

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director



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TO: Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
Rogerene Arce, Director of Agriculture

DATE: March 10, 2024

SUBJECT: SUPPORT OF HB1815 HD1, RELATING TO THE AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The Act specifies the inclusion of agritourism in the definition of "enterprise" to authorize the Agribusiness Development Corporation to financially support businesses engaged in agritourism.

We **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This bill allows Agribusiness Development Corporation to include agritourism to their definition of enterprise so that they can engage and support financially a growing sector of agriculture.
2. The amendment will create the opportunity for a more diversified agricultural industry that will enhance the industry as a whole through an increased access to funding.
3. This bill will further help the State to diversify our economy as a whole in a holistic way that positions the tourism industry to giveback to our community, rather than just extract.

For the foregoing reasons, we **SUPPORT** this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



WENDY L. GADY
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII
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**TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
& TOURISM**

Tuesday, March 12, 2024
1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1815, HD1
RELATING TO THE AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Chairperson DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 1815 HD1, which includes agritourism in the definition of "enterprise" to authorize the Agribusiness Development Corporation to financially support businesses engaged in agritourism.

Agritourism comes with economic benefits for farmers and ranchers. From generating additional income and direct marketing to preserving farms, farmland, and local culture and traditions, agritourism diversifies farmers' income streams, meaning they can make money outside of their regular planting season.

We support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



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March 12, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

TESTIMONY ON HB 1815, HD1
RELATING TO THE AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice-Chair Wakai, 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 1815, HD1, which includes agritourism in the definition of "enterprise" to authorize the Agribusiness Development Corporation to financially support businesses engaged in agritourism.

We strongly support agritourism as it represents an excellent revenue enhancement opportunity for farmers and ranchers as well as an educational opportunity for the public. Fostering the profitability of farmers and ranchers will significantly contribute to the State's goal of increased self-sufficiency.

The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) was initiated by the agricultural industry as sugar and pineapple downsized. It was established to help transition Hawaii's agricultural industry from plantation agriculture to smaller diversified agricultural operations. Transitioning large tracts of monoculture farmland into smaller diversified ag lots and finding and supporting bona fide farmers to work those lands is a long and complex process. ADC has had success developing a productive diversified sector out of former sugar and pineapple lands.

ADC assists farmers and ranchers with land and water issues, regulatory mandates, invasive species, global competition, financing, marketing, and research funding. As the entrepreneurial agricultural arm of the State, ADC should have the authority to support agritourism.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism
Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 1PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference**

RE: HB 1815 HD1 Relating to The Agribusiness Development Corporation

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii Supports (“The Chamber”) **supports HB1815 HD1**, which includes agritourism in the definition of "enterprise" to authorize the Agribusiness Development Corporation to financially support businesses engaged in agritourism.

The Chamber appreciates the opportunity to support this bill as it enables new opportunities for growth and development within Hawaii’s agricultural and agritourism industries.

The Chamber completed its 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii Initiative earlier this year. The vision was to create a data-based action plan for Business to lead and shape Hawaii’s economic future as a top place to do business. We connected with stakeholders from business, government & community to shape goals and priorities and develop a strategy that presents achievable policy reforms and metrics to increase Hawaii's economic competitiveness.

As a part of the blueprint, stakeholders indicated that industry diversification, specifically within Hawaii’s agricultural industries, is a key opportunity for growth in advancing the local economy and achieving greater food self-sufficiency.

The Chamber is Hawaii’s leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the “Voice of Business” in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state’s economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

On behalf of The Chamber, thank you for this opportunity to testify.



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Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Senate Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union 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 provides comments HB1815.**

Agritourism is an important component of Hawaii's agricultural industry, providing opportunities for farmers to diversify their income streams and connect with the community. However, without a clear definition of agritourism, there is a risk that the Agribusiness Development Corporation's efforts could be misdirected towards supporting recreational activities that do not align with the goal of promoting productive land use.

We recommend referencing HRS §205-4.5(13) to define agritourism as that which is conducted on working farms.

Under the current HRS §163D-2 statute the enterprise definition concludes "provided that the majority of whatever the corporation produces shall be produced for export." It is thus not clear how ADC would support agritourism for export. HFUU would recommend amending this language to enable ADC to support enterprises focused on local consumption as well.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

LATE

HB-1815-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2024 10:21:35 PM

Testimony for EET on 3/12/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I fully support the ADC being able to support businesses in the industry of Agritourism. In doing so the ADC can help and assist local farmers who wish to engage in lawful Agritourism to create added revenues and to educate both local and visitors on hawaii farming practices and to allow direct revenue with the visitor industry.