kalākāua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815
kelepona tel 808 973 2255
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Josh Green, M.D.
Governor

John De Fries
President and Chief Executive Officer

Statement of
JOHN DE FRIES
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

February 13, 2023
2:20 p.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 312 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL NO. 308
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of HB308, establishing the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group within the Department of Agriculture to complete an interagency food systems plan.

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Destination Management Action Plans, also known as DMAPs, were developed in collaboration with Hawai'i's communities. Contained within the six plans are hundreds of actions and sub-actions identified by kama'āina, many of which speak to the importance of supporting local agriculture, shopping and dining with local businesses, and building capacity for agritourism.

The further development of sustainable food systems in Hawai'i addresses those DMAP actions, advances the goals of the Aloha+ Challenge, the principles of the 'Āina Aloha Economic Futures Declaration (to which HTA has committed), and moves us closer to a model of regenerative tourism. It also offers more avenues to capture visitor spending – over \$19 billion in 2022 – and keep those dollars circulating in Hawai'i.

HTA stands ready to participate in the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group, defers to our colleagues at the Department of Agriculture on matters of implementation, and appreciates the intent of HB308 to advance sustainable food systems in Hawai'i. Mahalo.



HB308
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

February 13, 2023

2:20 PM

Room 312

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers its **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS** for HB308, which would establish the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group within the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to develop a plan for a more sustainable and resilient local food economy. **OHA asks the Legislature to amend this proposal by adding one seat on this working group for OHA, as the principal public agency in the State responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to Native Hawaiians.¹**

He ali‘i ka ‘āina; he kauwā ke kanaka. OHA wishes to express its strong support for the thrust of this measure to establish a robust network of partners “to create a vibrant and resilient local food economy that enhances and sustains the environmental, economic, and social health of the community.” **In support of this impetus, OHA respectfully asks that this measure be amended to afford OHA a representative seat on the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group.**

OHA makes this request as the principal public agency in the State responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to Native Hawaiians,² a great many of whom are kahu holoholona (ranchers), mahi‘ai (farmers), lawai‘a (fishers), kanaka hahai holoholona (hunters), and hānai ‘ai (food producer-practitioners). Our traditional Native Hawaiian cultural practices are deeply rooted in familial bonds with the natural world and the cultivation of these connections over the span of millennia now serve as exemplary models for any sustainable Hawai‘i-based food system.

Unfortunately, the fetid flow of historical injustice over the past 130 years has systemically severed Native Hawaiians from their ‘āina (the natural world), their traditions, and their cultures. Accordingly, Native Hawaiians now endure some of the worst socio-economic conditions among all peoples in this State, with ongoing inequities and disparities that continue to undermine Native Hawaiian existence. One of the most challenging social determinants of health for Native Hawaiians is economic well-being,³ where Native Hawaiians have the highest rate of poverty and unemployment among Hawai‘i’s major

¹ HRS §10-3.

² Id.

³ Dept. of Native Hawaiian Health, John A. Burns School of Medicine, *Assessment and Priorities for the Health and Well-Being in Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders*, 2020, p. 12



HB308
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

ethnic groups, and “lower average annual earnings than statewide averages for both men and women.”⁴ Once again, at the highest rate among the State’s major ethnic groups, 63% of Native Hawaiians are finding it difficult to survive,⁵ with a 60% majority of Native Hawaiians unable to make ends meet.⁶

The late Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli once observed, “the health of the land is the health of the people.” Native Hawaiians, i ka wā kahiko (in the time long before), intimately understood the need to develop systems and practices – like mālama ‘āina – that would ensure the survival of the people into perpetuity. It has become preeminently clear, over the long struggle to address the inequities and disparities associated with the disturbing status of Native Hawaiian health, that the greatest hope for recovery is through the dismantling of these tangled systems that have kept Native Hawaiians landless and impoverished.

Widespread Native Hawaiian participation in a far-reaching Hawai‘i-based sustainable food system economy would be integral to achieving vast improvements in Native Hawaiian health and well-being by reconnecting Native Hawaiians with ‘āina and their traditional cultures, while simultaneously elevating Native Hawaiian socio-economic conditions through potentially limitless economic development opportunities. Na ke kanaka mahi‘ai ka imu ō nui (the well-filled imu belongs to the person who tills the soil).

Since its establishment in 1978, OHA has made substantial contributions toward the preservation and protection of agricultural lands and the perpetuation of hānai ‘ai cultures and practices. Through meaningful participation in this Working Group, OHA will continue to meet its strategic goals to address health outcomes and economic stability for the betterment of conditions of Native Hawaiians.

Finally, OHA recognizes that this measure designates two members of the Native Hawaiian community to be selected by the director of the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development. OHA appreciates and supports this provision for its insight into the value of Native Hawaiian representation and the potential contribution of Native Hawaiian knowledge to advance the purpose and function of this working group. **OHA is certain that its contribution to this Working Group would be unique, as OHA is best-positioned to represent the interests and aspirations of the Native Hawaiian people as the only entity with**

⁴ Id.

⁵ Aloha United Way, *Aloha United Way, Alice in Hawai‘i: 2022 Facts and Figures*, Nov. 2022, p.9.

⁶ Id. at 6.



HB308
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

the constitutional and statutory mandate to serve the betterment of conditions of Native Hawaiians.

OHA appreciates the opportunity to support this measure with the recommended amendment **to grant OHA a representative seat on the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group.** Mahalo nui loa.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
Monday, February 13, 2023 at 2:20 p.m.

By

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

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 308 – RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 308 relating to sustainable food systems which establishes the sustainable food systems working group within the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture.

The purpose of this working group is to develop an interagency food systems plan linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for a more sustainable, resilient local food economy that enhances and sustains the environmental, economic, and social health of the community.

A sustainable food system is defined as one that provides sufficient food to meet current food needs while maintaining healthy ecosystems that support continuous food production for generations to come. To ensure equitable access to nutritional food that is produced with minimal impact on the environment, Hawai'i needs to encourage the development of sustainable food systems. Our food systems need to be serving our population's health, the environmental health of our land, and the economic health of our food and agricultural sector. Hawai'i needs to be proactive in making locally produced food widely available to our population. Similar to other parts of the world, Hawai'i is especially vulnerable to natural and human disasters that may have a negative impact on our own food security. Hence, the establishment of a working group focused on making our local food production more sustainable is one we certainly support.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this bill provided that its passage is in addition to and does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION
COMMISSION
POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Co-Chairs:
Chair, DLNR
Director, OPSD

Commissioners:
Chair, Senate AEN
Chair, Senate WTL
Chair, House EEP
Chair, House WAL
Chairperson, HTA
Chairperson, DOA
CEO, OHA
Chairperson, DHHL
Director, DBEDT
Director, DOT
Director, DOH
Chairperson, DOE
Director, C+C DPP
Director, Maui DP
Director, Hawai'i DP
Director, Kaua'i DP
The Adjutant General
Manager, CZM

**Testimony of
Leah Laramee
Coordinator, Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission**

**Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

**Monday, February 13, 2023
2:20 PM**

State Capitol, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 312

**In support of
HOUSE BILL 308
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**

House Bill 308 establishes the sustainable food systems working group within the department of agriculture (DOA). Requires the working group to submit a plan, any recommendations for implementing the plan, and any proposed legislation to the legislature. Appropriates funds to establish the working group and develop the plan and for an unspecified number of sustainability specialist positions to be employed by DOA. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this measure.**

The Commission's working paper *Nature-Based Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change in Hawai'i* recognizes that Climate impacts to agriculture, fisheries, and food system infrastructure have steadily increased over the last 10 years and are projected to increase in severity over this century. Hawai'i, must prepare for more frequent and severe climate-induced shocks, disruption of critical supply chains and fisheries, increased food insecurity, and the catastrophic loss of life, livelihoods, property and infrastructure.

Simultaneously, the post-plantation agricultural economy of Hawai'i remains largely oriented toward external markets, with a diversified agriculture sector and regional food economy limited by a range of social, economic and political obstacles. Sustainably-managed agricultural systems can play a critical role in enhancing local food supplies, increasing resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change, and protecting Hawai'i's coral reefs ecosystems.

There are a number of models of sustainable food systems in Hawai'i, including approaches that incorporate indigenous management strategies, that can help to build resilience, and support biodiversity and ecosystem services. Recent research suggests that indigenous agroecosystems (including agroforestry, lo'i systems, and dryland agriculture) supported large populations of

Native Hawaiians pre-European contact, and that many of the areas that these systems likely occupied are still viable today. By contrast, Hawai'i's legacy of plantation agriculture has left many of the most highly productive soils in the state in a degraded condition. There are, however, many producers interested in reversing this trend. Climate-smart agricultural management choices support soil health over time which provides beneficial outcomes for air and water quality, human health, groundwater recharge, nearshore ecosystem resilience, increased drought tolerance of crops and plants, reduced impacts of flooding, increased crop and livestock productivity, and overall ecosystem resilience.

With 41% of Hawai'i's agricultural lands currently unfarmed, there is a huge opportunity to lower the state's food importation rates while mitigating climate change and protecting native ecosystems and cultural/traditional practices. Locally-produced agriculture is a vital part of our economy. Combining cultural wisdom with new scientific methods, sustainable food systems can reduce carbon emissions and improve crop yields through utilizing cover crops, reducing tillage, agroforestry and other carbon smart practices. Establishing the sustainable food systems working group is a good first step in achieving this.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 5:09:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Colehour Bondera | Kanalani Ohana Farm | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members:

This is the direction we need for our government to head and I hereby applaud this effort.

Please agree to such an establishment and ask the HDOA to require a diversity of representatives and not only those with a paid job to pay for their time, but rather actual practitioners who can speak regarding what will actually be attainable.

As a long time certified organic farmer, I think that this is a healthy path to follow, so again my thanks for your support.

Yours,

Colehour Bondera

KANALANI OHANA FARM

colemel2@gmail.com



HIPHI Board

Misty Pacheco, DrPH
Chair
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

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Native Hawaiian Research Office

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Kaiser Permanente

May Okihiro, MD, MS
John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Department of Pediatrics

Titiimaea Ta'ase, JD
State of Hawai'i, Deputy Public
Defender

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health
Worker Initiative

COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol Free
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective

meaningful legislation will help to address food insecurity; growth of green jobs; land stewardship; affordable land for farmers; water access; and environmental challenges.

Date: February 11, 2023

To: Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Re: Support for HB 308, Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

Hrg: Monday, February 13, 2023, at 1:00 PM, Conf Rm 224

The Obesity Prevention Task Force (OPTF), a program of Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ (HIPHI), is in **support of HB 308**, which establishes the sustainable food systems working group within the Department of Agriculture.

The lack of a sustainable food system impacts the resiliency of our communities.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) appreciates the opportunity to provide SUPPORT for **HB 308**. This measure establishes a working group within the Department of Agriculture that will include a diverse group of members who bring a variety of understanding and perspectives to the work of identifying areas to address to strengthen the food system in our state.

Hawai'i is faced with an escalating crisis as a variety of factors such as climate change, workforce challenges, increasing cost of land and water, natural disasters, and a tenuous food supply system. Life expectancy continues to decline in the United States. COVID-19 is a factor, but chronic diseases, such as heart and chronic liver disease, continue to rise.ⁱⁱ

In the 2018 Hawai'i Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 14% of adults in the state reported they were diagnosed with prediabetes; 12% with diabetes; 3% had coronary heart disease; 3% had a stroke; 32% had high cholesterol; and 34% had high blood pressure.ⁱⁱⁱ To address these chronic diseases, and improve overall public health, a strong, sustainable, locally-based healthy food system, from which people can benefit, is necessary.

