



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, March 1, 2024 at 9:55 a.m.

By

Walter Bowen, Associate Dean of Research
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2817 SD1 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2817 SD1 relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) which makes an appropriation to the University of Hawai'i to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 APT FTE) faculty positions at CTAHR.

CTAHR strongly supports this bill and, we respectfully offer one suggested amendment. Specifically, this bill aims to help rectify significant gaps in the reach of Cooperative Extension programs due to vacancies that have surfaced in the past four years. We suggest the following amendment to SECTION 3 which designates one full-time equivalent extension agent in water quality and conservation in the county of Maui.

Specifically, this bill will provide:

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i the sum of \$500,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for CTAHR at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) positions, provided that the sums appropriated shall be expended as follows:

- (1) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension specialist in water quality and conservation in the county of Maui;

SUGGESTED ADMENDMENT:

- \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent in water quality and conservation in the county of Maui;
- (2) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent in livestock in Hilo, county of Hawaii;

- (3) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) state extension specialist in livestock at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa;
- (4) \$ for one full-time equivalent extension agent in urban horticulture and food systems in the city and county of Honolulu; and
- (5) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent in health and community development in the county of Maui.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the university of Hawai'i for the purposes of this Act.

CTAHR's Cooperative Extension relies on the knowledge and experience of county extension agents and extension 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 essential these noted positions are for the health and well-being of Hawai'i's agricultural producers and consumers.

We strongly support SB 2817 SD1 with the suggested amendment, provided its adoption does not impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the measure.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

SB2817 SD1

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

Friday, March 1, 2024, 9:55 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB2817 SD1** which makes an appropriation to the University of Hawaii to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) faculty positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded.

This measure requests funding for livestock, water quality and conservation, and urban horticulture and food systems 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. 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 over 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.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council





Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Friday, March 1, 2024 — 9:55 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2817 SD1, Relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

Dear Chair Dela Cruz 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, clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports SB 2817 SD1, which makes an appropriation to the University of Hawai'i to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) faculty positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

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



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March 1, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 2817, SD1
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL
AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
9:55 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 2817, SD1, which makes an appropriation to the University of Hawaii to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) faculty positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

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 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.



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The Committee on Ways and Means

March 1, 2024

9:55 AM

Room 211

RE: **SB 2817, SD 1, Relating to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources**

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

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support of SB 2817, SD 1**, Relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

SB 2817, SD1 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 2817, SD 1.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Christian L. Fern
Executive Director
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

University of Hawaii
Professional Assembly

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