

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Friday, April 4, 2025  
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

In consideration of  
GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 697  
SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION  
TO THE POSITION OF  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, DEAN MATSUKAWA  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 7, 2026

Governor's Message 697 submits for consideration and confirmation, Dean Matsukawa to the position of Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this nomination.**

Mr. Matsukawa was born into a farming family from the Windward side of O'ahu. He started his career as a self-employed farmer managing his family's farm where he installed accounting and payroll systems. Six years later, he took his experience to the Department of Agriculture, where he worked as a business loan officer then became the Agricultural Loan Administrator. Mr. Matsukawa held this position for seventeen years before taking a two-year break. In 2024, he returned to the Department of Agriculture as the Deputy Director.

Mr. Matsukawa brings his connections to County Farm Bureaus and the Hawaii Leadership Academy as well as thirty-three years of experience at the Department of Agriculture to the Deputy's position. We believe Mr. Matsukawa will provide steady and insightful leadership as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Dean Matsukawa.

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

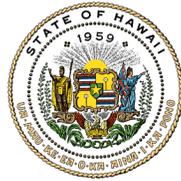
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**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**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2025  
1:00 PM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**GOVERNORS MESSAGE NO. 697**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, DEAN MATSUKAWA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Gubernatorial Nominee Dean Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture (Department). Dean has 34 years of experience with the Department, in the Agricultural Loan Division (AGL), serving as the Administrator for 20 of those years, and as the nominee for Deputy Director since January 2025.

While at AGL, his successes can be measured by the increase in the Department's loan portfolio from \$17 to \$25 million, by the professionalism he demonstrated managing the daily operations, and by receiving both Manager and Team of the Year awards which are indeed important accomplishments. However, Dean can claim a unique measure of success, which is the respect of the industry due to his intimate understanding of the challenges faced by farmers, ranchers, growers, value-



added producers, beginning and legacy farmers, earned from engaging with the industry.

As Deputy Director, Dean could apply his experience working on the family farm in Waiahole and draw from lessons learned as President of the East County and Kona County Farm Bureaus, which enhance his work for the industry. The first step to the position of Deputy Director may have been when Dean was selected as a member of Class VI of the Agricultural Leadership Program!

In the three months as the nominee, with Dean's oversight, the Department has filled key positions such as but not limited to Administrators of the Plant Industry and Agricultural Loan Divisions, Administrative Services Officer, and Human Resources Officer.

Dean's career path has prepared him well to be a successful leader. For the reasons noted, I respectfully request your vote to confirm the nomination of Dean Matsukawa to serve as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. He is qualified, well respected, and the right person for the position. Respectfully request his confirmation so we can continue to work together for the Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

Testimony of  
**Josh Green, M.D.**  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

Before the  
**Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment**

Friday, April 4, 2025  
1:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224, and Videoconference

In consideration of  
**Governor's Message No. 697**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the Senate Committee on  
Agriculture and Environment:

I respectfully request your favorable consideration of Governor's Message No. 697, regarding the appointment of Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director for the Department of Agriculture.

Dean Matsukawa is a third-generation farmer who grew up on the family farm on the windward side of O'ahu. With firsthand experience in agriculture, he brings both practical knowledge and strategic leadership to the field.

During his tenure in the Agricultural Loan Administration, he managed daily operations and played a key role in shaping long-term strategies for the Agricultural Loan Division. His efforts led to the development of new loan programs and improvements to existing ones, ensuring better support for Hawai'i's agricultural community.

As a self-employed farmer, Dean managed and operated his family farm in Waiāhole, cultivating bananas and tropical crops. He was responsible for overseeing harvest schedules, irrigation, and the application of pesticides, fertilizers, and fungicides—demonstrating his deep understanding of farm management and sustainability.

