



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 242, RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT AND ON
TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS

DATE: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 **TIME:** 1:01 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 224

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Kelcie K. Nagata or Christopher J.I. Leong, Deputy Attorneys
General

Chairs Gabbard and Lee and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

The stated purpose of this bill is to ensure that Hawaii's agricultural land remains available and accessible to local farmers and agricultural enterprises by limiting foreign ownership of agricultural land and establishing transparency requirements. It prohibits any entity that is not incorporated or organized to do business in the United States from holding any real property interest in agricultural lands over a certain acreage. The bill carves out four exceptions to the prohibitions: (1) interests in land conveyed by inheritance; (2) land used for non-agricultural purposes, as approved by the Department of Agriculture; (3) leaseholds of five years or less for non-controlling interests in agricultural land; and (4) any interest in land held by a foreign entity before July 1, 2025.

The bill further provides that any foreign entity with any interest in agricultural land must file an annual report to the Department of Agriculture. Any foreign entity that fails to comply with the chapter or fails to report to the Department of Agriculture will be subject to civil penalties and fines. Moreover, in this bill, any land transaction that is completed in violation of this new chapter shall be deemed void and the possession of land will revert back to the transferor or the Department of the Attorney General.

The Department has serious concerns regarding the constitutionality and legality of this bill and the potential for this bill, as written, to subject the State to litigation and to cause the State to incur substantial monetary liability. Among other things, the Department has concerns grounded in the Commerce Clause, article I, section 8, clause 3 of the United States Constitution. Under the Commerce Clause, only Congress has the authority to regulate commerce with foreign countries and to regulate interstate commerce. Relatedly, the federal government has exclusive authority over foreign relations. Because this bill prevents foreign corporations from having any property interest in Hawaii's agricultural lands, it appears to intrude on the federal government's authority to control the foreign relations of the United States.

Further, this bill may be preempted by the federal government via the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act (FIRRMA). FIRRMA is one of the statutes that governs the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS). Briefly, FIRRMA gives CFIUS the power to review and potentially intervene in a transaction to address concerns with foreign entities, including land purchases. Article VII, Clause 2, of the U.S. Constitution is commonly referred to as the Supremacy Clause and establishes that federal law take precedence over state laws and constitutions. Because FIRRMA and CFIUS have already regulated transactions with foreign entities, this bill, should it become law, may be preempted.

Section -4(c), on page 5, lines 1-5, which provides that transactions will be voided and ownership will revert to the transferor or the State, may also run afoul of the Due Process clauses of the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution and article I, section 5 of the Hawaii State Constitution. In general, due process requires notice and an opportunity to be heard before the government deprives a person of property or liberty. *Brown v. Thompson*, 91 Hawai'i 1, 10, 979 P.2d 586, 595 (1999) (adequate notice must inform the affected parties of the action to be taken against them and procedures available for challenging that action). Here, with an immediate voiding of the transaction, there is no opportunity for the the parties of the transaction to challenge any actions taken against them. And, also, there is no procedure for the funds used in the transaction to automatically "revert" back to the transferor.

Finally, the reference to the Department of the Attorney General in section -4(c) should be deleted because the Department of the Attorney General is not a party to agricultural land transactions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
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WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
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TO: Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbet M. "Tim" Richards III, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture and Environment

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
Rogerene Arce, Director of Agriculture

DATE: February 1, 2025

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB242, RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The act prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land. Limits the lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities. Requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture. Appropriates funds.

We **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. This bill aims to address one of the biggest issues within our agriculture industry in Hawai'i, which is foreign land ownership. With over 17% of Hawai'i agricultural lands being owned by foreign entities, this restricts access to land to many of our local farmers, ranchers, and food producers.
2. Many of these foreign entities are purchasing our agriculture lands for investment purposes, with many of them not practicing ag or any form of sustainable ag, and overall contributing to the continued food insecurities we face in Hawai'i. Foreign entities should not be allowed to own to lease lands in Hawai'i.

3. Industrial agriculture practiced by foreign entities and multinational corporations are also destroying our 'āina with potentially harmful pesticides if used incorrectly, and most are diverting water from traditional agricultural systems, taking a limited resource and putting additional strain and burden on our communities.

Mahalo for your consideration.