Beyond public health, taking the steps necessary to achieve a sustainable food system through discussion, planning, reporting, and proposing

The measure is necessary because it is the base for building a sustainable food system framework and ensuring our communities are healthy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Mahalo,



Peggy Mierzwa
Advocacy & Policy Director
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

ⁱ Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents. The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) convenes the Task Force and supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i.

Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

ⁱⁱ https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/nchs_press_releases/2022/20220831.htm

ⁱⁱⁱ https://hhsp.hawaii.gov/assets/pdf/Coordinated%20HHSP_FINAL_WEB.pdf



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Waialua, HI 96791-9501
808-383-4481
www.NSEVP.org

February 11, 2023

House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Friday Monday 13, 2023, 2:20 p.m.

SUBJECT: Comments on HB 308– RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Dear Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership (North Shore EVP), I would like to extend support for HB 1350, which Establishes the sustainable food systems working group within the Department of Agriculture.

Since 2016, North Shore EVP has been working to prepare farmers to fully and equitably participate in Hawaii's commercial and institutional markets by providing food safety training and certification through our USDA GroupGAP program. Our staff has spent countless hours working up and down Hawaii's food chain connecting farmers with buyers and piecing together new value chains for our certified farmers and partners.

From a public policy perspective, the lack of a statewide food chain analysis that identifies the players in agricultural production, related specialized support activities, food and beverage manufacturing, and distribution of food and beverage products has hampered efforts to produce a strategy for growing agriculture. Instead of a comprehensive view of agriculture's contribution to GDP, Hawaii chooses to measure agriculture based on production gate value alone, hence DBEDT's figure of 0.3% of GDP from agriculture. In fact, agriculture contributes to the success and adds value to of many industries in Hawaii including food manufacturing, tourism, and culinary arts to name just a few.

In the late 1990s California undertook a statewide food chain analysis and instead of just looking at production, they looked at the interactions between production, support services, processing, and distribution. In the November 2006 California's Food Chain at Work report, the data showed that three quarters of the Food Chain Employment – and virtually all job growth – were generated outside of production. Nobody knew that before...

Certainly Hawaii does not have the production capacity of California, but without a wide economic perspective across industries that touch agriculture, Hawaii may never realize the opportunities that lie at the intersection of other industry sectors and agriculture.

Therefore, I ask this committee to consider adding representation from the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) to the working group to provide economic and employment data to the food system work.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Kevin M Kelly, President

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 10:39:10 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Leanne Kami | Kohana Family Farms | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Cedric Gates

House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

House Bill No. 308 -- Relating to the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group

Hearing date: Monday, February 13, 2023

Hearing time: 2:20 P.M.

Hearing location: Conference Room 312 State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street

IN STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and members of the committee,

Aloha kākou, my name is Leanne Kami. I was born and raised in Pāhoā on Hawai‘i island and now work in Hilo as a strategy consultant for Kamehameha Schools, focused on sustainable food system development in Hawai‘i. I also own and manage Kohana Family Farms, a small organic farm in Pana‘ewa, and am in the process of obtaining a graduate degree in Sustainable Food Systems from Arizona State University. I am writing this letter as a farmer, student, and member of the Hawai‘i Farmers Union United and the Hawai‘i Farm Bureau Federation.

I strongly support HB308, which establishes the sustainable food systems working group within the department of agriculture and requires the working group to submit a plan, any recommendations for implementing the plan, and any proposed legislation to the legislature.

A post-plantation plan for sustainable agriculture production in Hawai‘i is long overdue and much needed to reach our agricultural and sustainability goals outlined in the Aloha+ Challenge. Sustainable ag production is vital to increasing food security and creating healthy economies and ecosystems in Hawai‘i. I support government investment in sustainable local agriculture as a priority, including investments to increase bio-security and improve soil

health. We need to protect our native ecosystems and reduce the threat of invasive species on the livelihoods of our producers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

Mahalo,

Leanne Kami

Kohana Family Farms

Leanneokamoto@hotmail.com

126 Awa Street, Hilo HI 96720



February 12, 2023

Rep. Cedric Gates, Chair
Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

RE: Testimony in support of HB 308, Relating to Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, **I support HB 308**, which would establish a sustainable food systems working group within the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture.

Food security is a critical issue in Hawai'i, where one in six residents lacks comprehensive access to healthy, nutritious food. The pandemic amplified the need for Hawai'i to strengthen our local food systems, which would in turn support greater resilience, food security, environmental and human health, economic diversity, and stability. A statewide strategy developed in collaboration with partners across the food system is a necessary step to developing a more sustainable and resilient food system in Hawai'i and we welcome the opportunity to serve on the working group contemplated in this bill.

The Hawai'i Foodbank is the largest hunger relief organization in the state. We gather donated, rescued, and purchased food and distribute it to those in need through our network of more than 200 agency partners. We welcome the opportunity to serve on the working group contemplated in this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration.

With aloha,

Amy Miller Marvin
President and CEO, Hawaii Foodbank



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 13, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 308
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Conference Room 312 & Videoconference
2:20 PM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, 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 HB 308, which establishes the sustainable food systems working group within the department of agriculture, requires the working group to submit a plan, any recommendations for implementing the plan, and any proposed legislation to the legislature, and appropriates funds to establish the working group and develop the plan and for an unspecified number of sustainability specialist positions to be employed by the department of agriculture.

The impacts of the COVID pandemic have highlighted the need to strengthen Hawai'i's food system to ensure greater resilience, food security, human health, and economic diversity and stability.

As such, HFB respectfully requests the following amendments:

(4) Two representatives of the University of Hawai'i system who have experience in food systems, to be selected by the Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

(9) One representative of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau, to be selected by the president ~~executive director~~ of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau;

(19) One representative of the Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council, to be selected by the president of the Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
Monday, February 13, 2023 — 2:20 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports the intent of HB 308, Relating to Sustainable Food Systems.

Dear Chair Gates and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports the intent of HB 308, which establishes the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group within the Department of Agriculture to submit a plan, any recommendations for implementation, and any proposed legislation.

Developing a statewide plan around food economics may help to serve the State of Hawai'i and the future of the local agricultural industry. However, while we acknowledge that this working group shows merit with its intentions, the sheer number of participants, along with an inadequate number of actual food producer voices, creates some concern around efficiency and appropriate representation. We believe that more local producers need to be at the table and that the Department of Agriculture, whose responsibility is to serve those agriculturalists, should determine who those local farmers and ranchers should be. We recommend adjusting the working group to double the current producer voices and consider limiting/removing other entities to promote efficiency.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 7:50:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| laurel brier | Kauai Climate Action Coalition | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

A sustainable food system means food security, better access to healthy food, diversifying our economy in a positive direction and addressing environmental protection and climate chaos.Let's do it



LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

Executive Officers

Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Chair*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Vice Chair*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*
John Schilf, Rainbow Sales and Marketing, *Advisor*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*
Charlie Gustafson, Tamura Super Market, *Immediate Past Chair*

1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

TO: Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: Monday, February 13, 2023
TIME: 2:20pm
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: HB308 Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. Creating more sustainable, resilient local food economy is a goal we all share. HFIA has important industry knowledge and expertise to contribute to this group and we are glad to participate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Anabella Bruch
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Madeline Ross
Kohala, Hawai'i

Odysseus Yacalis
East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Andrea Drayer
Ka'ū, Hawai'i

Chantal Chung
Kona, Hawai'i

Fawn Helekahi-Burns
Hana, Maui

Reba Lopez
Haleakala, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahalawai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Rufina Kaauwai
Molokai

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

Brynn Foster
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki
Kauai



Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems 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 HB308.**

HFUU seeks an amendment to specify HFUU's selection of its representative to the sustainable food systems working group.

