

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o  
Hawaii*

SYLVIA J. LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina  
'o Hawaii*



KALI WATSON  
CHAIRPERSON, HHC  
*Ka Luna Ho'okele*

KATIE L. LAMBERT  
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR  
*Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele*

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS  
*Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawaii*

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
HEARING ON JANUARY 29, 2025 AT 1:00PM IN CR 224

**SB 498, RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING**

January 28, 2025

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **supports** this bill which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act authorizes DHHL to lease agricultural lands or lands used for aquaculture purposes. DHHL has awarded 1,105 agricultural leases as of December 31, 2024 – 60 on Oahu, 64 on Maui, 406 in East Hawaii, 111 in West Hawaii, 46 on Kauai, and 418 on Molokai. DHHL also has 19,939 applications for an agricultural lease as of January 1, 2025 – 4,220 on Oahu, 4,840 on Maui, 7,410 on Hawaii Island, 2,327 on Kauai, and 1,142 on Molokai.

DHHL's General Plan Update dated November 2022 notes the following: "The connection to 'āina and ability to cultivate it and bring forth life is central to Prince Kūhiō's vision for the rehabilitation of Hawaiians. The first homestead pilot program focused on agriculture production as evidence that the Hawaiian Homesteads work. Today, agricultural homestead lots have the longest waitlists on all islands except for O'ahu." The Plan also provides that "the majority of agricultural applicants who responded (80%) indicated that they intend to farm and live (i.e., build a home) on their agricultural lot when awarded. The agricultural activities that applicants anticipated for their lots, once awarded, were mostly subsistence and gardening activities, while 11% of waitlist respondents anticipated using their agriculture lot for commercial farming." The Plan further explains that "DHHL is developing an Agriculture Program Plan to increase beneficiary capacity in farming. Programs will range from training in beginning farming to more advanced programs for commercial agriculture."

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**JANUARY 29, 2025**  
**1:00 P.M.**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 498**  
**RELATING TO THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 498 relating to Agricultural Workforce Housing. The bill establishes an agricultural workforce housing working group. Agricultural workforce housing has been a long-standing concern for many agricultural operations throughout Hawai'i. If agricultural operations can offer housing to their employees, it would allow them to have a long-term experienced stable workforce making operations more productive and efficient.

The Department is in support of this measure. The proposed working group is comprised of a wide variety of individuals that will bring their own unique perspectives and expertise to resolve this long standing concern. The agriculture community will greatly benefit from the work of this committee to overcome the challenges and hurdles of obtaining affordable workforce housing. Agricultural workers will also benefit from having adequate housing near their places of employment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
January 29, 2025  
1:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

SENATE BILL NO. 498  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING

Chairperson Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) **supports** Senate Bill 498, which seeks to address the critical shortage of workforce housing for agricultural employees in Hawaii. This bill is an essential step toward supporting the agricultural sector, ensuring the stability of Hawaii's farming workforce, and promoting food security by enabling farmworkers to live closer to the lands they cultivate and care for. We also acknowledge and support the inclusion of ADC as a member of the proposed working group tasked with implementing this initiative, ensuring that workforce housing solutions align with the unique needs of farmers and agricultural employees across the state.

**The Need for Workforce Housing in Agriculture**

Hawaii's agricultural industry is a cornerstone of the state's economy, cultural heritage, and food security goals. However, the high cost of living,

limited affordable housing options, and lack of workforce housing near agricultural lands create significant barriers for farmworkers and their families.

Without adequate housing, many agricultural employees are forced to commute long distances or live in substandard conditions, contributing to worker shortages, increased operating costs for farmers, and decreased productivity. Workforce housing is critical for maintaining a reliable, skilled workforce that supports Hawaii's agriculture and food security initiatives.

### **How SB 498 Supports Agricultural Employees and Employers**

Senate Bill 498 provides a framework to develop, incentivize, and facilitate the creation of workforce housing on or near agricultural lands, which will:

1. **Stabilize the Agricultural Workforce:** Providing affordable and accessible housing will help retain skilled workers, attract new talent to the agricultural sector, and reduce turnover rates that disrupt farm operations.
2. **Enhance Productivity:** By reducing commute times and ensuring workers have safe and stable living conditions, SB 498 supports a more reliable and productive workforce, benefiting farmers and the agricultural economy.
3. **Support Food Security Goals:** A stable agricultural workforce is essential to achieving Hawaii's goal of doubling local food production by 2030, as outlined in the Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan.
4. **Reduce Barriers for Farmworkers:** Many farmworkers face financial challenges due to Hawaii's high cost of living. Workforce housing

alleviates this burden, allowing workers to focus on their contributions to local food production.

5. **Create Opportunities for Rural Communities:** Workforce housing projects will stimulate economic development in rural areas, support local businesses, and strengthen community ties.

### **ADC's Role in the Working Group**

The inclusion of ADC on the proposed working group is a critical component of the success of this initiative. As the state's lead agency for agricultural land management and development, ADC is uniquely positioned to bring its expertise and resources to the table.

In its role on the working group, ADC will:

- **Identify Suitable Sites:** Work to identify lands under its management that are appropriate for workforce housing projects, ensuring proximity to active agricultural operations.
- **Collaborate with Stakeholders:** Partner with farmers, housing developers, local governments, and community organizations to design and implement housing solutions that are affordable, sustainable, and compatible with agricultural land use.
- **Promote Sustainability:** Advocate for the integration of renewable energy, water-efficient systems, and environmentally responsible practices in workforce housing developments.

- **Ensure Agricultural Compatibility:** Ensure that housing developments on agricultural lands do not interfere with or reduce agricultural productivity.
- **Support Funding Efforts:** Collaborate on securing federal, state, and private funding to support the development and maintenance of workforce housing projects.

### **Alignment with Statewide Goals**

Senate Bill 498 aligns with several critical state priorities, including:

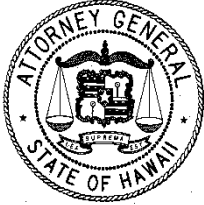
- **Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan:** Workforce housing supports the agricultural workforce needed to increase local food production and reduce reliance on imported goods.
- **Economic Development:** Stable housing for farmworkers fosters economic growth in rural communities and helps sustain local farming operations.
- **Social Equity:** Providing affordable housing ensures that farmworkers and their families can live with dignity, stability, and access to basic services.

### **Conclusion**

The passage of Senate Bill 498 is essential for addressing the housing needs of Hawaii's agricultural workforce and supporting the broader goals of food security, economic resilience, and sustainability. By investing in workforce housing and establishing a collaborative working group with ADC's

involvement, Hawaii will strengthen its agricultural sector, support local farmers, and create opportunities for farmworkers to thrive.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of this measure.



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

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 498, RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**DATE:** Wednesday, January 29, 2025      **TIME:** 1:00 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

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Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

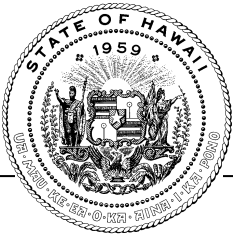
The purpose of this bill is to establish a working group within the Department of Agriculture to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State.

Pursuant to article V, section 6 of the Hawaii State Constitution, “[t]emporary commissions or agencies for special purposes may be established by law . . . .” This provision grants the Legislature, rather than the respective department, the authority to establish a commission or working group through statute. Accordingly, we recommend amending section 1(a) of the bill, on page 1, lines 1-4, as follows:

(a) [~~The department of agriculture shall establish~~] There is established within the department of agriculture for administrative purposes an agricultural workforce housing working group to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.





**STATE OF HAWAI'I  
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, Hawai'i 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'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 AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

in consideration of

**SB 498**

**RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING.**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) offers comments on SB 498, which would establish a multi-sector agricultural workforce housing working group to examine a range of tools and strategies to address the need for agricultural workforce housing in the State.

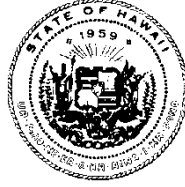
OPSD recognizes farmworker housing has been a long-standing concern for the agricultural sector in Hawai'i, and that overcoming the shortage of farmworker housing is vital to the long-term viability of agricultural producers. To this end, the Administration submitted SB 1332, which allows for farmer and farm worker cluster housing on lands designated as important agricultural lands that, if enacted, would provide a measure for addressing this issue.

OPSD stands ready to participate in the working group. Such a working group would be useful in determining how we, as a State, could collectively meet the industry's need for farmworker housing while protecting agricultural lands from non-agricultural residential uses.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



DEAN MINAKAMI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM  
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
FAX: (808) 587-0600

Statement of  
**DEAN MINAKAMI**

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation  
Before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

January 29, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 224

In consideration of  
**S.B. 498**

**RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING.**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the Committee.