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Kaua'i

Aloha Chairs Lee & Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye & Richards, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawai'i 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 SB242.**

Farmland and market consolidation—whether by foreign or domestic entities—can adversely affect local farmers by limiting access to land, driving up prices, and reducing market competition. This testimony is thus driven by economic considerations—specifically, the need to preserve fair market conditions and ensure local farmers can access affordable land. Our position is rooted in ensuring equitable access and competition in the market, irrespective of an investor's nationality or origin.

Hawai'i's agricultural land is a vital resource that underpins our local food systems, cultural practices, and rural economies. Farmers throughout our islands face significant challenges in accessing and affording the land they need to maintain or expand their operations. According to USDA data, Hawai'i has the second-highest percentage of foreign-held agricultural land in the nation, reaching 17.1% of privately held agricultural land in 2023—an increase of over 71,000 acres in just one year.

While foreign ownership accounts for these holdings, consolidation in general raises questions about the long-term security of our local agricultural sector. The rush on agricultural land for energy development, also found in recent foreign ownership data, has only added to these issues. Hawaii's farmers, ranchers, and communities have expressed concerns that expanding foreign or large corporate ownership can further exacerbate the ongoing challenges they already face, including high operating costs and limited market power.

Background

Under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978 (AFIDA), any foreign person acquiring or transferring an interest (other than a security interest) in U.S. agricultural land must report the transaction to the USDA within 90 days. This data is tracked by USDA and reported annually to Congress. Recent appropriations have directed the USDA to broaden public access to data on foreign holdings of U.S. agricultural land—including crop, grazing, and forest land. Additionally, the FY2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act requires USDA to report on how foreign investments in agricultural land affect family farms, rural communities, and the domestic food supply.

State-Level Restrictions & Hawaii Data

Approximately twenty-five states have enacted laws that forbid or limit nonresident aliens, foreign business entities, or foreign governments from acquiring or owning interests in private agricultural land. The National Conference of State Legislatures

(NCSL) has also engaged with the issue, highlighting the agricultural impacts of foreign land ownership. Proposed legislation [SB2617 \(2024\)](#) here in Hawaii aimed to direct a study on foreign ownership of agricultural land.

As stated above, in 2023 the foreign-held acreage in Hawaii increased by 71,049 acres to a total of 278,741 acres, representing 17.1% of the state's privately held agricultural land. This includes 88,758 acres of cropland, 81,245 acres of pasture, and 101,711 acres categorized as "other ag," with additional areas in forestry and non-agricultural uses. The land is spread across 138 parcels, with 76 parcels (55%) in Hawaii County (covering 159,221 acres) and 48 (34%) in Maui County (covering 110,430 acres). No holdings were reported in the Counties of Honolulu or Kauai.

Scale & Economic Concerns

Small land acquisitions or holdings in Hawaii, when combined with active participation in the state's agricultural economy, can benefit the sector overall by strengthening both the marketplace for agricultural services and contributing to the market for agricultural goods. However, when the scales of investment, regardless of origin, signal interest in dominating the local marketplace, such concentrated ownership risks undermining local control, stifling competition, and ultimately jeopardizing the diversity and sustainability of Hawaii's agricultural ecosystem.

Additionally, when large investors—foreign or domestic—acquire substantial tracts of land, property values often rise beyond the reach of local farmers. This phenomenon has been documented in multiple regions of the U.S. and globally, where farmland prices spike as private equity, foreign investment funds, or transnational agribusinesses enter the market.

In states like Iowa and Missouri, multi-national agribusiness purchases have contributed to rapid increases in farmland values. When corporations or investment groups consolidate landholdings, local farmers—often operating on thin margins—find it even more challenging to expand, transition, or start new operations.

Market Power and Reduced Competition

In agriculture, large-scale ownership and operation can lead to vertical and horizontal consolidation. A single entity may control not only farmland but also processing facilities, distribution channels, and retail outlets, thereby squeezing out smaller producers and reducing competition.

By example, In the contiguous United States, four major firms control a significant portion of meat processing. This concentration has been associated with reduced bargaining power for independent ranchers and can impact how much farmers are paid for their products. A comparable effect in Hawai'i could see farmgate prices suppressed or contract terms tilted unfavorably against our local producers.

Community and Food Security Implications

Local ownership of farmland helps ensure that a greater share of the economic benefits of agriculture remain in the community, supporting jobs, value-added businesses, and the local tax base. When farmland is controlled by large, absentee, or foreign entities, there is a risk that decisions about land use (e.g., cropping choices, labor practices, water management) are driven by global market forces rather than local needs. This can undermine Hawai'i's efforts to increase food self-sufficiency and

resilience.

Relevance to Hawai'i and the Need for Action

Hawai'i already faces high land costs, finite acreage, and unique environmental and logistical challenges. The 2023 data showing 17.1% of agricultural land in Hawai'i under foreign ownership is cause for economic reflection: If unchecked, further consolidation—regardless of the nationality of the investor—could undermine our long-term goals for local food production, community-based agriculture, and the viability of small-scale and mid-sized farms.

SB242 proactively addresses these concerns by:

- Establishing acreage limits on foreign-held farmland;
- Restricting lease terms to prevent long-term ownership transfers that could displace local enterprises;
- Requiring annual reporting to ensure transparency and public awareness of changes in land ownership and use.

Conclusion

It is critical to underscore that the Hawai'i Farmers Union supports this legislation *from an economic standpoint*. Our aim is to safeguard opportunities for local producers and to promote the economic vibrancy of Hawai'i's rural communities. Similar measures exist in approximately 25 other states, which limit foreign ownership of agricultural land to prevent undue market influence and to preserve farmland for local producers.

For Hawai'i's agriculture to thrive, we must ensure that farmland remains accessible and affordable to the next generation of local farmers. Unfettered consolidation—by any large corporate or foreign entity—risks marginalizing small and mid-sized producers, driving up land costs, and eroding local market conditions. SB242 provides a balanced framework to safeguard the public interest, enhance transparency, and maintain the economic resilience of our food systems.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union



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Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*

Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Transportation Culture and the Arts and Committee on Agriculture and Environment

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 5, 2025

TIME: 1:01pm

RE: SB242 Relating to Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land

Position: Comments

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 believes that this measure would lead to less agricultural land in the state being under active cultivation, and unnecessarily reduce production of local food.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

SB242
RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 1:01PM
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye and Richards, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB242** which prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land, limits the lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities, and requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture.

Access to land is one of the top impediments to agricultural operations. Supporting local farmers and ranchers will help to strengthen our agricultural system. We would like to respectfully request that since this bill mandates that the Department of Agriculture take on these duties, that enough funding is also provided so that this effort does not take away resources from other programs that help ag producers.

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





Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment /

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB242

Wednesday, February 5th, 2025 1 p.m. Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Lee and Members of the Committee,

HAPA supports SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawaii's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawaii to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have enacted restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands.

Please support SB242. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', with a stylized, cursive script.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 11:07:14 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Goeggel	Testifying for Animal Rights Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support!

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 7:48:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Fox	Testifying for Malama Kaua'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We must retain control of our own food systems. It is of the best interest of every single resident in the state. Local producers are struggling to gain access to affordable lands, while foreign interests drive up the prices. Please make this a practice of the past and do not allow it to continue.



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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 5, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND THE CULTURE AND THE ARTS

TESTIMONY ON SB 242
RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice-Chairs Richards and Inouye, 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 respectfully opposes SB 242, which seeks to restrict foreign ownership of agricultural land and impose additional reporting and leasing limitations.

While we share the legislature's commitment to ensuring that agricultural land remains available for local farmers and food production, this bill raises significant concerns about its potential unintended consequences, particularly regarding investment, land availability, and the viability of Hawai'i's agriculture industry.

Farming operations in Hawai'i require substantial capital investment, often secured through private investors, joint ventures, and partnerships—some of which include foreign entities. Restricting foreign investment may discourage much-needed agricultural development, particularly in areas requiring infrastructure improvements, irrigation systems, and sustainable land use practices. This bill could deter partnerships that are beneficial to local farmers, particularly those seeking financial backing to expand operations or transition to more sustainable farming methods.

Many farmers rely on long-term lease agreements with various landowners, some of whom may be considered "foreign entities" under this measure. By limiting lease terms to five years, SB 242 could introduce significant instability for farmers who depend on secure, long-term leases to justify investment in soil improvement, irrigation, and equipment.

If foreign landowners divest due to these restrictions, it could reduce the availability of agricultural land, leading to higher costs and fewer opportunities for farmers.

The bill requires annual reporting by foreign entities with ownership or leasehold interests in agricultural land, creating additional administrative burdens. The proposed public registry of foreign-owned agricultural lands may complicate land transactions, making it more difficult to buy, sell, or lease farmland efficiently. The fines and penalties for non-compliance may lead to unintended consequences, such as land being taken out of agricultural production if ownership disputes arise.