Local agriculture is a critical component of sustainable food systems. As most farms in the state are smallholder and family operations, which compose the majority HFUU farm members, we believe our participation in this working group will add an important and necessary perspective. Furthermore, HFUU's dedication to sustainable food systems has been a driving force of its membership growth, educational activities, and legislative goals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 5:40:02 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Dana Keawe | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strong support:

Note:

It is most important to include people from every island and in the above categories in working group. This will truly enable the State of Hawai'i to become food resilient as well as restore contaminated soils to certified organic standards.

In 1-3 years of utilizing KNF & JADAM disciplines alone, can restore polluted soils to original healthy soils. Removing ALL contaminates from soil; nuclear waste, depleted uranium, harmful pesticides, oil, gasoline and every other human made contaminates.

JADAM founder Mr. Cho and his associates along side Hawai'i coffee farmers, have done successful research test trials on Hawai'i island to combat invasive species with full success. They have created an organic pesticide/control solution to combat Coffee Rust, CBB(coffee borer beetle), fire ants & Papaya mealy bug. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbO-x9dyZ_Y

Me ke Aloha 'Āina,

Dana Keawe

danakeawe@gmail.com

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 7:15:33 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Noa Lincoln | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB308

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 9:25:22 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sunny Savage | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

In strong support!

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/11/2023 5:46:30 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jason Shon | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and the members of the Agriculture Committee,

I strongly support this effort to improve food systems planning in Hawaii.

Traditional approaches to addressing issues in the food system are often siloed and too narrow in focus. The problems Hawaii faces are interconnected and cannot be solved independently of one another. A food systems approach provides a holistic lens for thinking about and addressing sustainability in Hawaii.

A statewide integrated food system plan will help to identify tradeoffs and synergies, and help us to prioritize the most impactful solutions that address multiple issues simultaneously.

As a graduate student in Food Policy and Food Security, I am excited to see this bill being considered in Hawaii. I see other states and countries developing food system plans and hope Hawaii will soon follow.

Please support this important bill. Mahalo.

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/11/2023 9:15:46 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Elizabeth Hansen | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, please support this bill.

A sustainable food system is one in which producers, retailers, members of the community, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies partner to create a vibrant and resilient local food economy that enhances and sustains the environmental, economic, and social health of the community.

Mahalo for your consideration

Elizabeth Hansen, Hakalau HI 96710

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/11/2023 9:33:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rodger Hansen | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, please support this bill.

A sustainable food system is one in which producers, retailers, members of the community, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies partner to create a vibrant and resilient local food economy that enhances and sustains the environmental, economic, and social health of the community.

Mahalo for your consideration

Rodger Hansen, Hakalau HI 96710

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 8:47:28 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| David Shizuma | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB308.

Hawaii’s food security has been a huge topic of discussion for decades, being isolated in the middle of the Pacific ocean. One of the issues with truly addressing the problem and improving our food security is that it involves numerous players from many different industries in Hawaii. I believe that this bill and the working group that this establishes addresses that issue and brings them together to come up with a plan to improve our situation.

My only concern with this bill, as written, is that once the plan is submitted by the working group prior to the legislative session of 2025, the working group is dissolved. I feel that this working group should continue to meet post-legislative session 2025 and continue to monitor the progress and continue to address issues as they arise to truly improve our food security. This, however, can be resolved in future legislation to extend the length of time the working group meets, or any updated recommended steps that they should take, as defined by the working group’s report.

I hope this passes and look forward to the progress to improving Hawaii’s food security.

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 11:13:55 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Caroline Azelski | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Support. Thank you.

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 11:50:08 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Keoni DeFranco | Individual | Support | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

This is Keoni DeFranco and I am submitting written testimony in favor of HB308.

Its critical that we establish a sustainable food systems working group within the department of agriculture.

Developing a more sustainable food system for Hawaii represents an oppourtouny to grow our food economy and create local jobs. It provides opportunity for sustainable economic development, land stewardship, food security, environmental protection and climate change resliency in addition to community health and well-being.

Thank you.

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 11:56:44 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kealohilani Minami | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am a university student and Kanaka Maoli who strongly believes there should be more action around food sustainability and policy in Hawai'i. In order to create community resilience I think it's necessary to have a core group that is acting with the best interest of all community parties in mind. We are the ones outside in the land making sure food reaches our community's plates and so we need to be accurately represented and heard in government as well. I support the passing of this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



To: The Honorable Chair Cedric Gates and the Honorable Vice Chair Kirstin Kahaloa and Members of the Committees on Agriculture and Food Systems

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

Re: Hearing HB308 **RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**

Hearing: Monday February 13, 2023 2:20 p.m.

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems:

The mission of the Climate Protectors Hawai'i is to educate and engage the local community in climate change action, to help Hawai'i show the world the way back to a safe and stable climate.

The Climate Protectors Hawai'i STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB308!

Hawaii needs to grow more food locally and sustainably to better meet our food needs and mitigate the climate warming impact of shipping in food from other places.

This bill would establish a sustainable foods working group within the Department of Agriculture. This group could help create "green jobs" and sustainable

economic development, foster land stewardship, food security, and community health, protect the environment and mitigate the climate emergency.

The Legislature has found we are in a climate emergency. We need to act now to mitigate the emergency! This bill represents one good first step. Please pass this bill!

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify!

Climate Protectors Hawai'i (by Ted Bohlen)

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 1:52:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Robert Bence | Individual | Support | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Aloha

Reccomend the taskforce should include a disabled farmer and in the objectives of Page 5 line 14 to include farmers with disabilities.

Mahalo

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 1:58:01 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Rachel LaDrig | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chair & Committee members,
My name is Rachel LaDrig. I have lived and worked here in the Agricultural community since 2016. I strongly support HB308.

A working task force, along with all of the other incentives and re-examinations that are listed on this bill is absolutely required in order to reach the very lofty goals that have been set for this state.

As someone who works for a beginner-farmer training program, I often wrestle with the fact that this state does not support small-scale farmers, let alone farmers in general. I think about about the countless nightmare-ish stories that are shared about small-scale farmers attempting to access land, and how the orgnizations and committees who gate-keep those lands, are often actually unhelpful and donw-right dismissive. What are we doing? Why are we missing so many oportunities to support and encourage a profession that we so clearly need to lift up? We need people in these seats who are deeply connected to this land, to the food they consume, to the communities of people growing that food for them, and to be our champions.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Sincerely,

Rachel LaDrig

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 7:37:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Will Caron | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please support HB308.

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/12/2023 10:47:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Melissa Barker | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Honorable Members,

I respectfully ask that you support HB308 which establishes the sustainable food systems working group within the Department of Agriculture.

Thank you for your courtesy and attention.

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI. 96746

HB-308

Submitted on: 2/13/2023 10:50:28 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/13/2023 2:20:00 PM

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

Comments:

Hello,

A sustainable food system is one in which producers, retailers, members of the community, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies partner to create a vibrant and resilient local food economy that enhances and sustains the environmental, economic, and social health of the community.

Developing a more sustainable food system for Hawaii represents an opportunity to create a new food economy that integrates the objectives of "green" job creation, sustainable economic development, land stewardship, food security, environmental protection, and climate change resiliency with community health and well-being.

Please support HB308.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nanea Lo, Mō‘ili‘ili