



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 Finance
Thursday, March 30, 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

SB 1586 SD1 HD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of SB 1586 SD1 HD1, relating to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. Specifically, this bill will help rectify significant gaps in the reach of Cooperative Extension programs due to vacancies that have surfaced in the past three years. Specifically, this bill will provide funding:

- 1) For one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Extension Specialist in entomology in Hilo, Hawai'i County.
- 2) For one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Extension Agent in livestock in Hilo, Hawai'i County.
- 3) For one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) State Extension Specialist in livestock at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.
- 4) For one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Extension Agent in livestock in Kaua'i County.
- 5) For one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Extension Agent in farm and consumer food safety in Maui County.

CTAHR's Cooperative Extension relies on the knowledge and experience of County Extension agents and specialists to extend research-based knowledge from the land-grant university out to the residents and agricultural producers of the state. That capability has been severely hampered by a string of resignations and retirements happening just prior to, and during, the COVID-19 pandemic. Agricultural producers from around the state have expressed how important these noted positions are essential to the health and well-being of Hawai'i's agricultural producers and consumers.

We strongly support SB 1586 SD1 HD1 with the suggested amendments, provided that its passage does not impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget.

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 2:50:57 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gordon Inouye	Puna Flower Power	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Puna Flower Power is a orchid growing cooperative located in Keaau, Hawaii. We need the hilo position for an entomologist to deal with the many threats we face in our industry. Please fund these positions.

Mahalo, Gordon Inouye, President



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Thursday, March 30, 2023 — 2:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 1586 SD1 HD1, Relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

Dear Chair Yamashita 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 SB 1586 SD1 HD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

CTAHR Extension Service provides critical boots-on-the-ground support to local producers across the State. With agricultural expertise and hands-on support, CTAHR's extension agents provide expert advice to local farmers seeking to improve operations. Support, to name a few items, can include crop selection and varieties, soil health, invasive species mitigation and control, crop techniques such as rotation or trellis, and irrigation efficiencies. By adding these 5 positions, the State is directly supporting the future success of local producers in Hawai'i.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become increasingly complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



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

March 30, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 1586, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL
AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, 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 1586, SD1, HD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

The excellent work performed by UH CTAHR 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.

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



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

SB1586 SD1 HD1

RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES.

Thursday, March 30, 2023, 2:00 PM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four 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 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 **strongly supports SB1586 SD1 HD1** which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) positions at the college of tropical agriculture and human resources.

This measure requests funding for livestock, entomology, and farm and consumer food safety extension positions, which are important for bringing best management practices and research to Hawaii's food producers. Especially during a time in which we are combatting invasive species like the Twolined Spittlebug, ranchers will benefit by having greater access to extension with expertise in the field. Many of these positions are vacant due to attrition, and the community will be served better if funds were provided to fill them again. The extension positions that are currently filled, specifically relating to the cattle industry, are at capacity, and need more resources in order to meet the evolving needs of our industry. Cattle are consistently in the top 10 agricultural commodities in the state, and we hope that funds will be appropriated to continue to provide cattle producers with the valuable support of extension.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council





The House Committee on Finance
March 30, 2023
2:00 PM
Room 308

RE: **SB 1586, SD 1, HD 1, Relating to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources**

Attention: Chair Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa and members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support of SB 1586, SD 1, HD 1**, Relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

SB 1586, SD1, HD1, establishes five full-time permanent extension agent and extension specialist positions at the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. To ensure the recruitment and retention of the positions, it is essential for the FTE appropriation to have a recurring, general funded designation.

UHPA supports and requests the passage of SB 1586, SD 1, HD 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern
Executive Director
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly



ASUH

Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i

YOUR STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Aloha Members of the Finance Committee,

I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 1586, which would appropriate funds to establish five full-time equivalent positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

The longterm benefits in investing in CTAHR's expertise is essential for promoting sustainability, self-sufficiency, and food security in our ag industries. The proposed positions in entomology, livestock, and food safety would be crucial in contributing to the health and well-being of Hawai'i.

I urge you to consider the importance of these positions and how this allows for a more resilient and prosperous future for Hawai'i. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rudy'.

Rudy Ramirez
ASUH President

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 2:56:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this measure.

Thank you.

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 5:01:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support HB 1586.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 8:31:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Auwelo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Carolyn Auwelo and I am the State Rangeland Management Specialist for USDA. I am testifying as a private citizen. I strongly support this bill. CTAHR extension specialist are a vital support to our agricultural producers. We desperately need livestock and weed specialist extension agents to help producers find solutions to new problems such as new invasive species and diseases that make their way to our shores. Our future food security depends on farmers and ranchers being successful.. Please support this important bill. Mahalo.

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 8:57:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joanna Bloese	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of Bill SB1586 HD1. CTAHR Extension and Research is vital to keeping Hawaii agricultural healthy and productive.

Extension is imperative to developing a healthy agricultural economy. Extension’s primary purpose is information transfer and education to make agricultural production as efficient as possible, and address developing problems to minimize their impact. Extension specialists also research the latest innovations and technologies and tailor their research to the specific needs of the communities they are serving, which leads to more efficient agricultural production. Extension positions are particularly helpful in assisting new and young growers getting into the industry. This is particularly important because much of the current membership is approaching retirement age and young growers are needed to keep the industry vital. Extension provides this bridge and educational opportunities for these new growers who are new to the industry. Extension provides a font of information, resources, and continued support for new growers. Extension programming can serve as entry point to the industry for young people, introducing them to the industry and highlighting a range of potential employment opportunities. Extension is often one of the first line of defense against new invasive species, since they work very closely with growers and other stakeholders. Current lack of extension positions has negatively impacted ag industries in Hawaii. Climate change has created a greater need for extension positions as it becomes more challenging to grow crops due to variable climates and shifting pest and disease complexes.

Prioritizing agriculture creates a more stable economy for Hawaii.

You cannot have successful agriculture in the tropics without strong entomology extension and research programs. In addition to the year-round balmy temperatures in Hawaii, its geographical location connecting Asian and American markets makes it uniquely predisposed to invasive species introductions. Hawaii has earned the title as the Invasive Capital of the World. Frequent pest introductions, climate change, the cost of land, electricity and labor in Hawaii make profitable agriculture supremely difficult.

Hawaii is so unique in its diverse climates and geographical location it is NOT sufficient to rely on research coming from other Universities on the Mainland. You must have boots on the ground and extension researchers who have a finger on the pulse of industry needs so they can develop PRACTICAL and APPLIED SOLUTIONS through RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT.

I sincerely appreciate your consideration and hope you will support this bill.

Sincerely,

Joanna Bloese

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 9:05:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Galanti	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of funding these positions, one of them is essential to reducing invasive pests across the state.

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 10:38:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Lutgen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Hannah Lutgen, as a citizen of the agriculture industry, I strongly support bill SB 1586. An entomologist on Hawaii island is essential for the identification and management of new and existing pests that negatively impact agriculture. Big Island is the largest agricultural producer in the state. Several invasive species start on the big island first and spread to outer islands. An entomologist will help reduce the spread of invasive species such as little fire ants, two-lined spittlebugs, and coqui frogs to other islands that affect the livestock industry, edible crops, and ornamental industries of Hawaii. We need an entomologist to protect food security and help our agricultural producers thrive.

Please kindly consider passing this bill.

Respectfully,

Hannah Lutgen

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 11:28:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cindy McCarty	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to support additional hires for extension agents for CTAHR. I am a biologist and have worked at USDA and at RCUH in entomology labs. I have witnessed the availability of extension agents and their ability to create invaluable relationships with individual farmers. These relationships include trust and consistency when dealing with invasive species and insects that have proven to be devastating to agricultural exports. More extension agents are needed to cover a variety of widespread agriculture businesses and to research new and different approaches to eliminate current and future problems.

SB-1586-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 11:44:50 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/30/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rosemary Gutierrez Coarite	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"Aloha,

My name is Rosemary Gutierrez Coarite, as a citizen, I strongly support bill SB1586. An entomologist on Hawaii island is essential for solving insect pest problems in crops that negatively impact agriculture. Big Island is the largest agricultural producer in the state. Several invasive species start on the big island first and spread to outer islands. An entomologist will help reduce the spread of invasive species such as little fire ants, two-lined spittlebugs, and coqui frogs to other islands that affect the livestock industry, edible crops, and ornamental industries of Hawaii. We need an entomologist to protect food security and help our agricultural producers thrive.

Please kindly consider passing this bill.

Thanks

Rosemary