



# ‘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, January 31, 2024 at 2:10 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 2777 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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 HB 2777 that makes an appropriation to the University of Hawai‘i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH CTAHR) for the establishment of two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) extension agent positions to support the 4-H Youth Development Program and intergenerational programming in Kona, Hawai‘i County, and Līhu‘e, Kaua‘i County.

The two positions were included in the BOR budget request, and the bill invests in the important work that CTAHR is uniquely positioned with developing a vibrant and skilled workforce and ensuring a vibrant and healthy community that starts with positively developing our youth. UH CTAHR is a land-grant university and mandated by the USDA to develop people, through community and economic development, family financial literacy, intergenerational programming, mental health, and 4-H.

4-H is a positive youth development organization that exists to improve young people’s lives through intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peers and families and enhances their strengths, that provides opportunities and furnishes support to build on their leadership skills.

Hawai‘i has the highest percentage of multigenerational households in the U.S. and older adults aged 65 or over are expected to reach 23.8% of the state’s population by 2045. To address the challenges of caregiving and living with ‘ohana, intergenerational programs in Hawai‘i bring together people of multiple generations to interact and support each other and their community.

With their statewide needs assessment, the Intergenerational Extension Programs team at CTAHR identified that the highest-priority intergenerational need in Hawai‘i is healthy

living, which encompasses food systems, relationships, and physical health. Through CTAHR Cooperative Extension, intergenerational educational programs can improve quality of life, address family challenges, and offer positive resources to build healthy, prosperous communities with Hawai'i residents of all ages.

We support the bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact the priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



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January 31, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

**TESTIMONY ON HB 2777**  
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

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 HB 2777**, which makes an appropriation to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources for the establishment of two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) extension agent positions to support the 4-H Youth Development Program and intergenerational programming in Kona, Hawaii County, and Lihue, Kauai County.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are aging. The average age exceeds 60 years old and if they were in other professions would be retired. Yet many of these farmers are those that provide to supermarkets, restaurants, hotels, and farmers' markets and truly make a difference in reducing imports. Unfortunately for many, succession plans do not exist and as they retire, the lands go out of agricultural production. To maintain and expand production levels, it's clear that we need a new generation of farmers and ranchers equipped to assume the task of growing crops and livestock. There is an urgent need for interns or apprentices who are willing to not only work on these farms but also take over their operations.

Hawai'i's 4-H program is vitally important to the future of agriculture in Hawai'i. We can no longer rely upon our public education system for the education and training of the next generation of sustainable farmers and ranchers. 4-H has a long history of fulfilling this goal. The passion and direct interaction of volunteer farmers and ranchers with young people will help grow and perpetuate the ranks of the next generation of farmers and ranchers. This program addresses sustainability on social, economic, and environmental

levels. The 4-H program has a proven track record of not only exposing and educating young people to positive, hands-on experience in agricultural production but also a program that instills leadership and life skills in a wide variety of projects.

We must strongly support agricultural education for our young people if we are to increase Hawai'i's long-term resilience and sustainability.

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



The House Committee on Higher Education and Technology  
January 31, 2024  
2:10 PM  
Room 309

RE: **HB 2777, Relating to the University of Hawaii**

Attention: Chair Amy Perruso, Vice Chair Jeanne Kapela and members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support of HB 2777**, Relating to the University of Hawaii.

HB 2777 establishes two permanent full-time extension agent positions at the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. To ensure the recruitment and retention of the program positions, it is essential for the FTE appropriation to have a recurring, general funded designation.

**UHPA supports and requests the passage of HB 2777.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Fern'.

Christian L. Fern  
Executive Director  
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

**HB 2777**

**RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I**

**January 31, 2024**

Chair Perruso and members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am Susan Saka, testifying in support of HB 2777 on behalf of the Hawai'i 4-H Alumni Association.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) extension agent positions within the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to support the 4-H youth development program in Kona, Hawai'i County, and Lihue, Kaua'i County.

The 4-H program has a long history (began in 1918 in Hawai'i) of teaching youth life skills, in general and including in agriculture. The members of the 4-H Alumni Association have been direct beneficiaries of the program and can attest to its positive impact on our lives and on the lives of others with whom we interact. Many of us would not be where we are today had it not been for 4-H. Our experiences would not have been possible without extension agents. We feel that is important to continue to provide this opportunity to the youth of Hawai'i and Kaua'i counties.

Thank you for your continued support of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources and the 4-H youth development program.

Mahalo nui loa,  
Susan Saka  
on behalf of the Hawai'i 4-H Alumni Association

**HB-2777**

Submitted on: 1/29/2024 1:20:02 PM

Testimony for HET on 1/31/2024 2:10:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dianne Deauna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Higher Education Committee:

I'm Dianne Deauna, a PhD candidate in Oceanography at UH Mānoa. As a member of the UH community, I support HB 2777, which will provide much needed staffing support to the Youth Development Program of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. I hope the committee views the appropriation beyond the financial constraints, but as a necessary investment in Hilo's youth and their future.

**HB 2777**

**RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII**

**January 31, 2024**

Chair Perruso and members of the Committee:

Aloha, I am David Morihara, testifying in support of HB 2777.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the University of Hawaii for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) extension agent positions within the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to support the 4-H youth development program in Kona, Hawaii county, and Lihue, Kauai county.

The 4-H program has a long history of teaching youth life skills. This has been particularly important in rural areas where access to the many programs offered in Honolulu are not available. For decades Kauai and Kona have been supported by extension agents supporting the youth 4-H program. Those programs have been invaluable in teaching life skills and agriculture to the youth.

Thank you for your continued support of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources and the 4-H youth development program.

Mahalo  
David Morihara