Testimony of Office of the Governor  
Governor's Message No. 697  
April 4, 2025  
Page 2

Given his extensive experience and dedication to agriculture, I strongly support Governor's Message No. 697 and the appointment of Dean Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this nomination.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
AND REHABILITATION**  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalu Kalaima  
a Ho'oponopono Ola*  
1177 Alakea Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813

**TOMMY JOHNSON**  
DIRECTOR

**Melanie Martin**  
Deputy Director  
Administration

**Vacant**  
Deputy Director  
Correctional Institutions

**Sanna Muñoz**  
Deputy Director  
Rehabilitation Services  
and  
Programs

No. \_\_\_\_\_

TESTIMONY ON GOVERNOR MESSAGE NO. 697  
RELATING TO THE NOMINATION OF DEAN MATSUKAWA TO BE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

by  
Tommy Johnson, Director

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

Friday, April 4, 2025; 1:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Via Video Conference

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

I submit testimony in strong support of the nomination and confirmation of Dean Matsukawa, to be the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture (HDOA), for a term ending December 7, 2026. Mr. Matsukawa has a diverse and wide-reaching work background which will be an asset as he assists the Chairperson of HDOA in leading such a large and complex operation.

Mr. Matsukawa's previous work experience as a farmer, a business loan officer, and an agricultural loan administrator will enhance his ability to effectively serve as the Deputy Director for HDOA.

He possesses prerequisite knowledge, honed leadership and managerial skills, interpersonal, and decision-making skills required of the Deputy Director's position. I strongly urge the committee to recommend advice and consent for this qualified nominee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in very strong support for the Governor's Message No. 697 and Mr. Matsukawa.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHAHA

April 4, 2025

To: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards III, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee

Date: Friday, April 4, 2025  
Time: 1:00 p.m.  
Place: Conference Room 224, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

**Re: G.M 697, Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, DEAN MATSUKAWA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.**

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations **strongly supports** the confirmation of Dean Matsukawa as Deputy Director to the Department of Agriculture (DOA).

Mr. Matsukawa is a graduate of the University of Washington with extensive course work in botany, horticulture and agriculture economics. He is a third-generation farmer and has previously served the DOA from 1991 – 2005 as its Business Loan Officer.

Currently, Mr. Matsukawa has served as the DOA since the beginning of 2024. During his time in this role, he has increased the DOA's loan portfolio from \$17 million to \$25 million by developing and modifying its loan programs.

The DLIR is confident that Mr. Matsukawa will work hard to support, enhance, promote, and protect Hawaii's agriculture and aquaculture industries. He has proven to create and maximize agricultural opportunities and will strive to prevent invasive species from harming our agriculture industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of G.M. 697.



JOSH GREEN, M. D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR  
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

BRENN A H. HASHIMOTO  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

BRIAN K. FURUTO  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT  
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMŌHALA LIMAHANA  
235 S. BERETANIA STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

Statement of  
**BRENN A H. HASHIMOTO**  
Director, Department of Human Resources Development

Before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**  
Friday, April 4, 2025  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of  
**GM697** Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, DEAN MATSUKAWA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and the members of the committee:

The Department of Human Resources Development (HRD) **supports** the nomination and confirmation of Mr. Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture (AGR).

Mr. Matsukawa's four decades of experience as a farmer and working in local agriculture coupled with the over 30 years that he has spent with the Department of Agriculture have prepared him to assist in leading the Department. Since his appointment in January, he has consistently demonstrated responsiveness, transparency, and a collaborative approach. We are eager to continue working alongside him and the AGR leadership team to support the administration's vision for the department.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony 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

April 4, 2025  
1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

**GM 697 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director to the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, DEAN MATSUKAWA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026**

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

I am writing to express my **support** of GM 697, relating to the consideration and confirmation of Mr. Dean Matsukawa's appointment as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

**Proven Leadership & Agricultural Expertise**

Mr. Matsukawa's many years of experience with the Department of Agriculture and his experience operating the family's farm prove he has the background and commitment to the agriculture industry needed to take on the challenges of the job.

I strongly urge the committee to confirm his appointment, as his continued service will help advance the strategic vision for Hawai'i's agricultural future.

