



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education & Technology
Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Parwinder Grewal, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2817 SD2 – RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 2817 SD2 relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture Human Resources (CTAHR) which make an appropriation to the University of Hawai'i to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 APT FTE) faculty positions at CTAHR.

CTAHR strongly supports this bill and, we respectfully offer one suggested amendment. Specifically, this bill aims to help rectify significant gaps in the reach of Cooperative Extension programs due to vacancies that have surfaced in the past four years. We suggest the following amendment to SECTION 3 which designates one full-time equivalent extension agent in water quality and conservation in the county of Maui.

Specifically, this bill will provide:

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the CTAHR at the University of Hawaii at Manoa to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) positions; provided that the sums appropriated shall be expended as follows:

(1) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension specialist in water quality and conservation in the county of Maui;

SUGGESTED ADMENDMENT:

\$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent in water quality and conservation in the county of Maui;

(2) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent in livestock in Hilo, county of Hawaii;

(3) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) state extension specialist in livestock at the university of Hawaii at Manoa;

- (4) \$ for one full-time equivalent agent in urban horticulture and food systems in the city and county of Honolulu; and
- (5) \$ for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent in health and community development in the county of Maui.

The sum appropriate shall be expended by the university of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

CTAHR's Cooperative Extension relies on the knowledge and experience of county extension agents and extension specialists to extend research-based knowledge from the land-grant university out to the residents and agricultural producers of the state. That capability has been severely hampered by a string of resignations and retirements happening just prior to, and during, the COVID-19 pandemic. Agricultural producers from around the state have expressed how essential these noted positions are for the health and well-being of Hawaii's agricultural producers and consumers.

We strongly support SB 2817 SD2 with the suggested amendment, provided its adoption does not impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the measure.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY
Wednesday, March 13, 2024 — 2:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2817 SD2, Relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

Dear Chair Perruso and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy, clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports SB 2817 SD2, which makes an appropriation to the University of Hawai'i to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) faculty positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

CTAHR Extension Service provides critical boots-on-the-ground support to local producers across the State. With agricultural expertise and hands-on support, CTAHR's extension agents provide expert advice to local farmers seeking to improve operations. Support, to name a few items, can include crop selection and varieties, soil health, invasive species mitigation and control, crop techniques such as rotation or trellis, and irrigation efficiencies. By adding these 5 positions, the State is directly supporting the future success of local producers in Hawai'i.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become increasingly complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



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

March 13, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

TESTIMONY ON SB 2817, SD2
RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL
AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Perruso, Vice-Chair Kapela, 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 2817, SD2, which makes an appropriation to the University of Hawaii to establish five full-time equivalent (5.0 FTE) faculty positions at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

The excellent work performed by UH CTAHR for Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers cannot be overstated. The ongoing outreach and education are unparalleled in the State. Farmers and ranchers rely on this program for their success. CTAHR has helped develop and improve agricultural technologies pertinent to Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers. This includes intensive cover crop research, promoting the importance of locally grown produce, developing biological and cultural methods for controlling pests without chemicals, and the use of biological nitrogen fixation to significantly increase the production of high protein foods while at the same time reducing the need for commercially produced fertilizers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject.



The House Committee on Higher Education and Technology
And
The Committee on Labor and Government Operations
March 13, 2024
2:00 PM
Room 309

RE: **SB 2817, SD 2, Relating to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources**

Attention: Chairs Amy Perruso and Scot Matayoshi, Vice Chairs Jeanne Kapela and Andrew Garrett, and members of the Committees

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support of SB 2817, SD 2**, Relating to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources.

SB 2817, SD 2 establishes five full-time permanent extension agent and extension specialist positions at the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. To ensure the recruitment and retention of the positions, it is essential for the FTE appropriation to have a recurring, general funded designation.

UHPA supports and requests the passage of SB 2817, SD 2.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern
Executive Director
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly