

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



WENDY L. GADY
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAI'I
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. 2960, SD1 HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2960 SD1 HD1. The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) supports this measure, which requires that lessees and purchasers of farm lots and ranch lots use that land for farming and diversified agricultural uses.

The state's goal of doubling food production by 2030 is of high priority for the Agribusiness Development Corporation. Senate Bill 2960 SD1 is a strong step towards our food security as a state and we support the preservation of agricultural lands that allow for the growth and future adaptations of the agricultural industry.

The Agribusiness Development Corporation supports policies that maintain agricultural lands for agricultural purposes.

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
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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**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2960, SD1 HD1
RELATING TO FARMERS**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2960, SD1 HD1. This bill requires the lessees and purchasers of farm lots and ranch lots to use that land for farming and producing food and authorizes agricultural cooperatives to apply for farmlands. The Department of Agriculture (Department) offers comments.

The Department acknowledges the mandate in article XI, section 3 of the Hawaii State Constitution to “conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands.” The Department’s actions to implement article XI, section 3 of the Hawaii State Constitution include inspections of our agriculture and non-agriculture park lessees twice a year for compliance with lease terms that the lands are in agricultural production.



The Department acknowledges the amendments made in the HD1 version and comments that the impact of the amendments on the current leases will be reviewed should the measure move forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

SB2960 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO THE FARMERS

Wednesday, Marc 27 2024, 3:30 PM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB2960 SD1 HD1** which requires that lessees and purchasers of farm lots and ranch lots use that land for farming and producing food. Authorizes agricultural cooperatives to apply for farmlands.

Our priority is keeping agricultural lands in agricultural production. With land as a limiting resource, we must ensure that any parcels that are suitable for agricultural activities are utilized for that purpose. We support measures that encourage bonafide farming and ranching practices to reach out state's food security goals, but we also want to ensure that the restrictions are feasible to a farmer and rancher to still be flexible amongst their agricultural operation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. 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
Managing Director





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March 27, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2960, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO FARMERS

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 2960, SD1, HD1, which requires that lessees and purchasers of farm lots and ranch lots use that land for farming and producing food, under certain conditions, and authorizes agricultural cooperatives to apply for farmlands.

HFB advocates for public policies and incentives that provide for viable farming and ranching activities on agricultural lands, thereby retaining agricultural lands for future generations. Lands capable of supporting viable agricultural activities should be protected and kept in agriculture for agricultural production.

We support the retention of agricultural lands in blocks of contiguous, intact, and functional land units large enough to allow **flexibility** in agricultural production and management and discourage the fragmentation of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. Lands zoned for agriculture should be used primarily for productive agricultural purposes, including family farming.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau was part of the Stakeholders Group convened by the Office of Planning in response to Act 278, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019. The stakeholder group established the following goals: 1) Keep suitable agricultural lands for agriculture; 2) Support farmers and farming; 3) Keep agricultural lands affordable for farming; 4) Enable long-term access to agricultural lands for farmers, and 5) Minimize subdivision and CPR of productive agricultural lands except for bona fide agricultural reasons.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports policies that ensure agricultural lands are used primarily for productive agricultural purposes. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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Honolulu, O'ahu

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 the intent and provides comments SB2960.**

This legislation is crucial in preserving Hawaii's agricultural lands and ensuring that they are utilized for their intended purpose. By mandating that the land be used for farming and food production, SB2960 helps to protect our valuable agricultural resources and fosters sustainable practices that benefit both farmers and consumers.

Additionally, we appreciate the provision in SB2960 that authorizes agricultural cooperatives to apply for farmlands. This will encourage collaboration among farmers and create opportunities for shared resources and knowledge. By allowing agricultural cooperatives to apply for farmlands, SB2960 promotes a sense of community and unity among farmers, which is essential for the growth and success of Hawaii's agricultural industry. Overall, SB2960 is a necessary piece of legislation that will support Hawaii farmers and ensure the continued sustainability of our agricultural lands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kaipo S.K. Kekona".