

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

**FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2023
9:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 325 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 520, SD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Gates and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 520 SD2. This bill establishes the Farmer Succession Pilot Program under the Leeward Community College; requires a report to the Legislature; and appropriates funds for the pilot program and the farmer apprentice mentoring program. The Department supports this measure and offers the following comments.

The Department believes a farmer succession pilot program could deliver critical support services to the next generation of farmers, ranchers, and allied producers who are deeply interested in perpetuating the agriculture heritage and becoming successful in this highly competitive business. Additionally, the Department deeply appreciates this legislative effort to provide continuing support to aspiring local farmers and ranchers under the apprentice mentoring program.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify on this measure.





SB520 SD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

March 17, 2023

9:30 AM

Room 325

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers its **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS** for **SB520 SD2**, which would establish the farm succession pilot program within the University of Hawaii (UH) Leeward Community College to further the knowledge and technical skills of young farmers. **OHA takes care to note that Native Hawaiian farmers and ranchers often face greater inequities and disparities as a result of historic injustice. OHA asks that the Legislature amend this measure to authorize the Pilot Program to better addresses the needs of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and to advance Native Hawaiian participation through meaningful consultation with OHA. OHA offers specific amendments within this testimony.**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (SDFR) “as those belonging to groups that have been subject to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice.”¹ The USDA has affirmed that Native Hawaiians are recognized under the SDFR characterization² and a number of financial support instruments exist through the USDA for SDFRs.³ While this distinction and the needs of those within this designation exist at the federal level, the State of Hawai‘i has yet to adopt the necessary policies and mechanisms to address inequities and disparities faced by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, like Native Hawaiian mahi‘ai. **As the principal public agency in the State responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to Native Hawaiians, OHA asks this legislature to ensure that Native Hawaiian farmers and ranchers are provided equitable farm assistance opportunities, such as the grants proposed through this measure.**

OHA wishes to emphasize that a great many Native Hawaiians are kahu holoholona (ranchers), mahi‘ai (farmers), lawai‘a (fishers), kanaka hahai holoholona (hunters), and hānai ‘ai (food producer-practitioners). Our traditional Native Hawaiian cultural practices are deeply rooted in familial bonds with the natural world and the cultivation of these

¹ USDA Economic Research Service, Socially Disadvantaged, Beginning, Limited Resource, and Female Farmers and Ranchers, available at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/socially-disadvantaged-beginning-limited-resource-and-female-farmers-and-ranchers/#:~:text=The%20USDA%20defines%20socially%20disadvantaged,and%20Asian%20or%20Pacific%20I slander.>

² USDA Farm Service Agency, Minority and Women Farmers and Ranchers, available at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/minority-and-women-farmers-and-ranchers/index>.

³ USDA Farm Service Agency, Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Fact Sheet 2019, available at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/2019/sda_loans-fact_sheet-aug_2019.pdf.



SB520 SD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

connections over the span of millennia now serve as exemplary models for any sustainable Hawai‘i-based food system.

Unfortunately, the fetid flow of historical injustice over the past 130 years has systemically severed Native Hawaiians from their ‘āina (the natural world), their traditions, and their cultures. Accordingly, Native Hawaiians now endure some of the worst socio-economic conditions among all peoples in this State, with ongoing inequities and disparities that continue to undermine Native Hawaiian existence. One of the most challenging social determinants of health for Native Hawaiians is economic well-being,⁴ where Native Hawaiians have the highest rate of poverty and unemployment among Hawai‘i’s major ethnic groups, and “lower average annual earnings than statewide averages for both men and women.”⁵ Once again, at the highest rate among the State’s major ethnic groups, 63% of Native Hawaiians are finding it difficult to survive,⁶ with a 60% majority of Native Hawaiians unable to make ends meet.⁷

Widespread Native Hawaiian participation in a far-reaching Hawai‘i-based sustainable food system economy would be integral to achieving vast improvements in Native Hawaiian health and well-being by reconnecting Native Hawaiians with ‘āina and their traditional cultures, while simultaneously elevating Native Hawaiian socio-economic conditions through potentially limitless economic development opportunities. Na ke kanaka mahi‘ai ka imu ō nui (the well-filled imu belongs to the person who tills the soil).

Accordingly, OHA asks that the measure be amended by amending subsection (4) on Page 1, lines 16-17, and Page 2, lines 1-2, to read:

- (4) Offer and fund programs that provide education and training to beginning farmers and ranchers, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, including agricultural rehabilitation and vocational training;

⁴ Dept. of Native Hawaiian Health, John A. Burns School of Medicine, *Assessment and Priorities for the Health and Well-Being in Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders*, 2020, p. 12

⁵ Id.

⁶ Aloha United Way, *Alice in Hawai‘i: 2022 Facts and Figures*, Nov. 2022, p.9.

⁷ Id. at 6.



SB520 SD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

OHA also asks that the measure be amended by adding a new subsection following subsection (5) on page 2, following lines 3-5, to read:

- (6) Encourage and advance native Hawaiian participation in farming and ranching through partnerships with the office of Hawaiian affairs.

Finally, OHA asks that the measure be amended by adding OHA as a suggested consultant to subsection (c) on Page 2, lines 6-12, to better assist the Pilot Program in its capacity to address inequities and disparities faced by Native Hawaiian farmers and ranchers:

- (c) Leeward community college may consult with any public or private entity, including the Hawaii Good Food Alliance, Hawaii Farm Bureau, Hawaii Farmers Union United, the university of Hawaii's GoFarm Hawaii Program, and the office of Hawaiian affairs, and representatives therefrom, to carry out its duties under contract with the pilot program established pursuant to this Act.

OHA appreciates the opportunity to support SB520 SD2 and **respectfully asks that the Legislature take into consideration OHA's recommended amendments for the betterment of conditions of Native Hawaiians and to address the needs of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in the State.** Mahalo nui loa.



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 Agriculture & Food Systems
March 17, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

By

Della Teraoka, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of Hawai'i System

SB 520 SD2 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 520 SD2, which provides for a farmer succession five-year pilot program in the University of Hawai'i Leeward Community College that leverages existing farms, ranches, and education to leverage resources in support of growing an agriculture workforce.

This program will support the navigation between education and employment, as well as provide technical assistance to prospective farmers in accessing land, funding, and planning resources. Additionally, it will provide for the development and offering of training to support aspiring and current farmers and ranchers in the growth and succession of agriculture in Hawai'i.

Note that while Section 2 includes 4.0 FTE staff positions and an appropriation for FY24 and FY25 for UHCC, the measure requires the pilot program to continue for five years. As such, it may be more appropriate to establish the pilot program via line-item appropriation in the General Appropriations Act to ensure continued funding throughout the five years, along with a proviso that has a corresponding sunset date.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of SB 520 SD2, as long as its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 520 SD2.



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 17, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON SB 520, SD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloha, 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 520, SD2, which establishes the Farmer Succession Pilot Program under Leeward Community College, requires a report to the Legislature, and appropriates funds for the pilot program and Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are aging. The average age of the Hawai'i farmer exceeds 60 years old, and if they were in other professions would most likely 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.

Multigenerational commercial farms and ranches are facing the prospect of closure because succession plans do not exist. As these farmers and ranchers retire, their lands go out of agricultural production. There is an urgent need for interns or apprentices that are willing to not only work on these farms but take over their operations.

This measure will provide support for the next generation of new farmers who are interested in developing the skills and knowledge needed to be successful agriculture businesses.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Food+ Policy Internship 2023

food@purplemaia.org

March 15, 2023

To: Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Subject: **SB520**, Relating to Agriculture

Aloha,

Food+ Policy supports SB520. The average age of a farmer in Hawai'i is sixty years old, a number that has been rising over time. Hawai'i's food security depends on the state's ability to encourage a new generation of farmers, accompanied by adequate educational and financial resources.

Many challenges exist for Hawai'i growers such as the decreasing trend in dollar value of agricultural products combined with the high cost of farm inputs. The pilot program and farmer apprentice mentorship program can assist aspiring young farmers in overcoming these challenges and reaching their full potential as leaders in the agricultural community.

We support SB 520 because it would inspire more dedicated stewards to the 'āina while ultimately helping to improve food and nutrition security in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,
Kelsey Amos & the 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.

In 2023, the cohort of interns are undergraduate 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.

SB-520-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 4:48:43 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jim Crum	UH AgConnect program	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I have been working with the UH CC Hilo campus to implement such a program described in this bill as a pilot on the Big Island of Hawaii, and in that role, have seen a great deal of interest from many ag producers and those that want to break into Hawaii ag production - not just on Hawaii Island but on other islands as well. We had to turn away some possible participants because of demand being greater than our capacity. We are about 1/2 way through the pilot semester, and there seems to be great engagement and enthusiasm among the cohort.

If you would like more details, I would be happy to answer any questions about the pilot program via Zoom if you have specific questions, so I have selected that option when submitting this, but am facilitating one of our classes until 10am HST on 3/17/23 so it would have to be at 10am or later, or another time. Just let me know if I can help provide more information and I'd be happy to share. My email is crumj@hawaii.edu and the web site for the pilot is here:

<https://hawaii.hawaii.edu/agconnect>

Mahalo for your support of local ag production and facilitating ways to make farming in Hawaii less stressful for producers and those interested in a career in ag production, and finding ways to match them up. Passing this bill is one such way.

-Jim Crum



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

SB520 SD2

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Friday, March 17, 2023, 9:30 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, 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 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.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB520 SD2** which establishes the Farm Succession Pilot Program under Leeward Community College. Requires a report to the Legislature.

While the age of farmers and ranchers increase, the need for continued influx into the field is necessary to reach food security goals. Beginning farmers and ranchers need support to find available agricultural land and resources. Technical assistance for business planning and grant writing will ensure that new farmers and ranchers are able to find the resources they need to continue the production of food in our state. We support this measure to establish a farm succession pilot program.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Anabella Bruch
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Madeline Ross
Kohala, Hawai'i

Odysseus Yacalis
East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Andrea Drayer
Ka'u, Hawai'i

Chantal Chung
Kona, Hawai'i

Fawn Helekahi-Burns
Hana, Maui

Reba Lopez
Haleakala, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahalawai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Rufina Kaauwai
Molokai

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

Brynn Foster
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki
Kauai

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) 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 SB520.**

The future of farming in Hawaii depends on the next generation of farmers and the ability for existing farmers to pass on their knowledge, land, and resources to their children or other individuals who are committed to farming. However, the barriers to entry and the complexities of running a farm can be overwhelming, especially for those just starting out.

The farmer succession pilot program will provide much-needed support for the next generation of farmers, helping to ensure that Hawaii's agricultural heritage is preserved and that our communities continue to have access to fresh, locally grown food. The farmer apprentice mentoring program will provide critical on-the-job training and support for aspiring farmers, helping them to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed. I strongly urge the legislature to support this bill and appropriate funds for these essential programs. They will be critical in supporting the growth and sustainability of our state's agricultural industry.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB520 SD2

Friday, March 17, 2023 9:30am Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Members of the Committee,

HAPA Supports SB520 SD2 which establishes the Farm Succession Pilot Program under Leeward Community College. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds for the pilot program and for the Department of Agriculture's Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program.

The pilot program and farmer apprentice mentorship program can assist aspiring young farmers in gaining the skills and confidence to recognize their potential as leaders in Hawai'i's agricultural community.

These programs are important for Hawaii's older generation of growers to be able to pass down their knowledge, land, and resources to their children or other individuals committed to local agriculture.

Please support SB520 SD2.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick, Executive Director



March 16, 2023

Rep. Cedric Gates, Chair
Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

RE: Testimony in support of SB 520, Relating to Agriculture

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of Hawaii Foodbank, **I support SB 520**, which would establish the farmer succession pilot program within the Department of Agriculture.

Food security is a critical issue in Hawai'i, where one in six residents lacks comprehensive access to healthy, nutritious food. The pandemic amplified the need for Hawai'i to strengthen our local food systems and agricultural sector. For the past several years, the Hawai'i Foodbank has increased our purchasing from farmers, co-ops, and food hubs – these local producers are essential to distributing fresh, healthy food across our communities.