HHFDC **supports** SB 498, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State. It also requires reports to the Legislature and appropriates funds.

HHFDC is named as a member of the working group and agrees that collaboration would be a valuable way to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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)

January 29, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON SB 498**  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference  
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 498**, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State. Requires reports to the Legislature.

HFB recognizes the need for housing for the agricultural workforce and believes that affordable housing is necessary to attract farm workers. However, this has been a major shortfall as we try to address the labor needs for agriculture, and it is a limiting factor for the growth of agriculture in Hawai'i.

The shortage of willing and able workers, the need for affordable housing for farm workers, and competition from alternative employment are several of the pressing farm-labor-related issues that need to be addressed.

The lack of affordable housing for farmers and farm labor impedes increasing food and non-food agricultural production in Hawai'i. There is a need to develop housing for farmers and farm employees while ensuring that the housing is used in conjunction with an active farm and occupied by bona fide farmers and farm employees.

An Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group can help identify the agricultural workforce housing needs in each County and the barriers to meeting these needs for farm and ranch businesses in Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



**Officers**

Kaipo Kekona  
State President

Anabella Bruch  
Vice-President

Maureen Datta  
Secretary

Reba Lopez  
Treasurer

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee,

**Chapter Presidents**

Clarence Baber  
Kohala, Hawai'i

Tony Vera  
East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Andrea Drayer  
Ka'u, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta  
Kona, Hawai'i

Fawn Helekahi-Burns  
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer  
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros  
Mauna Kahālāwai,  
Maui

Kaipo Kekona  
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy  
Moloka'i

Negus Manna  
Lāna'i

India Clark  
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman  
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich  
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura  
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska  
Kaua'i

The Hawaii Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports SB498.**

The Hawaii Farmers Union recognizes the critical need for sustainable agricultural workforce housing as a cornerstone for the future success of our state's agricultural sector. SB498 offers a pragmatic and well-structured approach to addressing this need by establishing an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group under the Department of Agriculture. This group is tasked with analyzing the current landscape, identifying critical shortages, and exploring innovative solutions to provide adequate housing for our invaluable agricultural workers. By bringing together key stakeholders—including farmers, housing experts, and government representatives—this initiative promotes a collaborative effort to tackle one of the most pressing issues facing our industry.

The benefits of such a focused and coordinated effort cannot be overstated. Secure and supportive housing is fundamental to attracting and retaining skilled agricultural workers who play a vital role in sustaining our local food systems and enhancing food security. Adequately housed workers are more productive, more committed, and better able to contribute to the health and dynamism of our rural communities. SB498 not only addresses immediate housing challenges but also sets the stage for long-term planning that aligns with state goals for agricultural development.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:48:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ian Kennedy	Testifying for Strata Farms LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

s a farmer in Hawai‘i, I strongly support SB498, which establishes an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group to address the critical shortage of affordable and accessible housing for the agricultural workforce in our state.

The agricultural sector in Hawai‘i is the backbone of our local food security and sustainability efforts, but the lack of affordable housing is a significant barrier to attracting and retaining a stable agricultural workforce. Farmers and farmworkers face unique challenges, including long hours and rural living, and without secure housing, the people who grow and produce our food are left struggling. This bill is an important step toward creating viable housing solutions that ensure the future stability of agriculture in Hawai‘i.

Navigating the complex web of state and county regulations regarding workforce housing has been a daunting task for farmers. A working group dedicated to addressing these challenges and recommending actionable solutions is essential. By bringing together stakeholders and decision-makers, we can develop clear pathways to create and sustain workforce housing that meets the needs of both farmers and farmworkers.

Supporting SB498 is not just about housing—it’s about investing in the long-term resilience of Hawai‘i’s food system. Stable housing means a stable workforce, which directly translates to greater local food production, reduced dependence on imports, and a more secure future for our communities.

I urge the Legislature to support SB498 and take this critical first step toward solving the agricultural workforce housing crisis. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Ian Kennedy

Strata Farms LLC



January 28, 2025

To: Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Time Richards, and Senate Members of the Committee,

Subject: **SB 498**, Relating to Agricultural Workforce Housing

Aloha,

I am writing to express my **support** for SB 498, which seeks to establish more affordable housing opportunities for our state's agricultural workers. As someone who has spent a lot of time working on agricultural land in Waiāhole Valley, I have firsthand seen the importance of access to housing for farmers, and how imposition to housing opportunities for agricultural workers can be detrimental to the broader community that depends on their labor.

