

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

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  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

10:01pm

State Capitol, Conference Room #211

In consideration of  
**HB 778, HD 2**  
**RELATING TO INTEGRATED LAND USE**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) **supports HB 778, HD 2** that requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to conduct an integrated land use study for the use of lands within the agricultural districts and submit interim and final reports to the Legislature.

Hawai'i's 4 million acres are under immense pressure as affordable housing, renewable energy, and agriculture compete for space. With 22 statutorily mandated sustainability, climate, and housing goals, strategic planning is essential to prevent conflicts and ensure responsible land use. A comprehensive, data-driven study is critical to assess current land use, address competing land use demands, and align development with Hawai'i's statutory commitments.

DBEDT is leading an integrated land use study, supported by OPSD, HSEO, ADC, HHFDC, and CTAHR. However, with only one employee, the OPSD Statewide Sustainability Branch requires additional staff and resources provided in this bill to ensure timely progress.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



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)

April 2, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 778, HD2**  
RELATING TO INTEGRATED LAND USE

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
10:01 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 HB 778, HD2**, which requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to conduct an integrated land use study for agricultural districts and submit interim and final reports to the Legislature. A comprehensive and data-driven approach to land use planning is necessary to balance competing priorities while ensuring that agriculture remains a viable and protected industry in Hawai'i.

The amendments made in HB 778, HD2, strengthen the bill by clearly defining and prioritizing the protection of productive agricultural lands and ensuring direct input from the agricultural community. These provisions are crucial, as agricultural lands have long been subject to increasing pressures from non-agricultural uses, including affordable housing, renewable energy projects, and waste management facilities. While we recognize the importance of these developments, they must not come at the expense of productive agricultural lands that are essential for local food production and economic sustainability.

Hawai'i's agricultural landscape has evolved beyond traditional soil classification as the sole factor in determining land suitability for farming. Modern agricultural practices, including greenhouses, hydroponics, aquaculture, and aquaponics, allow for successful production across all land classifications. Some of the state's most productive floriculture and hydroponic operations thrive on lands classified as C, D, and E. Factors such as rainfall patterns, temperature variations, wind conditions, and humidity levels all play a significant role in determining the viability of different crops in a given area. In many cases, soil type and terrain are not the primary determinants of whether farming can succeed.

Any land use study must account for these advancements and environmental considerations when evaluating the future of agriculture in Hawai‘i.

To ensure that the study is effective, we emphasize the importance of:

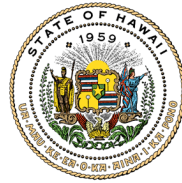
- Clearly defining and prioritizing the protection of productive agricultural lands to prevent further encroachment from non-agricultural developments.
- Including direct input from the agricultural community to ensure the study reflects the realities and needs of farmers and ranchers.
- Ensuring that agricultural lands designated for agricultural production are not compromised for short-term development needs.

Preserving and supporting agriculture is vital for Hawai‘i’s food security, economic sustainability, and cultural heritage. We encourage the committee to advance HB 778, HD2, with careful consideration for maintaining a strong agricultural sector.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

**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 SENATE COMMITTEES ON WAYS AND MEANS**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2025**  
**10:01 AM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 229**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 778, HOUSE DRAFT 2**  
**RELATING TO INTEGRATED LAND USE.**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 778, House Draft 2 that requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to conduct an Integrated Land Use Study the purpose of which is to develop land use data that can be used for planning and decision making for competing uses of lands within agricultural districts. The Study will determine the land use feasibility and needs of lands within agricultural districts to meet the State's climate, sustainability, and housing statutory targets. (page 2, line 19 to page 3, line 4). The Department of Agriculture (Department) supports the intent and offers comments.

Having a comprehensive data-driven approach to land use planning is necessary to ensure equitable outcomes and to ensure protection of Hawaiian agriculture and that new and existing agricultural operations remain viable well into the future.

The Study is to incorporate the recommendations of plans, studies, and statutes for high-profile uses and activities (Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan, state land use review of district, Hawaii sea level rise vulnerability and adaptation report, State's climate, sustainability, and housing targets). The direct and indirect impacts of utility-scaled solar energy facilities located on Hawaii's good quality agricultural land must be fully accounted for in the proposed Study. The Study must also ensure that those who wish to continue their existing farm businesses or start agricultural operations on



agricultural lands throughout the State are not impeded by non-agricultural uses and activities. Preserving and protection of agriculture operations and lands is vital to reach food production goals and to achieve higher levels of food sustainability.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.



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

**HB778 HD2**  
RELATING TO INTEGRATED LAND USE

Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 10:01 AM  
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB778 HD2** which requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to conduct an integrated land use study for the use of lands within the agricultural districts and submit interim and final reports to the Legislature.

As land is a limiting factor in Hawaii, there will always be competing land uses for the 4 million acres in the state. While the State makes goals to increase local food production, agricultural lands are constantly at threat of being converted into other uses. A strategic and comprehensive overview of the needs and opportunities that exist is crucial to moving forward in a way that ensures we meet the needs of the community. This integrated land use study proposes developing land use data and determining the feasibility of our ability to meet the State's goals. We appreciate that the agricultural community will be included with direct input, as this is crucial to meeting food production needs.

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  
Managing Director



**HB-778-HD-2**

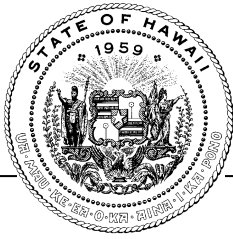
Submitted on: 3/31/2025 5:40:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/2/2025 10:01:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support



**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF PLANNING  
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846  
Fax: (808) 587-2824  
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS, Director**  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**  
Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 10:01 am  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211  
in consideration of  
**HB 778, HD2**  
**RELATING TO INTEGRATED LAND USE.**

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

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **strongly supports** HB 778, HD2 which mandates an integrated land use study for Hawai'i's agricultural districts to address the urgent challenges of competing land uses.

With only 4 million acres of total land, Hawai'i faces immense pressure as affordable housing, renewable energy, and agriculture compete for limited space within the 1.9 million acres of Hawai'i's Agricultural District. Additionally, the State of Hawai'i has statutorily mandated the following 21 sustainability, climate, and affordable housing targets:

Target Year	Statutory Mandate	Legal Reference
2025	<b>Farm-to-State Target</b> – DOE, DOH, PSD, DOD, and UH must purchase <b>10%</b> of total food from local agricultural/processed food sources.	HRS §27-8
2026	<b>Affordable Rental Housing Target</b> – The state must develop or facilitate <b>22,500 affordable rental housing units</b> for occupancy between 2017-2026.	Act 127, SLH 2016
2030	<b>Farm-to-State Target</b> – DOE, DOH, PSD, DOD, and UH must purchase <b>18%</b> of total food from local agricultural/processed food sources.	HRS §27-8
2030	<b>Farm-to-School Target</b> – <b>30%</b> of food served in public schools must be locally sourced	HRS §302A-405.6
2030	<b>Doubling Local Food Target</b> – <b>Double local food production</b> and increase local food exports.	Act 151, SLH 2019
2030	<b>Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standards (EEPS) Target</b> – <b>Reduction of 4,300 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity use statewide.</b>	HRS §269-96
2030	<b>Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) Target</b> – <b>40%</b> of electricity generation must come from renewable sources	HRS §269-92
2030	<b>Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission Limit</b> – Reduce statewide GHG emissions to <b>50% below 2005 levels.</b>	HRS §225P-5 (Act 238, SLH 2022)
2030	<b>State Fleet ZEV Transition</b> – <b>All light-duty passenger vehicles</b> in the state fleet must be zero-emission.	Act 74, SLH 2021 (HRS § 225P-7, 264-20.7, and §196-9(c)(11))



<b>2035</b>	<b>DOE Net-Zero Energy Target</b> – All Public schools must generate as much renewable energy as they consume.	HRS §302A-1510
<b>2035</b>	<b>UH Net-Zero Energy Target</b> – All University of Hawai'i campuses must generate as much renewable energy as they consume	HRS §304A-119
<b>2035</b>	<b>State Fleet ZEV Transition</b> – All light-duty <b>motor vehicles</b> in the state fleet must be zero-emission vehicles.	Act 74, SLH 2021 (HRS § 225P-7, 264-20.7, and §196-9(c)(11))
<b>2035</b>	<b>Farm-to-State Target</b> – DOE, DOH, PSD, DOD, and UH must purchase <b>26%</b> of total food from local agricultural/processed food sources.	HRS §27-8
<b>2040</b>	<b>Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) Target</b> – <b>70%</b> of electricity generation must come from renewable sources.	HRS §269-92
<b>2040</b>	<b>Farm-to-State Target</b> – DOE, DOH, PSD, DOD, and UH must purchase <b>34%</b> of total food from local agricultural/processed food sources.	HRS §27-8
<b>2045</b>	<b>Reclaimed Water in State and County Facilities</b> – <b>100%</b> use of reclaimed water except for potable/drinkable uses.	HRS §174C-31(g)(6)
<b>2045</b>	<b>Zero Emissions Clean Economy Target</b> – The state must sequester more carbon than it emits.	HRS §225P-5
<b>2045</b>	<b>Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) Target</b> – <b>100%</b> of electricity generation must come from renewable sources.	HRS §269-92
<b>2045</b>	<b>Farm-to-State Target</b> – DOE, DOH, PSD, DOD, and UH must purchase <b>42%</b> of total food from local agricultural/processed food sources.	HRS §27-8
<b>2050</b>	<b>Statewide Cesspool Conversion</b> – All cesspools must be upgraded, converted, or connected to sewage systems.	HRS §342D-72
<b>2050</b>	<b>Farm-to-State Target</b> – DOE, DOH, PSD, DOD, and UH must purchase <b>50%</b> of total food from local agricultural/processed food sources.	HRS §27-8

Without strategic planning, the State risks not fulfilling these multiple climate, sustainability, and affordable housing mandates. A comprehensive, data-driven study is critical to assess current land use, identify conflicts, and develop balanced solutions to ensure land use planning reflects Hawai'i's statutory and policy commitments.

Currently, DBEDT and OPSD are conducting a pilot study for the island of O‘ahu, with the support of ADC, HSEO, HHFDC, and CTAHR’s available data, but additional staffing and resources to OPSD are needed to expand this effort in a more timely manner, statewide.

Passing HB 778, HD 2 will provide essential staff and financial support to continue this critical work.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



#### Officers

Kaipo Kekona  
State President

Anabella Bruch  
Vice-President

Maureen Datta  
Secretary

Reba Lopez  
Treasurer

#### Chapter Presidents

Clarence Baber  
Kohala, Hawaii

Tony Vera  
East Hawaii

Puna, Hawaii

Andrea Drayer  
Ka'u, Hawaii

Maureen Datta  
Kona, Hawaii

Fawn Helekahi-Burns  
Hana, Maui

Mason Scharer  
Haleakala, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros  
Mauna Kahalawai,  
Maui

Kaipo Kekona  
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy  
Molokai

Negus Manna  
Lana'i

India Clark  
North Shore, Oahu

Christian Zuckerman  
Wai'anae, Oahu

Ted Radovich  
Waimanalo, Oahu

Vincent Kimura  
Honolulu, Oahu

Natalie Urminska  
Kauai

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means 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. **HFU supports HB778.**

HB778 HD2 takes an important step in integrating land use planning to address climate adaptation, sustainability, and long-term community needs. While the intent to assess competing land demands is laudable, several areas require strengthening to ensure that agricultural sustainability, food resilience, and farmer voices are not only included but prioritized. Our key Concerns and Recommendations are to address:

Agricultural Land Preservation and Sustainable Food Production The proposed study should explicitly incorporate a goal of preventing the conversion of high-quality agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. Insert a new paragraph directly after Section 2(f), renumbering the existing subsequent sections accordingly.

(g) Include in the integrated land use study an evaluation of the impacts of land use decisions on long-term agricultural viability, food security, and soil health. The study shall prioritize the preservation and sustainable use of high-quality agricultural lands for food production and shall incorporate strategies to prevent the conversion of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, except where no feasible alternatives exist.

Direct Inclusion of Farmers and Agricultural Stakeholders Section 2(f) should be amended to require formal inclusion of representatives from Hawaii's farming community—specifically family farmers, producer networks, and agricultural cooperatives. These stakeholders possess essential, place-based knowledge about land suitability, productivity, and local food systems.

Proposed Amendment to Section 2(f):

Develop data-based estimates on the amount of land required to meet the competing uses of lands within the agricultural districts by compiling and analyzing existing data from various government entities, including the department of agriculture, with direct input from producer groups.

A sustainable land use framework must protect the long-term food security of Hawaii residents alongside climate mitigation strategies. By adopting these refinements, HB778 can more effectively support a resilient, farmer-centered land use strategy that advances climate adaptation, economic equity, and food self-sufficiency.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Farmers Union