The Hawai'i gathers donated, rescued, and purchased food and distribute it to those in need through our network of more than 200 agency partners. Availability of fresh, locally grown food is an important aspect of our anti-hunger work, and we support this effort to provide support for farmers and create pathways to farming as a viable living.

Mahalo for your consideration.

With aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Miller Marvin".

Amy Miller Marvin
President and CEO, Hawaii Foodbank



3/16/2023

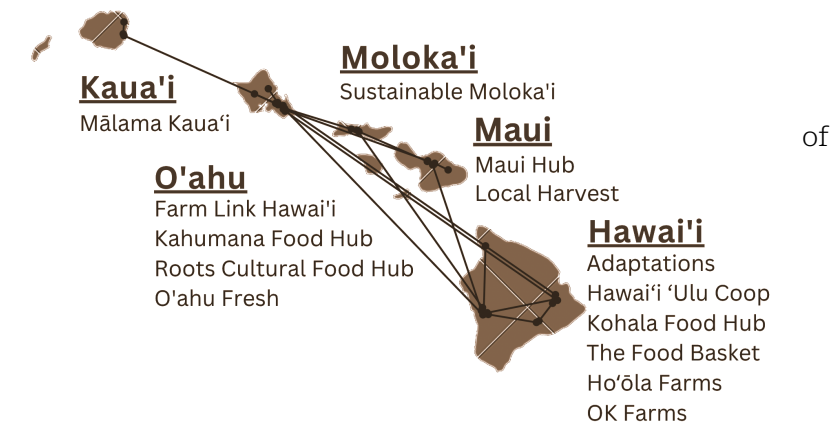
Dear AGR committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB520.

Hawai'i Food Hub Hui (HFHH) strongly supports SB520 with one amendment offered:

- Given the statewide intent of this bill, the program is best suited at the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

The farm succession pilot program is designed to help ensure the succession of agricultural lands and productive resources by encouraging matchmaking between incoming and outgoing farmers, as well as matchmaking between recently trained farmers and available jobs in agriculture and food systems. The program also funds and continues programs that provide education and training to beginning farmers and ranchers, including agricultural rehabilitation and vocational training programs. Finally, the program helps to advance land partnerships such as farm incubator programs and educational programs on commercial farms that teach agricultural and business skills.

HFHH is a collaboration dedicated to supporting local food hubs and promoting the consumption locally grown, culturally preferred foods. Our collaboration was created in 2017 and currently encompasses 14 food hubs across the states supporting 1,337 farms that serve approximately 14,465 customers every year.



The HFHH's efforts ensure that small- and medium-sized farms have access to the resources they need to thrive, as well as providing access to fresh, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods to local residents.

Saleh Azizi Fardkhales, Ph.D.
Director
Hawai'i Food Hub Hui
(808) 383-5224 | info@foodhubhui.com



KL Felicitas Foundation

info@klfelicitasfoundation.org
www.klfelicitasfoundation.org
P.O. Box 2118 · Big Sur · California · 93920

March 16, 2023

Dear AGR committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB520.

The KL Felicitas Foundation, which supports and invests in social nonprofit and for profit enterprises in agriculture in Hawaii, strongly supports the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui's suggested amendment to SB520 as follows:

- **Given the statewide intent of this bill, the program is best suited at the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).**

The farm succession pilot program is designed to help ensure the succession of agricultural lands and productive resources by encouraging matchmaking between incoming and outgoing farmers, as well as matchmaking between recently trained farmers and available jobs in agriculture and food systems.

The program also funds and implements programs that provide education and training to beginning farmers and ranchers, including agricultural rehabilitation and vocational training programs. Finally, the program helps to advance land partnerships such as farm incubator programs and educational programs on commercial farms that teach agricultural and business skills.

Lisa L. K. Kleissner
Board President

SB-520-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 11:39:33 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cards Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cards Pintor

SB-520-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 10:21:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB520 SD2.

SB-520-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 8:55:14 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/17/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I'm born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom a Kanaka Maoli.

I'm writing in SUPPORT of SB520 SD2.

me ke aloha 'āina,
Nanea Lo, Mō'ili'ili