

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



WENDY L. GADY
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 27, 2024
3:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

SENATE BILL NO. 2159, SD2 HD1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2159, SD2 HD1. 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.



SB2159 SD2 HD1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY
House Committee on Finance

March 27, 2024

3:30 a.m.

Conference Room 308

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB2159 SD2 HD1, which addresses food sustainability, a critical issue affecting our communities, particularly the Native Hawaiian population. We also **respectfully request an amendment** to further strengthen this proposal. **OHA emphasizes the significant opportunity to prioritize food security, particularly for the Native Hawaiian community, while also fostering environmental sustainability.**

OHA supports this bill which promotes and expands the state's focus on food sustainability. It aims to include wild seafood as a viable food source in the State Agriculture Functional Plan and requires the Department of Agriculture to update the plan periodically and include other agricultural economic updates like seafood sustainability. This will help ensure the long-term sustainability of our food sources and support our local farmers, fishers, and aquaculture producers.

Aquaculture and fish farming are integral parts of Native Hawaiian culture. The proposed measure could help to make Hawai'i's food system more sustainable while preserving cultural, social, economic, and political values related to food. OHA appreciates the ways in which this bill recognizes how much fishing provides for our communities, even when it is not commercialized. OHA stands ready to ensure that future plans for saltwater aquaculture actions and investments align with Hawaiians' traditional and customary rights as well as the rights of subsistence-based fishing.

OHA respectfully offers an amendment to section 2 of this bill to ensure there is monitoring and consideration of any impacts to Native Hawaiian fishing practices, community-based fishing areas and our entire ecosystem which includes the Northwest Hawaiian Islands:



SB2159 SD1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY
House Committee on Agriculture
House Committee on Water and Land

"§226- Other objectives and policies for the economy-- agriculture. (a) Pursuant to section 226-55, the department of

agriculture, in coordination with the office of planning and sustainable development, shall prepare and periodically update the state agriculture functional plan to include other agricultural economic updates, including updates on aquaculture, that expand the State's priority on food by including freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as a viable food source.

(b) As part of the updated state agriculture functional plan, which shall include aquaculture among other agricultural economic updates, the department of agriculture and the office of planning and sustainable development may:

(1) Establish objectives, policies, and actions related to aquaculture;

(2) Research the agricultural and economic impact that freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms have on food self-sufficiency in the State, including its influence on:

(A) Non-commercial consumption, such as community sharing and fisher household consumption; and

(B) Community-based subsistence fishing areas; and

(C) Exports;



SB2159 SD1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY
House Committee on Agriculture
House Committee on Water and Land

(3) Collect data on the wholesale and retail sales of freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms in the State;

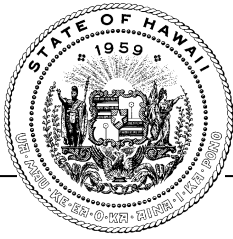
(4) Classify and regulate freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as a food commodity in the State; and

(5) Incorporate aquaculture into the state agriculture functional plan related to increased food security and food self-sufficiency.

(6) Research and monitoring performed in collaboration with Native Hawaiian organizations, including but not limited to the office of Hawaiian affairs, of the impact that the expansion of aquacultural markets may have on the State's ocean ecosystems as well as Hawaii's traditional and customary fishing practices.

(c) For the purposes of this section, "freshwater and saltwater aquatic organism" means naturally born or hatchery-raised fish and shellfish harvested in the wild through commercial, recreational, or subsistence fishing but excludes net-pen aquacultural or other farm-raised fish."

OHA believes this measure can provide an important blueprint for moving the state forward to better incorporate aquaculture in our state's agricultural plan. Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **ADVANCE and AMEND SB2159 SD2 HD1**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.



**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
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

3:30 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration of
**SENATE BILL 2159, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY.**

Chair Yamashita and Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee on Finance.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** S.B. 2159, SD 2, HD 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



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024
3:30 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308
AGENDA #2**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2159, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2159, HD1. This bill amends Chapter 226 (Hawaii State Planning Act) by requiring the Department of Agriculture (Department) in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) to prepare and periodically update the State Agriculture Functional Plan to include agricultural economic updates. Prior to the update of the State Agriculture Functional Plan, the Department and OPSD shall produce a report on freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as a viable food source that is to be submitted prior to the convening of the 2026 Legislature. The Department supports this measure that allows the Department and OPSD to focus on the freshwater and saltwater organisms report which will be incorporated into a future update of the State Agriculture Functional Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy
Support for SB 2159 SD2 HD1 Relating to Food Sustainability
Committee on Finance
March 27, 2024, 3:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference**

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) **supports** SB 2159 SD2 HD1, relating to food sustainability, which would require the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, to prepare a report on freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms regarding their agricultural and economic impact on the State's food self-sufficiency. It would also require the Governor to submit a report on the impacts of freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2026.

It's a long-held assumption that food production and environmental health are a zero-sum game. Food production currently accounts for nearly one-quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions, and 70 and 80 percent of freshwater usage and habitat degradation respectively. The ocean, meanwhile, faces unprecedented perils in the form of unsustainable fishing, coastal water pollution, and habitat degradation, including food production through fishing and aquaculture. A growing body of evidence, however, is challenging the assumption that increasing food production will inevitably result in the degradation of nature. Through practices such as restorative aquaculture, it's possible to produce nutritious food and actively contribute to the recovery of ecosystems at the same time.

Aquaculture is not only the fastest-growing form of food production—it can also be one of the most environmentally efficient ways of producing food. This is especially true for bivalves and seaweed, which are near-zero input forms of farming—their production requires almost no feed, freshwater or land and results in minimal greenhouse gas emissions.

TNC has been a policy leader in exploring the practices of restorative aquaculture. We appreciate that this bill will update the State Agriculture Functional Plan to include prioritizing freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms as food sources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2159 SD2 HD1.

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March 27, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2159, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
3:30 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, 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, SD2, HD1, 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.



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Vincent Kimura
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Natalie Urminska
Kauai

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Finance 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 will aid 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



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at 3:30PM
Conference Room 325 & Video Conference**

RE: SB2159 SD2 HD1 Relating to Food Sustainability

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii Supports (“The Chamber”) **supports HB2159 SD2 HD1**, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development, to prepare a report on freshwater and saltwater aquatic organisms regarding their agricultural and economic impact on the State's food self-sufficiency which is to be submitted to the legislature by the Governor 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. The eventual incorporation of 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.

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

SB-2159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2024 11:56:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2024 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!

JUST ABOUT ANYTHING FOR FOOD SUSTAINABILITY AND HELPING LOCAL FARMERS IS A GOOD IDEA.

MAHALO!

SB-2159-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2024 4:52:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/27/2024 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nimr Tamimi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill.