

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025
10:01 a.m.

CONFERENCE ROOM 016 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

HOUSE BILL NO. 1291, HD2, SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify to House Bill No.1291, HD2, SD1. This bill extends the offense of false labeling of Hawaii-grown coffee to include roasted coffee. The Department of Agriculture (DOA) strongly supports this bill.

This bill raises the offense of False labeling of Hawaii-grown coffee to a class C felony, which will include roasted coffee. The bill also designates the eight geographic regions that the false labeling would apply under the law.

DOA respectfully requests that funds be added to this bill to support Measurement Standards Inspector V SR-19 \$65,000, to support and restore enforcement capability for labeling regulations for Hawaii products such as coffee, macadamia nuts and mamaki tea. The inspector will inspect and enforce the new laws.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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March 25, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

TESTIMONY ON HB 1291, HD2, SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 016 & Videoconference
10:01 AM

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

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

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1291, HD2, SD1, which extends the offense of false labeling of Hawai'i-grown coffee to include roasted coffee.

Hawai'i-grown coffee is recognized for its high quality and aromatic flavor. It is held to a set of quality standards, making it one of the most expensive coffees in the world. Hawai'i-grown coffee is one of Hawai'i's signature crops. The Hawai'i Department of Agriculture estimated the 2023-2024 production value of Hawai'i-grown coffee at \$48.2 million. It ranked third among the state's top fifteen agricultural commodities produced in 2023.

To protect the Hawai'i coffee from counterfeiting, the Legislature enacted Act 211 in 2023. This law requires all coffee products carrying a Hawai'i geographical reference to disclose the location where the coffee was grown and indicate the percentage by weight of locally grown coffee and coffee grown elsewhere. It also specifies that coffee products claiming to be 100% Hawai'ian must be grown and processed entirely in Hawai'i.

The current law focuses on green (unroasted) coffee, leaving a loophole allowing misleading labeling of roasted coffee containing little or no genuine Hawai'i-grown beans. HB 1291, HD2, SD1 closes this gap and strengthens consumer protections by ensuring that roasted coffee labeled as Hawai'i-grown truly originates from Hawai'i farms.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

HB-1291-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/21/2025 2:22:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/25/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this initiative.

HB-1291-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/23/2025 2:17:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/25/2025 10:01:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dylan P. Armstrong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i's best chance for diversification is in expanding value-added, niche tropical crops that cannot be produced en masse on the mainland or in the Eurozone (with exceptions like overseas territories and departments).

Protect Hawai'i crops, expand the production of these, and create integrity and trust in the brand. That is how you will grow agriculture and middle class jobs in in Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your consideration of this timely and thoughtful measure.

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