Some of Hawai'i's largest landowners may have international stakeholders, including corporations and trusts that lease land to local farmers. If restrictions force these entities to sell land or withdraw from Hawai'i, it may shrink the pool of available farmland—further exacerbating access challenges for farmers.

Rather than protecting agriculture, SB 242 may lead to land speculation, development pressures, and even increased fallow land if owners are unable to sell or lease under the new restrictions.

HFB supports efforts to preserve agricultural land for active farming and to enhance food security in Hawai'i. However, we believe SB 242 may have unintended consequences that harm the very farmers it aims to protect.

We urge the committee to consider alternative approaches, such as incentivizing local ownership rather than imposing strict prohibitions that may negatively impact agricultural investments and land access.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our input on this measure.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 11:15:29 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gene Harrington	Testifying for Biotechnology Innovation Organization	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

According to USDA's latest AFIDA report, 45.85 million acres of U.S. agricultural land were held by foreign investors in 2023, which represents 3.61% of total privately held agricultural land in the United States. Trends also reveal that a 1.58-million-acre increase in these lands was driven primarily by investments linked to renewable energy projects specifically for Hawaii. We oppose SB 242 and encourage lawmakers to seek out sustainable solutions for the many existing and costly barriers to farmers such as access to affordable land, water, labor, housing, transportation and permitting.

Hawaii has served as home for our biotechnology seed partners who lease and own land to grow research crops due to the state's favorable year-round climate and strong regulatory environment of the USDA and State Department of Agriculture. These seeds are an important tool to help farmers improve productivity and reduce costly pesticides and other inputs such as water and fertilizers. Our seed partners also make their lands - both lease and owned - available to small farmers to grow complimentary crops. They have financially supported the purchase of the Kunia Ag Park so that the Hawaii Ag Foundation could make land more affordable and available for lease by small farmers. So while these foreign companies may own and/or lease these lands, their important work contributes to the long term viability of agriculture in Hawaii.

We respectfully request that the committee hold SB 242.



February 5, 2025

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair

Senate Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

RE: Senate Bill 242, Relating to Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land

HEARING: Wednesday, February 5, 2025, at 1:01 p.m.

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Joint Committees:

My name is Lyndsey Garcia, Director of Advocacy, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawaii and its over 10,000 members. HAR **opposes** Senate Bill 242, which prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land. Limits the lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities. Requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture. Appropriates funds.

Hawaii's Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in all real estate transactions based on race; sex, including gender identity or expression; sexual orientation; color; religion; marital status; familial status; ancestry; disability; age; or human immunodeficiency virus infection. Restricting foreign ownership of agricultural lands may put real estate professionals in the difficult position of having to inquire about national origin or citizenship (race or ancestry) which could raise serious legal concerns for real estate professionals.

Additionally, partnerships with foreign entities can provide critical investment in infrastructure and land, benefiting small and mid-sized farms in Hawaii. Such collaborations support agricultural sustainability, economic growth, and food security for our State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

SB242 – In Opposition Relating to Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land

Senate Committees on Agriculture & Environment and Transportation & Culture & The Arts

Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Time: 1:01 PM

Place: Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Lee, and Members of the Joint Committees:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in opposition to SB242**, which prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land. It also limits the lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities and requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture.

Hawaii plays a critical role in agricultural research and development. Our tropical climate and agricultural infrastructure encourage both national and international entities to look at Hawaii as a prime location to conduct research for fruits and vegetables, seed crops, floral, and other types of crops. Hawaii should continue to be an international hub for agriculture research and development because it creates economic benefits to our local economy and small farming sectors.

HCIA is concerned about this bill's unintended consequences that could reverse Hawaii's economic growth since agriculture has been a steady business sector for many years. Our state should be focusing on getting more new farmers onto land, encouraging existing farmers to increase production, and increasing market development worldwide. Hawaii can be a mecca for both local production and the hub for international research and development. There are a lot of positive initiatives and programs to help local agriculture production and we should support those to further diversify Hawaii's economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices, and build a healthy economy.

SB-242

Submitted on: 1/31/2025 7:44:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Bence	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and Committee members,

As a generational farmer from Kula it is impossible to compete with multinational foreign owned corporations who often buy land for an average of just \$6 to \$8,000 an acre while locals can't afford to own enough land to compete even if we are blessed. Foreign companies like PSP from Canada often also pay far less for water. In the case of foreign ownership by giant chemical companies that have been fined for knowingly dumping pesticides like Bayer-Monsanto, they currently still don't even pay GET. The majority of money goes off island. Often the food and almost always the seeds go off island, a lot of the jobs are also not employing local people. This bill should go even further because if the ownership of these large important agricultural lands remains in the state the local farmers will contribute to our islands food security, economy, environment and the local people will be more productive at fulfilling the state motto. Please pass a total ban on foreign ownership of at least agricultural land in Hawai'i.

Mahalo

Robert Lawrence Bence

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 11:21:06 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline S. Ambrose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

YES to -

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 12:48:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suellen Barton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Best to keep it local - already seeing the water being hogged by Mhi Pono, Canadian company

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 12:26:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keila Paahana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 2:08:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roger Walraven	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB 242 to establish a safe and fair environment for all of Hawaii's citizens including those farmers who have not had a fair share of the economic market. Don't allow foreign companies to outsource our food supply from Hawaii. Let's help the people of Hawaii grow, build and prosper from the products of our lands. Keep foreign and domestic corporations out of the equation.
mahalo

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 2:48:48 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aviva Libitsky	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Mahalo ,

Aviva Libitsky

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 12:26:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamara Luthy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 1:34:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexandra Perez Urbina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Alexandra Perez Urbina, and I am not a resident of Hawai'i, but I am a frequent visitor and love the people and the land. For this reason I ask you to please support SB242.

There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place.

This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242; Hawai'i is a beautiful and sacred place that *must* be protected.

Thank you,

Alexandra

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 12:44:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*Aloha:**Please support SB242.*

There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands.

This issue is of particular importance on Maui, where the Canadian Pension Fund Canadian Public Sector Pension Investment Board (PSP) is the island's largest private landowner through Mahi Pono-- and is now seeking to control East Maui water leases.

For clarification, Mahi Pono Holdings, LLC’s sole member is Canadian pension fund PSP, both of which are registered as foreign entities in Hawai‘i. PSP is a Crown Corporation with \$265 billion in assets that invests the pension funds of the Canadian Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the federal public service, and the Reserve Force.

Many of those workers are represented by the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) union, which has more than 200,000 members. James Infantino, the National Pension Officer for PSAC, spoke at the September 2024 East Maui Water Authority meeting and gave a very clear message to Water Authority members and the community: “Don’t let PSP investments anywhere near this long-term lease.”

The basis for his message was PSP Investment’s well-known record of international water grabs exploitation of water resources and local communities, which PSAC – representing PSP beneficiaries -- does not support.

This is just one example of why we need to ensure that Hawai‘i’s lands are protected from foreign interests.

For Hawai‘i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB245.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Shay Chan Hodges, Haiku, Maui

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 1:07:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 3:02:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Janik	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

For Hawai‘i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place.

Richhard Janik, MD

Lihue, Kauai

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 7:06:34 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT this common sense Bill to limit foreign ownership of our land in Hawaii. I urge all members of the Committee to **VOTE YES** on this Bill.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 6:54:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emelia Briscoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 6:38:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This makes it harder for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands.

Please support SB242. Mahalo.

Kathy Shimata

Honolulu. 96822

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 6:55:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa M Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 242 RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 5:15:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nalani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e,

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

mahalo,

Nalani A. From Lahaina

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 4:09:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242. Mahalo.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 3:02:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this very important bill - there is increasing concern about the ownership of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers!

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 10:20:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Stayton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

I am writing to ask you to please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Susan, Lawai, Kauai

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/1/2025 10:59:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
emily gambino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Mahalo,

Emily Gambino

Makawao

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 9:12:37 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Shaver	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I urge you to support SB242. The increasing acquisition of Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations is making it harder for local farmers to access affordable land, creating an uneven playing field that threatens our food security and agricultural sustainability.

For Hawai‘i to truly move toward greater food self-sufficiency, we must prioritize land access for local producers and Native Hawaiian practitioners with deep ancestral ties to place. This bill is a critical step in ensuring that agricultural lands remain in the hands of those who are committed to feeding our communities and stewarding the land for future generations.

Twenty-five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands—Hawai‘i should do the same to protect our local farmers and our food system. Please pass SB242 to help secure a future where Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands remain accessible to those who call this place home.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:29:15 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Barker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Committee Members,

I am writing to respectfully ask that you support SB242 which prohibits foreign ownership of agricultural land.

There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai‘i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 9:33:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kodie Solis-Kalani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I support SB242. 6 years ago, I had the opportunity to steward aina. Something I never dreamed of being able to do, as a young kanaka without the means to be able to purchase or lease aina. It took many years to learn how to cultivate this place and now it has begin to fruit and feed my community. This experience should not be rare for those of us who live and want to cultivate our lands. In order for Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. 25 states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of ag lands. The food of this place should be able to feed the people of this place. Mahalo.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:31:42 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Dillon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chairs and Members of the AEN and TCA Committees.

I support this bill and urge you to do the same. We need to keep the ownership and management of our agricultural lands in the hands of American citizens and not in the hands of foreign entities. Please vote for this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joy Dillon, Hilo resident

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 1:11:09 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kimdonghyeon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 4:30:56 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Irena Bliss	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

Please support SB242.

There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai‘i to move towards increased food security, we should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands.

Please support SB242. It is vital to continue to live the values of Aloha ‘Āina, Mālama ‘Āina and make decisions that support the well-being of present and future generations on island.

Mahalo nui for your consideration and support.

Irena Bliss

Ha‘ikū, Maui 96708

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 12:12:09 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators!

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai‘i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Mahalo,

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 1:33:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Chair and Committee members,

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai‘i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 2:09:13 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert H. Pahia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Let Hawaii invest in our people instead of external influence .

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 2:37:34 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai‘i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Susan Wong, Kailua, HI

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 3:12:25 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to support SB242, which will restrict ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. Doing so will help local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands thereby increased food security.

Thank you

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 4:00:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sven Sorge	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Sirs and Madams,

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Thank you very much!

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 2:49:15 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sylvie Madison	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I strongly support **SB242**, which seeks to **limit foreign ownership and control of Hawai‘i’s agricultural land**. This bill is about **protecting our land, our farmers, our food security, and the future of Hawai‘i’s people**.

Why This Bill Matters:

- **Prioritizes Hawai‘i’s Food Security** – Hawai‘i **imports nearly 90% of its food**, leaving us vulnerable to supply chain disruptions. **Protecting agricultural land ensures we can grow food locally** and reduce dependence on outside sources. **If we don’t secure farmland now, future generations will have even fewer resources.**
- **Protects Local Farmers** – Foreign entities and developers are buying up farmland, making it harder for **local farmers to afford land and sustain Hawai‘i’s agricultural industry**. Without action, our ability to feed ourselves will continue to decline.
- **Prevents Foreign Control of Resources** – Other states have seen the dangers of allowing **foreign entities to dominate agricultural land**, leading to loss of local control and the exploitation of resources. Hawai‘i must **act now** to prevent the same from happening here.
- **Addresses Hawai‘i’s Housing Crisis** – Foreign investors **aren’t just buying farmland—they’re buying homes**, inflating prices, and making it **impossible for local families to afford housing**. We must prioritize **Hawai‘i’s people over outside speculators and developers**.
- **Puts People Over Developers & Real Estate Interests** – For too long, **developers and real estate investors have dictated land use policies**, often at the expense of **local residents and sustainability**. We must **put the needs of Hawai‘i’s people first**.
- **Ensures Transparency & Accountability** – Requiring **annual reporting** by foreign entities leasing or owning agricultural land provides necessary oversight to **prevent land speculation and misuse**.

Hawai‘i’s land should **first and foremost serve Hawai‘i’s people**—not foreign investors looking to profit while local farmers, families, and communities struggle.

I urge the legislature to **pass SB242 to protect our land, our farmers, and our future**.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**Sylvie Madison
Kailua Kona, Hawaii**

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 2:31:19 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joell Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 10:03:51 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann V Saffery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha All,

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB 242 TO PROHIBIT FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AG LAND.

Mahalo,

Ann V Saffery

He Mele komo a he mele aloha no na kupuna o ke au i hala Aloha mai kakou.

Aloha,

My name is Cindy Freitas and I'm a Native Hawaiian descended of the native inhabitants of Hawai'i prior to 1778 and born and raised in Hawai'i.

I am also a practitioner who still practice the cultural traditional customary practices that was instill in me by my grandparents at a young age from mauka (MOUNTAIN TO SEA) to makai in many areas.

I'm in SUPPORT for SB242

Act to Regulate Foreign Ownership and Leasing of Agricultural Land

1. Restrictions on Foreign Ownership and Control

- Foreign entities shall be **prohibited from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest** in more than **[X] acres** of agricultural land within the state.
- The **maximum allowable acreage** shall be determined based on agricultural sustainability, food security needs, and economic impact.
- Foreign entities **currently exceeding the limit** may be required to **divest excess holdings within a set period** or may apply for conditional exemptions subject to strict oversight.

2. Lease Term Limits for Foreign Entities

- The maximum lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities shall not exceed **[X] years** to prevent long-term foreign control over local food production.
- Lease renewals shall require **state approval**, with a demonstrated commitment to **land stewardship, compliance with agricultural regulations, and economic benefits for local farmers**.

3. Reporting & Transparency Requirements

- Foreign entities **owning or leasing agricultural land** shall submit an **annual report** to the Department of Agriculture, including:
 - Total acreage owned or leased
 - Type of agricultural activities conducted
 - Compliance with state environmental and land use regulations
 - Economic impact, including employment and local market contributions
- Reports shall be made **publicly available** to ensure transparency and accountability.

4. Regulatory Oversight & Enforcement

- The Department of Agriculture shall establish a **monitoring and enforcement framework**, including **regular audits and inspections** of foreign-owned or leased agricultural lands.
- Non-compliance with ownership limits, lease restrictions, or reporting requirements shall result in **penalties**, which may include:

- Fines
- Lease termination
- Forced divestiture of land holdings
- The state shall maintain the **right of first refusal** on any foreign-owned agricultural land offered for sale.

5. Appropriation of Funds

- Funds shall be appropriated to:
 - Administer and enforce these regulations
 - Conduct research on foreign land ownership and its effects on agriculture and food security
 - Support **local farmers and agricultural cooperatives** in acquiring and maintaining farmland
- A portion of the funds may be allocated for **grants, low-interest loans, or incentives** to encourage local ownership and sustainable agricultural practices.

Mahalo,

____/s/____

Cindy Freitas

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 2:31:55 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy D Moser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Support of SB 242

Aloha Chairs and Members of the Committees.

This measure moves in the right direction toward greater food security for residents of our communities.

Please pass this measure.

Sincerely,

Nancy Moser

in Waikoloa 96738

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 3:17:33 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kamakani de dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaiians for Hawaiian land. I oppose this bill!

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 3:18:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Dedely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaiians for Hawaiian land. I oppose this bill!

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 3:18:12 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mallory De Dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaiians for Hawaiian land. I oppose this bill!

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 4:01:00 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Padgett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair, Vice Chair and Committee members,

My name is James Padgett, and I am writing in support of SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to testify and please support SB242.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 6:45:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Hennessy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai'i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty-five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Mahalo, Lisa Hennessy

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 8:27:54 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sebastian Church	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill prohibiting foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Ownership of agricultural lands in Hawai'i by foreign, non-resident entities has been a fundamental mechanism for disposessing Hawaiians of their land, sovereignty, and food security. Prohibiting foreign ownership of Hawaiian agricultural lands will prevent increases in land costs caused by foreign demand and capital forcing scarce agricultural lands to be sold at prices unattainable by local aspiring farmers. This bill will also prevent agricultural land from being squatted on by gentleman farmers and other fake agriculturalists who do not meaningfully produce crops for Hawai'i's growing population. Keeping ownership of agricultural lands local will also ensure that capital spent on agricultural goods remains in Hawai'i instead of being extracted to foreign countries. Mahalo.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 6:45:02 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isis Usborne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e,

Please support SB242. There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai‘i’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawai‘i to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Mahalo,

Isis Usborne
96815

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 10:39:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carmela Resuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Keep ownership of agricultural lands out of foreign hands.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 9:59:02 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Laeha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please protect Hawaii's land—especially vital agricultural areas that sustain our communities. Rising costs have made it impossible for kama'āina to buy or lease land; selling to foreign buyers will worsen this already dire crisis.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 7:21:20 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Senator Gabbard, Vice Chair Senator Richards III and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment, and Chair Senator Lee, Vice Chair Senator Inouye and Members of the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts.

Please vote for SB 242 to support local farmers and producers. It's my understanding that this bill would place restrictions on foreign entities as it relates to agricultural land.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:55:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorraine Waianuhea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I am writing in strong support of SB 242: Prohibits Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land. Foreign corporations currently own large amounts of Hawai‘i's lands. These lands should instead be owned by local producers to increase the food and economic security of people in Hawai‘i. The state should prioritize access to these lands for local farmers and native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. Other states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands.

Please pass SB 242.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony,

Lorraine Waianuhea

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:05:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Senators,

Enforcement of Hawai‘i's Water Code is essential to the health of traditional and customary practices by ensuring streamflows are sufficient for kalo cultivation, health of riparian species, and for overall conservation efforts to ensure abundant clean water resources for future generations. This is so important to me, my family, community, county & State.
Please support HB 306 HD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Mavis Oliveira-Medeiros

Earle A.K.Medeiros

(808)866-7409

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 8:30:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Depicolzuane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB242 prohibiting foreign entities from ag. lands, except for the language in SB242 which says, "in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land." This needs more clarification. Unspecified number of acres could be specified, preferably from 0 to infinity (and no foreign ownership of ag. lands). Thank you to our Legislature for hearing/reading my testimony and for their attention to this issue and all of their hard work.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 10:37:15 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krista Vessell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a resident of Waimānalo and a person who is very concerned about food security and sustainability in Hawaii, I fully support this bill . Foreign entities have no business owning ag land in such a fragile place as Hawaii. This is what led to the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom and establishment of the fake "state of Hawaii" in the first place! I also request that SB1006 be allowed a hearing, as it is a completely different bill specifying foreign ownership of lands (not limited to ag lands) surrounding military bases.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 10:06:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure to ensure that Hawaii's agricultural land remains available and accessible to local farmers and agricultural enterprises by limiting foreign ownership of agricultural land and establishing transparency requirements. Please pass SB242.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 12:42:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danielle Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill and trust that the legislators/lawmakers fill in the blanks for the numbers including defining the property size and fine costs to be reasonable and effective. Supporting local and regenerative agriculture is key to a sustainable, nutritious, equitable food system for Hawai'i. Mahalo.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 12:47:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kate Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

Our future in Hawaii depends on AG lands. We need to increase food security and self-sufficiency. We need to keep these lands for U.S. citizens and, ideally, Hawaii-based agriculture businesses.

We can look to California regarding the problems of selling fee-simple AG land to foreign investors.

We hope you will SUPPORT this bill.

Mahalo,

Kate Thompson

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 12:59:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christian Zuckerman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Lee & Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye & Richards, and Members of the Committees,

I am in support of bill SB 242. SB 242 will help protect farmland in Hawaii from foreign consolidation and help to support local agriculture. Land is a finite resource in Hawaii and if we want to empower our farmers to support the state initiatives of food security we need to stop lands from being consolidated under foreign entities. We need to put in safe guards to prevent this and encourage Hawaii farmers to get access to land.

We've seen a dramatic increase in foreign ownership of land on Maui and if we are not careful this trend will continue. I am a farmer in Waianae who also grew up in this community. In the last 30 years, there has been a dramatic change in the landscape in agriculture in Waianae. Land is being bought in large quantites to be put into basil production for export. The primary drivers of this are from Chinese entities who are backing the land acquisitions. I recently put an offer in to buy farmland and was not able to even get to the table because 3 cash offers of over asking price were put in. This is a recurring issue that I have seen many farmers face.

Thanks for your consideration, for reading my testimony and for passing SB 242.

Mahalo

Christian Zuckerman

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 1:22:42 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Hawaii is not a postcard, a trophy, or a status symbol. Those who buy up large swaths of land for their own gain, especially from foreign countries, are actively participating in denying native Hawaiians their rights to live and breathe in their homeland. I support this bill. Too many people are being priced out of their homes by those who can afford five or more.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 9:21:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiana Otsuka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kiana Otsuka, and I am an O‘ahu resident writing in support of SB242.

here is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawaii’s agricultural lands by foreign corporations. This creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable lands. For Hawaii to move towards increased food security, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to place. This bill is an important step in prioritizing agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

Mahalo,

Kiana Otsuka

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 7:21:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Wong Wagner	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I don't want foreign entities buying, selling our land here in Hawaii.

SB-242

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 1:14:42 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Auwae Ortiz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Foreigners should have never been allowed to purchase Hawaiian lands. Hawaii should remain in the hands of the hawaiians and or local people that are native to Hawaii.