



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**  
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI  
A HO'OMĀKA'IKAI

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
DIRECTOR

**DANE K. WICKER**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804  
Web site: [dbedt.hawaii.gov](http://dbedt.hawaii.gov)

Telephone: (808) 586-2355  
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of  
**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
Director  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY**

Wednesday, February 12, 2025  
10:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 423

In consideration of  
**HB 774, HD1**  
**RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS**

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 774, HD1, which proposes the establishment of the Agribusiness Development Corporation's (ADC) Food and Product Innovation Network. This initiative is pivotal to addressing systemic challenges in Hawai'i's agricultural sector and fostering a resilient and diversified economy that benefits all residents.

**Key Benefits of the Food and Product Innovation Network**

**Value-Added Production Opportunities:**

The network will empower farmers and food entrepreneurs to transform raw agricultural products into high-value goods. Access to centralized processing, packaging, and product development facilities will enable producers to generate greater revenue, extend product shelf life and reduce waste.

**Support for Local Farmers and Entrepreneurs:**

Many of Hawai'i's small-scale farmers and entrepreneurs lack the resources to develop and commercialize new products. Shared facilities, technical assistance, and training programs will level the playing field, enabling these businesses to compete in both local and global markets.

**Enhanced Food Security and Resilience:**

By increasing local food production and processing capacity, this initiative will reduce Hawai'i's reliance on imported goods. This strengthens the state's resilience against supply chain disruptions and aligns with Hawai'i's goals for food security and sustainability.

**Economic Development and Job Creation:**

The network will drive economic growth by supporting new and existing businesses, fostering innovation, and creating jobs in agriculture, food manufacturing and related sectors. Investments in facilities and equipment will provide the infrastructure needed to support these activities.

**Alignment with Sustainability Goals:**

The network promotes sustainable practices by encouraging the use of local ingredients, reducing food waste, and supporting environmentally friendly production methods. These efforts will contribute to Hawai'i's broader climate and sustainability objectives.

**Statewide Benefits and Regional Equity**

The establishment of a statewide network ensures equitable distribution of resources and opportunities across counties, addressing the unique agricultural strengths and needs of each region. Examples include:

- O'ahu: Leverage urban infrastructure for processing and distribution.
- Maui: Support diversified agriculture and innovative value-added products.
- Hawai'i Island: Focus on livestock processing, specialty crops and rural development.
- Kaua'i: Promote niche markets such as tropical fruits and agroforestry products.

DBEDT proposes the following amendments (highlighted below) to HB 774, HD1 to align the Food and Product Innovation Network with Hawai'i's strategic agricultural goals:

1. Delete the reference to the Department of Education food and product innovation center in Kekaha, Kaua'i (SECTION 2, Subsection (b), Item (1)).
2. Amend the language to propose future facilities on ADC lands in Kekaha and to-be-determined locations on Hawai'i Island, Maui and Moloka'i.

**AMENDED BILL LANGUAGE (SECTION 2, Subsection (b), Item (1)):**

(b) Partner members of the food and product innovation network shall include:

- (1) Future facilities to be developed on lands owned by the agribusiness development corporation in Kekaha, on the island of Kauai; a to-be-determined location on Hawaii island; and additional facilities on Maui and Molokai to expand regional support and enhance statewide coverage;
- (2) The foreign-trade zone facility in Hilo, on the island of Hawaii;
- (3) The university of Hawaii Maui college food innovation center, on the island of Maui; and
- (4) The university of Hawaii Leeward community college value-added product development center in Wahiawa, on the island of Oahu.

These amendments focus on developing a network of strategically located, flexible, and scalable innovation centers that provide open-access facilities to businesses at different stages of product development.

Positioning future facilities on ADC-owned lands in Kekaha, Hawai'i Island, Maui and Moloka'i ensures greater access to value-added resources for local producers while utilizing existing infrastructure. The amendments allow the flexibility to build or expand facilities at the most suitable locations without being restricted to current infrastructure. This will help maximize the impact on Hawai'i's agricultural sector by fostering entrepreneurship, innovation and economic growth across the islands.

This bill is a forward-thinking measure that addresses critical gaps in Hawai'i's agricultural sector while creating opportunities for economic growth and resilience. By establishing the Food and Product Innovation Network, we can support small farmers and entrepreneurs, enhance food security and advance our state's sustainability goals.

DBEDT Testimony  
DBEDT 774, HD1  
Page 2 of 4

We respectfully urge the Committee to consider adopting our proposed amendments and passing this important measure and thank you for your dedication to Hawai'i's agricultural future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
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 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &  
TECHNOLOGY**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025**  
**10:00 AM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 423**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 774, HD1**  
**RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS**

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 774, HD1. This bill seeks to establish a food and product innovation network within the Agribusiness Development Corporation, enabling local businesses to scale up new products from research and development to manufacturing and commercialization. The Department of Agriculture supports this initiative.

The food and product innovation network proposed in this measure includes a range of robust facility partners on Kauai, Maui, and Oahu. The Department believes this network has the ability to significantly assist Hawai'i's agricultural businesses by offering space, equipment and specialized expertise to local farmers and other entrepreneurs for creating value-added products using locally grown and raised agricultural products. Additionally, it may serve as a catalyst for innovations in food products, processing technologies, packaging and labeling processes, inventive supply chain logistics, and new marketing channels.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**HB-774-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 3:59:56 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/12/2025 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ronald Weidenbach	Hawaii Fish Company Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i Fish Company (HFC) supports HB774 which increases value-added agriculture product development opportunities statewide to the benefit of Hawai'i's farmers, consumers, and economy.



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY  
Wednesday, February 12, 2025 — 10:00 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 774 HD 1, Relating to Value-Added Products.**

Dear Chair Illagan and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mariah Yoshizu, and I am the Government Affairs Associate 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 and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

**Ulupono supports HB 774 HD 1**, which establishes a food and product innovation network within the Agribusiness Development Corporation

Farmers can increase their profitability by creating value-added products with their off-grade produce. Off-grade produce can be perfectly edible and nutritionally sound, but might not be “good looking” enough for grocery shoppers. With off-grade produce comprising 10% to 40% of typical harvests,<sup>1</sup> this network would help enable farmers to generate revenue from currently unused crops.

We appreciate this committee’s efforts to look at policies that support local food production and the success of our farmers and ranchers in scaling up to help our state meet its agricultural and economic diversification goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Mariah Yoshizu  
Government Affairs Associate

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.salon.com/2019/09/08/study-finds-farm-level-food-waste-is-much-worse-than-we-thought\\_partner/](https://www.salon.com/2019/09/08/study-finds-farm-level-food-waste-is-much-worse-than-we-thought_partner/) and <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344919301296>



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
P: 808-533-1292 | e:  
[info@hawaiiifood.com](mailto:info@hawaiiifood.com)

#### **Executive Officers**

**Maile Miyashiro**, C&S Wholesale Grocer, *Chair*  
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**Jayson Watts**, Mahi Pono, *Secretary/Treasurer*  
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**Derek Kurisu**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Economic Development  
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: January 29, 2025  
TIME: 9:30am

RE: HB774 HD1 Relating to Value Added Products  
Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. Increasing local food production is a goal we all share. When more of the food that is consumed in Hawaii is made in Hawaii our state becomes more resilient, more sustainable, and stronger economically. State support for value added products is a key component of increasing local food production.

HFIA has proudly produced the Made in Hawaii Festival for 30 years. Each year Made in Hawaii Festival vendors find ways to add value and create a range of amazing products using locally grown fruits, vegetables, meat, flowers, wood, and more. We know there is tremendous potential for growth in this sector. Creating a Food and Product Innovation Network is the kind of support that can enable our local businesses to grow and thrive and create more Hawaii food and products for Hawaii consumers.

We encourage the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

#### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Economic Development & Technology  
Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

By

Della Teraoka

Interim Vice President for Community Colleges  
University of Hawai'i System

### HB 774 HD1 – RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 774 HD1, which establishes a “food and product innovation network” under the Agribusiness Development Corporation. This network will provide access to facilities, resources, expertise, and education to capitalize on the “Made in Hawai'i”, “Produced in Hawai'i”, or “Processed in Hawai'i” brand, which is critical to meeting the State’s agricultural and economic diversification goals.

Synergies between partner and primary network members can expand access statewide and leverage resources while avoiding unnecessary duplication in support of innovation and business development.

Critical to the success of exports and commercialization of value-added products is the establishment of facilities with the capacity to support growing businesses in scaling up production, and supporting economic diversification through offshore markets in all counties, including commodities and off-grades in each region.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 774 HD1.

**Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Development & Technology (ECD)  
Representative Greggor Ilagan, Chair  
Representative Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 10:00AM  
Conference Room 423 & Videoconference**

**RE: HB774 HD1 Relating to Value-Added Products**

Aloha e Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports House Bill 774 House Draft 1 (HB774 HD1), which establishes a public policy framework that addresses state goals related to economic diversification and appropriates funds to the Hawaii Technology and Development Corporation to implement specific programs that address these goals.

HB774 HD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

A food and product innovation network are essential to advancing Hawaii's agricultural and economic diversification. By leveraging the "made in Hawaii" brand, businesses can create high-quality products and scale production. This bill establishes a statewide network of open-access facilities, providing manufacturing equipment, industry expertise, and resources to support businesses from research and development to commercialization.

Key facilities across Kauai, Hawaii, Maui, and Oahu will offer business training, branding support, and specialized production equipment. The network will enhance exports, streamline production, ensure certification compliance, and foster entrepreneurship. The corporation will oversee operations while partner members manage their own facilities. Annual progress reports will measure industry growth. The Chamber supports this initiative as a vital investment in Hawaii's economy and agricultural sustainability.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass House Bill 774 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Hawai'i Forest Industry Association**

7192 Kalaniana'ole Hwy  
Suite A-143A, #249  
Honolulu, HI 96825  
Phone: 808/933/9411  
Email: hfia@hawaiiiforest.org

**Date:** 02/10/25

**TO:** ECD Chair Ilgan, Vice Chair Hussey and Committee Members

**FROM:** Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

**SUBJECT:** In Support of HB774 HD1 Relating to Value Added Products

Dear Chair Ilgan, Vice Chair Hussey and ECD Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), please support HB744 HD1 Relating to Value-Added Products..

Since 1989 HFIA has worked towards actualizing healthy and productive forests across the state of Hawaii and recognized Hawaii's opportunity for economic growth and diversification. We've taken much pride in encouraging our members to create products utilizing locally sourced materials. We've done this via our Hawaii's Wood Brand program which represents fine items made from wood grown in the Hawaiian Islands. The program requires participants to meet certain criteria ensuring their products are Hawaii Made and of good quality. Roughly 40% of HFIA's members are woodworkers, the vast majority of whom utilize woods sourced locally. Many HFIA woodworkers sell their finished products both locally and out of state. These sales of high quality, Hawaii Made products, to out of state buyers are a small-scale example of what HB744 HD1 could yield on a broader scale across various food and product categories.

It is also important to note that Hawaii is home to millions of acres of land zoned as Conservation Reserve. These lands hold forest resources that could be utilized for innovation and to create value-added, Hawaii Made products. Extracted resources could be replenished for future harvest and use. These lands also hold wild game that could be processed to feed local families or exported as a Hawaii Sourced product with the support of a Food and Product Innovation Network.

Ultimately, a successful Food and Product Innovation Network could yield various benefits including economic diversification and growth, job creation, business innovation and networking and resource sharing amongst entrepreneurs in the State of Hawaii. For these reasons we hope that you will support HB744 HD1

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

*Guy Cellier*

Guy Cellier, President

Hawaii Forest Industry Association

*HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 130 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.*

**HFIA Board of Directors**

Officers: President Guy Cellier, Vice President Irene Sprecher, Secretary Taylor Coons, Treasurer Wade Lee  
Directors: Jeremy Campbell, Doug Gordon, Nicholas Koch, Michael Sowards, Aileen Yeh





P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

February 12, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

**TESTIMONY ON HB 744, HD1**  
RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

Conference Room 423 & Videoconference  
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Ilagan, Vice-Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committees:

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 HB 744, HD1**, which establishes a food and product innovation network within the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

As expenses rise, increases in farm revenues and profits are critical to the continued viability of farms and ranches. Farmers can do this by "adding value" to raw agricultural crops. Currently, off-grade and excess production is sometimes wasted due to market conditions. Converting them into value-added products will increase farm revenue and provide new business opportunities, increase employment opportunities, and address Hawai'i's goals of increased self-sufficiency and sustainability.

High production costs are a major driver of narrow profit margins for Hawai'i's farmers and value-added food producers. Labor, taxes, land, transportation, utilities, and supplies are all costs of doing business that often result in value-added food producers just breaking even.

If a Hawai'i farmer or entrepreneur wants to process an off-grade product into a value-added product they are usually forced to send it to the mainland because Hawai'i lacks value-added processing facilities. This cost of transportation to and from the mainland is often enough to discourage farmers from pursuing value-added production.

Hawai'i is potentially losing millions of dollars because of the cost of processing agricultural crops into value-added products. A network of food and value-added facilities in Hawai'i will support the production of new value-added products so that farmers can

increase their income while allowing locally produced value-added goods to compete with imported products, and expand into new export markets, strengthening our local economy.

The strength of Hawai'i's economy depends upon a diversity in commerce that is resilient to economic downturns and aggressive in creating new growth opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
HUI HO'OU LU AINA MAHIAI

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY  
February 12, 2025  
10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 423 & Videoconference

HOUSE BILL NO. 774 HD1  
RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of House Bill No. 774 HD1, proposes the establishment of the Agribusiness Development Corporation's (ADC) Food and Product Innovation Network across the state of Hawai'i. This initiative represents a transformative opportunity to strengthen the state's agricultural sector, diversify the local economy, and enhance Hawai'i's food security and sustainability efforts.

**The Importance of a Food and Product Innovation Network**

Hawai'i's agricultural industry faces a range of challenges, including limited processing infrastructure, barriers to market entry, and dependence on imported goods. A statewide Food and Product Innovation Network can address these challenges by fostering collaboration, innovation, and value-added production. This network will provide essential resources and facilities that

support farmers, ranchers, and food entrepreneurs in transforming raw agricultural products into high-value goods.

### **Key Benefits of the Proposed Network**

#### **1. Value-Added Production Opportunities:**

By providing access to facilities for food processing, packaging, and product development, the network will enable farmers and producers to create value-added goods that generate higher revenue and extend the shelf life of local agricultural products.

#### **2. Support for Local Farmers and Entrepreneurs:**

Many small-scale farmers and food entrepreneurs lack the resources to develop, test, and commercialize new products. The network's shared facilities and technical assistance will level the playing field, empowering them to compete in local and global markets.

#### **3. Enhanced Food Security and Resilience:**

Expanding local food production and processing capacity will reduce Hawai'i's reliance on imported goods, increasing the state's resilience to supply chain disruptions and advancing its food security goals.

#### **4. Economic Development and Job Creation:**

The network will spur economic growth by supporting new and existing businesses, fostering innovation, and creating jobs in agriculture, manufacturing, and related sectors.



## 5. Sustainability and Climate Goals:

The network can encourage sustainable practices by promoting the use of local ingredients, reducing food waste, and supporting environmentally friendly production methods.

### Statewide Benefits and Regional Equity

The establishment of a Food and Product Innovation Network across Hawai'i ensures that resources are distributed equitably among counties, allowing for regional specialization and addressing the unique agricultural strengths and needs of each area.

- **O'ahu:** Leveraging urban markets and infrastructure for processing and distribution.
- **Maui:** Supporting diversified agriculture and innovative value-added products.
- **Hawai'i Island:** Focusing on livestock processing, specialty crops, and rural development.
- **Kaua'i:** Promoting niche markets, such as tropical fruits and agroforestry products.

### Recommendations for Implementation

To ensure the network's success, I recommend the following:

- **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Engage farmers, producers, academic institutions, and community organizations in the planning

and implementation process to ensure that the network meets local needs.

- **Streamlined Access:** Simplify application processes and provide technical assistance to ensure equitable access to facilities and resources, particularly for small-scale producers and underserved communities.
- **Focus on Education and Training:** Include programs that provide hands-on training in food safety, product development, and marketing to equip producers with the skills needed for success.
- **Sustainability Metrics:** Incorporate metrics to evaluate the network's impact on food security, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

House Bill 774 represents a bold and necessary step toward strengthening Hawai'i's agricultural economy and ensuring the long-term viability of local food production. By establishing the Agribusiness Development Corporation's Food and Product Innovation Network, we can empower farmers and producers, foster innovation, and build a more resilient and sustainable food system for the state.

I respectfully urge you to support this measure and prioritize its passage. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and for your commitment to advancing Hawai'i's agricultural future. 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.





# MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 423  
Wednesday, February 12, 2025 AT 10:00 A.M.

To The Honorable Greggor Ilagan, Chair  
The Honorable Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Technology

## SUPPORT HB774 HD1 RELATING TO RESILIENCY

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS HB774 HD1** which establishes a Food and Product Innovation Network within the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) to support Hawaii's agricultural and economic diversification goals.

The Chamber recognizes that the creation of a food and product innovation network is essential to achieving the state's agricultural and economic diversification objectives. This network will enable businesses in Hawai'i to capitalize on the global appeal of the "Made in Hawai'i," "Produced in Hawai'i," or "Processed in Hawai'i" brand. It will also facilitate the creation of world-class products and increase production capacity by providing businesses with access to a wide range of manufacturing equipment and industry expertise.

We wholeheartedly support initiatives that promote our local businesses and farmers.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT HB774 HD1** and respectfully request its passage.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.