



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Senate Committee on Higher Education  
Monday, March 20, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

By

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

And

Michael Bruno, Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

#### HB 694 HD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 694 HD1 relating to the University of Hawai'i and appropriates funds to support the aquaculture disease diagnostic laboratory at the State Veterinary Laboratory Building in the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA), Division of Animal Industry (AI) Veterinary Laboratory Services Branch, in partnership with the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

HDOA has a veterinary laboratory within the Division of AI that provides disease diagnostic laboratory support for livestock, poultry, and to some extent, aquacultured animals. CTAHR has built disease diagnostic laboratory capabilities for aquacultured animals but cannot provides services to the aquaculture industry with only project-supported personnel. HB 694 HD1 provides the opportunity for HDOA in consultation with CTAHR to respond to the needs of the aquaculture industry. To ensure consistent, timely, and accurate testing services, we defer to HDOA regarding the appropriation of funds and the full-time positions in HB 694 HD 1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure and we defer to HDOA on the allocation of the funding.

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

**MARCH 20, 2023  
1:00 PM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 694 HD1  
RELATING TO RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**

Chairpersons Gabbard and Mercado Kim and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 694 HD1. The bill appropriates funds to support the Aquaculture Disease Diagnostic Laboratory at the Department of Agriculture Animal Industry Division Veterinary Laboratory Services Branch, in partnership with the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture. The Department supports this bill.

The Department estimates personnel costs at \$500,000 for 2 Microbiologist III staff, equipment, and operations annually. The current personnel costs for the State Aquaculture Veterinarian Position are approximately \$150,000, annually. The renovation costs for PCR testing are estimated to be \$450,000. The total request for this measure would be \$1,100,000.

The Department supports this measure, provided it does not impact the Department's priorities identified in the Executive Budget request. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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March 20, 2023

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

**TESTIMONY ON HB 694, HD1**  
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference  
1:00 PM

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

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 strongly supports HB 694, HD1** which appropriates funds to support the aquaculture disease diagnostic laboratory at the department of agriculture animal industry division veterinary laboratory services branch, in partnership with the University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture.

The Legislature has acknowledged the importance of Hawai'i's aquaculture industry and recognizes that supporting local aquacultural production can help the State move toward greater food sustainability and economic diversification. Hawai'i's aquaculture industry continues to be one of the fastest-growing segments of Hawai'i agriculture and has become an important source of seafood and other products for local sale and export. Currently, Hawai'i imports about 63 percent of its seafood.

HB 694, HD1 is a much-needed measure to provide essential support to Hawai'i's diverse aquaculture industry and we look forward to its passage and the benefits it will bring to aquaculture production.

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

**HB-694-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 2:32:55 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Testifying for Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The University is considering closing the Seed Lab and diagnostic services because of funding. Many more people will use that service than an aquaculture lab. Please fund the Seed Lab and diagnostic services first. Mahalo for your consideration

Nancy Redfeather



SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
AND  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

March 20, 2023 – 1:00 p.m. – Via Videoconference &  
Conference Room 224

**HB 694 HD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII –  
IN SUPPORT**

Hawai'i Aquaculture &  
Aquaponics Association  
Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council  
Hawai'i Farm Bureau  
Federation  
Hawai'i Farmers' Union  
United  
Hawai'i Food Industry  
Association  
Hawai'i Food  
Manufacturers Association  
Kohala Center  
Land Use Research  
Foundation of Hawai'i  
Maui Farm to School  
Network (Maui F2SN)  
Ulupono Initiative  
College of Tropical  
Agriculture and Human  
Resources - University of  
Hawai'i at Manoa

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

The Local Food Coalition **SUPPORTS** HB 694 HD1, which  
appropriates funds to support the Aquaculture Disease Diagnostic  
Laboratory at the Department of Agriculture (HDOA) Animal  
Industry Division Veterinary Laboratory Services Branch, in  
partnership with the University of Hawaii College of Tropical  
Agriculture (CTAHR).

This lab is critical to the continued development and expansion of  
the aquaculture industry. Currently, aquaculture samples are sent  
to the University of Arizona for testing, which creates delays and  
prevents timely industry action.

Aquaculture is important to the agriculture industry in Hawaii, and  
this bill provides the needed support to help the state meet its goal  
of doubling local food production.

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

We respectfully request your support of HB 694 HD1. Thank you for  
the opportunity to submit testimony.

Kendall Matsuyoshi  
808-544-8345  
[kmatsuyoshi@wik.com](mailto:kmatsuyoshi@wik.com)



March 17, 2023

Testimony Presented to the Committee on Agriculture  
And Environment and the Committee on Higher Education  
Regarding HB694-HD1, Relating to the University of Hawaii  
By Shrimp Improvement Systems Hawaii, LLC  
Hearing time: March 20, 2023 at 1:00pm  
State Capitol – Conference Room 224  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Gabbard, Chair Kim, Vice Chair Herbert, Vice Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

I am writing to **SUPPORT** HB694-HD1 relating to the University of Hawaii and the aquaculture disease diagnostic lab in partnership with HDOA.

Shrimp Improvement Systems Hawaii, LLC (SIS), located in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, always strives to provide the highest quality facilities and product that is exported to our customers' located worldwide, and always looking to expand our ability to provide a sustainable resource to the local community, in the most effective and efficient capacity.

SIS is a small employer, with approximately 22 full-time staff and 14 part-time and casual staff. We are an aquaculture farm producing broodstock shrimp and shrimp for meat. Raising a healthy and high quality product requires great care and protection. Producing a quality product is the lifeblood of the company. Policies and procedures are established to ensure biosecurity and we use a number of techniques and technology available to increase production, provide protection to the product from external factors that impact the growth and health of the animals.

One way that we accomplish that is through maintaining SPF status and by frequent inspections at the facility and testing for any diseases at the diagnostic lab. Currently the only services available to us for testing is to ship samples out to the University of Arizona. Having a lab in Hawaii allows SIS to benefit in a number of ways including the shipping and return time, reducing the costs of expedited shipments and testing, and additional resources and availability since there are times when UAZ is closed and not available to provide any services.



Having a certified lab in Hawaii allows for SIS to take proactive measures for biannual SPF certification inspections and status, meet the time sensitive requirements for export testing in a more timely and efficient manner including processing of the documentation, as well as farm protection measure resources and support.

Having this service available locally in Hawaii allows SIS to provide direct support local business through the use of the lab as well.

SIS has demonstrated our support of this program since its inception by providing samples to Dr. Krista Lee in the early stages of the UH lab and have looked forward to this program becoming a reality since the idea was formed.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for your consideration in this crucial matter that would support SIS in our continued aquaculture business in the State of Hawaii and look forward to UH's ability to provide the full array of testing required for the countries where we export.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jaime Masukawa', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr. Jaime Masukawa  
General Manager



Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair, Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair  
Committee on Higher Education  
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair, Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair  
Monday, March 2, 2023, 1:00 PM  
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Re: HB694 HD1 Relating to Aquaculture

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Richards and Kidani, and Committee Members,

The Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association (HAAA) representing aquaculture industry members, researchers, and supporters Statewide strongly supports HB 694 HD1 which appropriates critical funds to support and staff the Aquaculture Disease Diagnostic Laboratory at the State Veterinary Building in the Department of Agriculture (DOA) Animal Industry Division, Veterinary Laboratory Services Branch, in partnership with the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

This Aquaculture Disease Diagnostic Laboratory is critical to the continued development and expansion of all segments of the Hawaii aquaculture industry. As such, the HAAA respectfully requests your strong support of HB 694 HD1 in its entirety, as current written. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald P. Weidenbach". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ronald P. Weidenbach  
HAAA President



**HB-694-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2023 10:46:35 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jenee S Odani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs and members of the committee:

My name is Jenee Odani, and I am the Extension Veterinarian with the University of Hawaii at Manoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, veterinary pathologist, and manager of the UH Animal Diagnostic Laboratory. I am grateful for the opportunity to provide personal testimony on HB 694. This testimony does not necessarily represent the position of the University of Hawaii or CTAHR.

I am the laboratory diagnostician who spear-headed efforts to start a shrimp diagnostic laboratory in Hawaii and worked tirelessly to obtain USDA approval to perform official export testing. Previous to my employment with CTAHR, I worked for 9 years in the HDOA Veterinary Laboratory; therefore, I feel that I am uniquely able to state, with certainty, that the measures proposed in this bill represent the best path forward to support Hawaii's aquaculture industry.

**HB-694-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2023 12:40:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Janet Ashman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this measure that will greatly support the aquaculture industry and food production in the islands.

Thank you.