Access to farmer housing in Hawai'i must be addressed as a means to provide support and suitable living opportunities for many of Hawai'i's agricultural workers. The passing of this bill is important due to the role that our state's agricultural workforce places in the stability and access to food security for many local families. Ensuring that farmers have stable living conditions is critical to ensuring that our food security is being protected and maintained as Hawai'i's food security continues to grow.

Mahalo nui for your consideration and review.

Mahalo,

Lea iaea & the Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 5:34:57 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Emelia Briscoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawai‘i is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawai‘i. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawai‘i’s local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

Mahalo,

Emelia Briscoe, Honolulu

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 9:31:40 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debra M Javar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully SUPPORT sb498. We need housing for the agriculture workforce. This will help us to be more self-sufficient re our Food supply.

Mahalo



**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 7:19:19 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Irena Bliss	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions.

Please support SB498.

It is vital to continue to live the values of Aloha 'Āina, Mālama 'Āina and make decisions that support the well-being and thriving of all future generations on island.

Mahalo nui for your consideration.

Irena Bliss

Ha'ikū, Maui 96708

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 10:05:28 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 9:53:03 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 12:41:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Barbara Best	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

Mahalo,

Bill & Bobbie Best, Wailuk

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 10:22:47 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to support SB498, which will establish a working group to look through state and county regulations and find viable solutions for increasing farmer housing and making it more affordable. This will improve the stability of the agricultural workforce and thereby food security in Hawaii.

Thank you

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 1:29:14 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Paul Kimo Pestana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Workforce and especially agricultural workforce is important for food production in Hawaii. Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable workforce housing crisis.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:43:57 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keila Paahana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 10:21:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
De Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

Please support SB498.

In order to encourage our state's move away from a reliance on imported foods, we need to support our farmers. Hawai'i has one of the most expensive housing markets, with comparatively little available to farmers or farm employees within their income range.

It is my understanding that this bill will require the Department of Agriculture to establish an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State. There will be reports required and funds will be allocated to this group.

Although this will be a satisfactory start, it is my hope the the committee will utilize all possible avenues of housing as quickly as possible, so that our farmers will have the stability and safety that assured housing provides.

Some potential routes include

- farms providing on-farm housing, these would most likely be rented or perhaps provided as part of the employment contract
- modular housing, which should be owned, not rented (ownership creates social stability)
- community-based initiatives, etc. to provide rental or purchasable housing options

I sincerely request that you support this bill, and give it your utmost to provide all the necessary tools for this committee.

Sincerely,

D. Austin

Kihei, Hi





**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 5:03:06 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lela Kalama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

mahalo,

Lela Kalama, Kea'au, HI

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 5:59:25 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB498 STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Senators! I'm writing to ask you to support SB498.

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 8:50:44 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tamara Luthy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 9:53:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eliel Starbright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB498. Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 1:42:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jacqueline S. Ambrose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

YES to - Requires the Department of Agriculture to establish an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group to address the shortage and challenges of agricultural workforce housing in the State. Requires reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 8:14:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laurie Makaneole	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmers make minimal wages and thier greatest need is affordable housing,, most farmers would prefer to live on the farms they work at,, housing is the greatest need all farmers have

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 3:48:24 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Isis Usborne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

Mahalo,  
Isis "Izzy" Usborne (they/them)  
Kapahulu Ave resident (96815)  
2026 JD Candidate at William S. Richardson School of Law



**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:19:51 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Glenn Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 6:16:55 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498. Mahalo.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 5:38:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tasman Kekai Mattox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:49:23 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sven Sorge	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmer housing in Hawaii is needed to address the affordable housing crisis and support the state's agricultural workforce. The stability of the agricultural workforce is important for food security in Hawaii. The stability of farmer housing is critical to growing Hawaii's local food security. Given the complexity of navigating state and county regulations, a working group is a first step to identifying how to navigate viable solutions. Please support SB498.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:09:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keoni DeFranco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB498, which establishes an Agricultural Workforce Housing Working Group to address the critical shortage of agricultural workforce housing in Hawai'i. This bill is a vital step toward supporting our agricultural workforce and addressing the affordable housing crisis.

Stable housing is essential for the stability of Hawai'i's agricultural workforce, which directly impacts our local food security. By navigating the complexities of state and county regulations, the working group can identify viable solutions to ensure farmers and agricultural workers have access to secure and affordable housing.

**SB-498**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:10:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Theresa M Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 498 RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson