



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
INTERIM DIRECTOR

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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Interim Director

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Friday, February 23, 2024

10:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 211

in consideration of
**SENATE BILL 2159, SD 1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** S.B. 2159, SD 1 which requires the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, to prepare and periodically update the State Agriculture Functional Plan to include other agricultural economic updates, including aquaculture, that expand the State's priority on food by including freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as a viable food source. Requires the Governor to submit the updated plan to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2026.

To comply with Hawai'i Revised Statutes §§ 226-55 and -56, DOA will need to convene an advisory committee and work in close cooperation with the officials and people of each county. OPSD is happy to provide guidelines and support the DOA.

Given the extensive scope of the work program mandated in §226-55, OPSD defers to the DOA on the impact on the Department's staff and programmatic resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



WENDY L. GADY
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
235 S. Beretania Street, Suite 205
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Phone: (808) 586-0186 Fax: (808) 586-0189

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

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Friday, February 23, 2024
10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 211

**SENATE BILL NO. 2159, SD1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY**

Chairperson Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2159, SD1. The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) supports this measure, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, to prepare and periodically update the State Agriculture Functional Plan to include other agricultural economic updates, including seafood sustainability, that expand the State's priority on food by including wild seafood as a viable food source and requires the Governor to submit the plan to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2026.

Local seafood provides sustenance and is a significant source of animal protein. Locals and visitors to our islands alike enjoy Hawaii's wild-caught and farmed seafood. ADC supports the intent of this measure and believes it will help

the State identify the key characteristics of sustainable seafood, explain the environmental, economic and social problems facing the industry, and offer suggestions for navigating the complicated world of seafood available to Hawaii consumers.

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.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2024
10:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2159, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2159, SD1. This bill requires the Department of Agriculture (Department) in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to prepare and periodically update the State Agriculture Functional Plan to include other agricultural economic updates, including aquaculture, that expands the State's priority on food by including freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as a viable food source. The updated Functional Plan is to be submitted prior to the convening of the 2026 Legislature. The Department offers comments and amendments to this measure.

With respect to undertaking a revision of the State Agriculture Functional Plan and incorporating freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms, the Department notes that Section 226-55 governs the updates of the Functional Plans and describes a comprehensive and deliberate process.



The Department strongly cautions that the revision of the existing State Agriculture Functional Plan (that was accepted by the Governor in 1991) to include freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms in the manner described in the measure (Page 2, line 18 to page 3, line 13) and to include “other agricultural economic updates” will be a time-consuming exercise that will require a considerable commitment of resources. For instance, the process that led to the 1991 Agriculture Functional Plan took over 10 years before the Technical Advisory Committee agreed to its contents. Further, there are twelve total State Functional Plans and only the Housing Functional Plan (2017) has been updated since their initial adoption in 1989 and additional revisions for seven of the plans through 1991.

The Department strongly recommends that the measure be revised to delete the update of the State Agriculture Functional Plan and focus on the gathering of data and information by agencies such as our Aquaculture Development Program and the Division of Aquatic Resources (Department of Land and Natural Resources) for freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms, pursuant to tasks (2) and (3) in the bill (Page 2, line 20 to page 3, line 8), if this data and information does not already exist. This may lead to a data/information-based assessment of the utility and practicality of “classify[ing] and regulat[ing] freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as a food commodity in the State” (Page 3, task (4), lines 9-10).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

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Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kauai

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means 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 supports SB2159.**

This bill is crucial in promoting and expanding the state's priority on food sustainability by including wild seafood as a viable food source in the State Agriculture Functional Plan. By requiring the Department of Agriculture to update the plan periodically and include other agricultural economic updates, such as seafood sustainability, we can ensure the long-term viability of our food sources and support our local farmers, fishers, and aquaculture producers.

The inclusion of seafood sustainability in the State Agriculture Functional Plan is a necessary step towards promoting a more diverse and resilient food system in Hawaii. As an island state, we are heavily reliant on imports for our food supply, but by prioritizing aquaculture as a viable food source, we can reduce our dependence on outside sources and support our local food producers. Additionally, by requiring the Governor to submit the plan to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2026, we can ensure that the state remains on track to meeting the goals established for increasing food production and supporting our local agriculture industry.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

TO: Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair; and Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Senate Ways and Means Committee
Friday, February 23, 2024; 10:30 a.m.; State Capitol Conference Room 211 &
Videoconference

RE: SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 2159, SD1 – Requires HDOA to include aquaculture and expands the State’s priority on food by including freshwater and saltwater organisms as a viable food source.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committees,

Kupu Place Aquaponics LLC strongly supports SB 2159, SD1: Requires HDOA to include aquaculture in the State Agriculture Functional Plan and expands the State’s priority on food by including freshwater and saltwater organisms as a viable food source. Not only are fish a very nutritious and culturally suitable protein source, but the feed conversion ratio of fish protein compared to that of other land animals makes aquaculture and its products amongst the most sustainable food source for our planet.

Although our small aquaponic company supports 3 full-time and 6 part-time staff, we are growing and finding innovative ways to produce more fish and high-value greens utilizing aquaculture technology. We firmly believe that this sector has the largest opportunity for growth, and also offers opportunity for a diverse array of food products to be produced locally.

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

Sincerely,
Anthony Mau PhD
Owner
808.542.4061
kupuplaceaquaponics@gmail.com



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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 23, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2159, SD1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:30 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwaki, 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 2159, SD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, to prepare and periodically update the State Agriculture Functional Plan to include other agricultural economic updates, including aquaculture, that expand the State's priority on food by including freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as a viable food source and requires the Governor to submit the updated plan to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2026

The State's Agricultural Functional Plan was last updated in 1991. Since it was last updated, Hawai'i's agricultural industry has transitioned from plantation agriculture to a more diversified agriculture sector. Diversified agriculture in Hawai'i includes flowers and nursery products, vegetables and melons, macadamia nuts, cattle, milk, fruits poultry, eggs, forest products, hogs, coffee, taro, ulu, cacao, other livestock, and aquaculture.

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 food and other products for local sale and export. Hawai'i residents consume seafood at twice the national average, with around 51% of seafood available to consumers derived from local sources.

Supporting freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as a viable food source can help the State move toward greater food sustainability as there is significant growth potential for the aquaculture industry in Hawai'i.

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



Food+ Policy Internship 2024

food@purplemaia.org

February 21, 2024

To: WAM

Subject: **Senate Bill 2159**: Relating to Food Sustainability

Aloha Chairs Donovan M. Delacruz, Vice Chair Sharon Y. Moriwaki, and Members of the Committees on Ways and Means,

I am writing this testimony in **strong support for Senate Bill 2159** which will create a plan to incorporate wild-caught seafood as a food source for the state, which will help enhance the resiliency and self-sufficiency of Hawai'i's local food system.

Given that Hawai'i imports the majority of its food (approximately 85% to 90%), the local food system is vulnerable to disruptions that may impact the inflow of food into the state. Natural disasters, national, and international crises can have detrimental effects on the availability and accessibility of food for the people of Hawai'i. It is imperative to address the issue of consistent access to nutritious and culturally relevant foods, especially in light of the challenges experienced during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, it has been nearly two decades since the last update to the state's agriculture functional plan. Ensuring regular amendments and updates to this plan is crucial for enabling policymakers to identify specific issues related to food insecurity and local food production. This proactive approach will empower them to take necessary actions to address these issues effectively.

Furthermore, aquaculture holds a significant place in the diet of many Hawaiian communities and serves as the livelihood for numerous generational fishing families. The inclusion of wild aquaculture in the state agriculture functional plan through this Act will contribute to enhancing local food production and potentially mitigating challenges associated with food insecurity. We personally know several families who depend on wild-caught aquaculture for their daily meals.

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2024, the cohort of interns are undergraduates and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



Food+ Policy Internship 2024

food@purplemaia.org

They conscientiously harvest only what they can use and frequently share excess fish with their neighbors and local communities.

Culturally, aquaculture and fish farming are integral to the lifestyles of the majority of Native Hawaiians. Establishing this Act will not only contribute to the broader goal of making Hawaii's food system more sustainable but will also safeguard cultural and social values, as well as economic and political interests tied to food.

Please consider these reasons in support of the bill because it will help the state to identify various opportunities that will enhance the livelihoods of many. It will also aid Hawaii'i in making progress towards a food system that is more locally focused and resilient.

Mahalo,
Food Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

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Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, February 23, 2024, at 10:30AM
Conference Room 211**

RE: SB2159 SD1 Relating to Food Sustainability

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports SB2159 SD1**, which requires the Department of Agriculture (DOA), in coordination with the OPSD, to prepare and periodically update the State Agriculture Functional Plan to include other agricultural economic updates, including seafood sustainability, that expand the State's priority on food by including wild seafood as a viable food source. Requires the Governor to submit the plan to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2026.

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. Incorporating aquaculture into the state agriculture functional plan would help further progress Hawaii's food security and food self-sufficiency goals.

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.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2159-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2024 11:08:28 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2024 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Philip Fernandez	Testifying for Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Fishermen's Alliance for Conservation and Tradition strongly supports this bill. Similar forms of this bill were discussed in prior legislative sessions and have received tremendous support from the public.

The state need to know where aquacultured fish produced in Hawaii, wilf fish caught and landed in Hawaii, and imported seafood fits into the food sustainability plan. Please pass this bill.

SB-2159-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/17/2024 12:30:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2024 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

My name is Jacob Wiencek, Chairman of Hawaii Young Republicans, and in my personal capacity I urge the committee to **support** this legislation. Aquaculture is crucial to enhancing food sustainability and this legislation will help provide a solid framework to advancing these objectives. Let's get this done!