Thank you for considering my testimony.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 04/04/2025

**Time:** 01:00 PM

**Location:** CR 224 & Videoconference

**Committee:** Senate Agriculture and Environment

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

**Bill Title:** GM 0697 Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, DEAN MATSUKAWA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

**Purpose of Bill:**

**Department's Position:**

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) supports the nomination of Dean Matsukawa for the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Matsukawa brings a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of Hawaii's agricultural landscape to this crucial role. Since holding the position from January 2024, he has demonstrated his ability to effectively manage the responsibilities of the office.

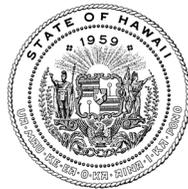
Prior to his current role, Mr. Matsukawa has served in various capacities in the Department of Agriculture. His vast experience is invaluable for leading the Department of Agriculture as the Department incorporates more local food onto its menus.

Beyond his professional experience within the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Matsukawa has firsthand knowledge of the agricultural sector as a third-generation farmer who grew up on a family farm on Oahu. He managed and operated the family farm in Waiahole from August 1985 to October 1991, where he raised bananas and tropical flowers and was responsible for various aspects of farm management, including accounting, payroll, harvesting, irrigation, and pest and fertilizer applications. This personal experience provides him with a unique understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by Hawaii's farmers.

Mr. Matsukawa's commitment to the agricultural community is further demonstrated by his involvement and deep relationships within local agricultural organizations, having served as President

of the East Oahu County Farm Bureau and President of the Kona County Farm Bureau.

Given his wealth of experience, leadership skills, and dedication to the betterment of Hawaii, the Department strongly recommends the confirmation of Dean Matsukawa to the role of Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
*Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā*  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY  
LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 697

**April 4, 2025**  
**1:00 p.m.**  
**Room 224 & Videoconference**

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, DEAN MATSUKAWA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.

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

I strongly support the appointment of Dean Matsukawa to the position of deputy director of the Department of Agriculture. I am working with Dean Matsukawa in my professional capacity as Director of Finance.

Governor Green's administration shares his priorities of homelessness and housing, the cost of living, climate change, and health care for the people of Hawai'i. We are committed to take action to make the needed changes to move Hawai'i forward.

Mr. Matsukawa is an integral part of a team that is dedicated to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Mr. Matsukawa worked for the Department for Agriculture for over 30 years from 1991 and retired in 2022. He came out of retirement in January 2025 to serve as the deputy director at the Department of Agriculture. His work experience will benefit the department and the State; therefore, I support his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



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

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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
DIRECTOR

**DANE K. WICKER**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804  
Web site: [dbedt.hawaii.gov](http://dbedt.hawaii.gov)

Telephone: (808) 586-2355  
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Testimony of  
**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
Director  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Friday, April 4, 2025  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of  
**GM 697**  
**Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the  
Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee,  
DEAN MATSUKAWA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.**

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

I support the confirmation of Mr. Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director for the Department of Agriculture.

Dean has deep roots in the ag industry as he began his career as a third generation farmer where he was self-employed and managed the overall operations. He has also served as President of both the East O'ahu County Farm Bureau and the Kona County Farm Bureau.

After Dean moved to the public sector, he dedicated more than 30 years to the Department of Agriculture where he first spent over a decade serving as the Business Loan Officer and worked with all of the counties throughout the state. After that, he became the Agricultural Loan Administrator managing daily operations and developing long-term strategies.

Dean has made a number of positive contributions to the department including increasing the Agricultural Loan Division's loan portfolio and improving programs to

Testimony of James Kunane Tokioka  
GM 697  
April 4, 2025  
Page 2

better serve the community. While serving in the Department of Agriculture, Dean has been awarded as Manager of the Year and been part of the Team of the Year.

With his extensive background in agriculture and commitment to public service, Mr. Matsukawa is an asset to the Department of Agriculture and the state of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



**STEPHEN F. LOGAN**  
MAJOR GENERAL  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

**PHILLIP L. MALLORY**  
BRIGADIER GENERAL  
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA HOPE 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA**  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4495

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON GM 697

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

BY

MAJOR GENERAL STEPHEN F. LOGAN  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
AND DIRECTOR OF HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

MARCH 25, 2025

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and members of the committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on **GM697 in SUPPORT** of Mr. Dean Matsukawa's appointment as Deputy Director for the Department of Agriculture (DOA).

Mr. Matsukawa has been a dedicated public servant to the State of Hawaii for over 31 years. He is well respected in his profession and by his peers and is a third-generation farmer who has dedicated his life to the agriculture industry in Hawaii. Mr. Matsukawa possesses a unique balance in agriculture, having worked both in state government and as a private farm owner. He will bring a pragmatic perspective that will look to both protect and promote agriculture in the State and to collaborate with the agricultural community when solving problems.

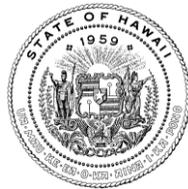
Mr. Matsukawa willingness to come out of retirement is emblematic of his dedication to serve the people of Hawaii. His leadership, selfless dedication, and familiarity with the DOA and the agriculture community will greatly help the culture and credibility of the department.

I have great respect for Mr. Matsukawa. He has a public servant's heart and has committed his life to bettering Hawaii. I believe the State and its people would be

fortunate to have him on the Governor's team and humbly as that you support his appointment.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

MG Stephen F. Logan, [Stephen.f.logan@hawaii.gov](mailto:Stephen.f.logan@hawaii.gov); 808-672-1001



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
*Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā*  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BY  
SABRINA NASIR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE

TO THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 697

**April 4, 2025**  
**1:00 p.m.**  
**Room 224 & Videoconference**

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, DEAN MATSUKAWA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.

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

I strongly support the appointment of Dean Matsukawa to the position of deputy director of the Department of Agriculture. I am working with Dean Matsukawa in my professional capacity as Deputy Director of Finance.

Governor Green's administration shares his priorities of homelessness and housing, the cost of living, climate change, and health care for the people of Hawai'i. We are committed to take action to make the needed changes to move Hawai'i forward.

Mr. Matsukawa is an integral part of a team that is dedicated to achieving the goals of this administration in an honest, transparent, accountable, and responsive manner.

Mr. Matsukawa worked for the Department for Agriculture for over 30 years from 1991 and retired in 2022. He came out of retirement in January 2025 to serve as deputy director at the Department of Agriculture. His work experience will benefit the department and the State; therefore, I support his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



STEPHEN F. LOGAN  
MAJOR GENERAL  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

PHILLIP L. MALLORY  
BRIGADIER GENERAL  
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA HOPE 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA**  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4495

TESTIMONY ON GM 697

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

BY

BRIGADIER GENERAL PHILLIP L. MALLORY  
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL

MARCH 31, 2025

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and members of the committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on **GM697 in SUPPORT** of Mr. Dean Matsukawa's appointment as Deputy Director for the Department of Agriculture (DOA).

Mr. Matsukawa has been a dedicated public servant to the State of Hawaii for over 31 years. He is well respected in his profession and by his peers. He is a third-generation farmer who has dedicated his life to the agriculture industry in Hawaii. Further, Mr. Matsukawa possesses a unique balance in agriculture having worked both in state government and as a private farm owner. He brings a pragmatic perspective that will protect and promote agriculture in the State.

Mr. Matsukawa's willingness to come out of retirement is a direct reflection of his dedication to serve the people of Hawaii. His familiarity with the DOA and the agriculture community will enhance the culture and credibility of the department.

I believe the State and its people would be fortunate to have him on the Governor's team and humbly ask that you support his appointment.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Brig Gen Phillip Mallory, [phillip.l.mallory@hawaii.gov](mailto:phillip.l.mallory@hawaii.gov); 808-672-1003

Testimony in Support of GM 697 – Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture

To: Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Lesley Harvey

Date: April 3, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

As a relatively new employee, I've quickly come to appreciate the strong, stable foundation that Mr. Matsukawa's leadership provides within the Department. His steady presence and thoughtful approach foster a supportive environment where staff can focus on advancing Hawai'i's agricultural sector.

Even before I had the chance to work with him directly, I'd heard about Mr. Matsukawa's calm and capable leadership style—his reputation definitely preceded him. In the interactions I've had so far, he's demonstrated responsiveness, a collaborative spirit, and a thoughtful approach to our work.

Mr. Matsukawa brings deep experience, including his prior role as Agricultural Loan Administrator, and his institutional knowledge continues to support the Department's mission. He has also earned the full confidence of Director Sharon Hurd, which speaks volumes about his effectiveness and character.

I respectfully urge the Senate to confirm Mr. Matsukawa's appointment so the Department can continue its important work under capable, experienced leadership.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lesley Harvey

Grant Writing Specialist, Hawaii Department of Agriculture

[lesley.g.harvey@hawaii.gov](mailto:lesley.g.harvey@hawaii.gov) / 808.766.5877

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



EDWIN H. SNIFFEN  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Deputy Directors  
Nā Hope Luna Ho'okele  
DREANALEE K. KALILI  
TAMMY L. LEE  
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

April 4, 2025  
1:00 P.M.  
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference  
State Capitol

In consideration of  
**Governor's Message 697**  
Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Chairperson, Department of  
Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, Dean M. Matsukawa

Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) **supports** the confirmation of Dean M. Matsukawa as Deputy to the Chairperson for the Department of Agriculture (DOA).

Mr. Matsukawa is a third-generation farmer with over two decades of experience in Hawai'i's agricultural sector. His deep-rooted knowledge of the industry, coupled with his hands-on experience, has given him a comprehensive understanding of both the challenges and opportunities facing local farmers. His proven track record in assisting farmers through the DOA's loan programs has been instrumental in supporting agricultural businesses, strengthening food security, and fostering economic growth in the state.

Beyond his expertise in agricultural finance, Mr. Matsukawa is a forward-thinking leader who embraces innovation and adaptability. He recognizes the evolving nature of the agricultural industry and is committed to implementing new strategies and solutions that enhance efficiency, sustainability, and resilience. His leadership will be invaluable in guiding the DOA toward policies that support farmers, improve food production, and address the sector's most pressing needs.

The HDOT believes Mr. Matsukawa's extensive experience, dedication to public service, and commitment to Hawai'i's agricultural future makes him an outstanding choice for this role. We are confident that his leadership will bring meaningful progress to the DOA and benefit the entire agricultural community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**JOSH GREEN M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR



**GARY S. SUGANUMA**  
DIRECTOR

**KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII'  
**DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION**

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau

P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII'1 96809

PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540

FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

**TESTIMONY OF**  
**GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

**TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

In consideration of G.M No. 697

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, Dean Matsukawa

**BEFORE THE:**

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

**DATE:** Friday, April 4, 2025  
**TIME:** 1:00 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 224

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

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the confirmation of Mr. Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

His decades of experience with the Department of Agriculture, and his farming background, makes him an excellent candidate. I believe Mr. Matsukawa possesses the passion and ability to be an excellent leader for the Department of Agriculture.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 697.

Testimony in Support of GM 697 – Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture

To: Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Leo Obaldo

Date: April 3, 2025

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

I am honored to submit this testimony in strong support of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture. With his extensive experience in agricultural loan administration and a lifelong dedication to supporting Hawaii's farmers, ranchers, and agricultural businesses, Mr. Matsukawa is exceptionally well-qualified to serve in this critical leadership role.

Throughout his career with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, including his tenure as Administrator of the Agricultural Loan Division, Mr. Matsukawa has played a key role in ensuring financial accessibility for agricultural operations across the State. His expertise in structuring and managing agricultural loan programs has provided critical financial relief and investment opportunities for local farmers and ranchers, enabling them to grow their businesses and contribute to Hawaii's food security and sustainability.

Mr. Matsukawa is a dedicated and visionary leader who understands the challenges and opportunities within Hawaii's agricultural sector. His decision to return from retirement to serve as Deputy Director is a testament to his deep commitment to the Department's mission and to the well-being of our agricultural community.

I respectfully urge the Senate to support his confirmation.

Mahalo!

Leo Obaldo, PhD  
Administrator, Hawaii Department of Agriculture Quality Assurance Division  
(808) 832-0705

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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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

To: Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Brendan Akamu, Branch Manager, Market Development, Department of Agriculture

Date: April 2, 2025

RE: Support of GM 697 – Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Committee Members,

I am submitting testimony in strong support of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. As the Branch Manager, Market Development, I have witnessed his leadership, efficiency, and commitment to advancing Hawaii's agricultural sector.

Since stepping into this role, Mr. Matsukawa has provided clear direction, operational stability, and strategic improvements that benefit both the Department and the agricultural community. His extensive experience, including his tenure as Agricultural Loan Administrator, has strengthened programs that provide essential financial support to local farmers and agribusinesses.

Mr. Matsukawa has the full support of myself and the Market Development Branch and together with Chairperson Sharon Hurd, they will be a strong team dedicated to the Department of Agriculture. And together they will strengthen agriculture in Hawaii and support farmers.

Confirming Mr. Matsukawa as Deputy Director will allow the Department to continue its progress under experienced and capable leadership. His qualifications, industry knowledge, and results-driven approach makes him an asset to the state. I respectfully urge the Senate to support his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,

Brendan R Akamu  
Branch Manager, Market Development Branch (MDB)  
brendan.r.akamu@hawaii.gov  
808-973-9465



Testimony in Support of GM 697 – Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture

To: Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Richard Cohen

Date: April 3, 2025

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Committee Members,

I am submitting testimony in strong support of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. As an employee of the Department, I have witnessed his leadership, efficiency, and commitment to advancing Hawaii's agricultural sector.

I have had personal experience working with Mr. Matsukawa during the time I have been with the department and know him to be professional and courteous, and thoughtful in his implementation of programs he has been associated with. He is a confident leader and someone that is committed to helping guide the department as well as helping farmers to succeed.

Since stepping into this role, Mr. Matsukawa has provided clear direction, operational stability, and strategic improvements that benefit both the Department and the agricultural community. His extensive experience, including his tenure as Agricultural Loan Administrator, has strengthened programs that provide essential financial support to local farmers and agribusinesses.

Mr. Matsukawa has the full support of the employees at the Department and the confidence of Director Sharon Hurd. Together, they make a strong team dedicated to strengthening agriculture in Hawaii, supporting farmers, and ensuring the Department operates effectively.

Confirming Mr. Matsukawa as Deputy Director will allow the Department to continue its progress under experienced and capable leadership. His qualifications, industry knowledge, and results-driven approach make him an asset to the state. I respectfully urge the Senate to support his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

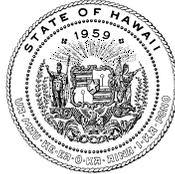
Sincerely,

Richard Cohen

Measurement Standards Program Manager, Department of Agriculture

[Richard.A.Cohen@Hawaii.gov](mailto:Richard.A.Cohen@Hawaii.gov)

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



KEITH A. REGAN  
COMPTROLLER  
KA LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ  
  
MEOH-LENG SILLIMAN  
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA 'OIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ**  
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 'I 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
OF  
KEITH A. REGAN, COMPTROLLER  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES  
TO THE  
  
**COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

APRIL 4, 2025, 1:00 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL

G.M. 697

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS THE DEPUTY  
DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE DEAN MATSUKAWA,  
FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 12-07-2026.

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee, thank you  
for the opportunity to submit testimony on G.M. 697.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) **supports** the  
Governor's nomination of Dean Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of  
Agriculture (DOA). His background as a third-generation farmer, business loan officer  
and state administrator, makes him an excellent choice.

Mr. Matsukawa was born into the agriculture industry. He grew up on his family's  
banana and tropical flowers farm on the windward side of O'ahu. He managed and  
operated the farm for six years. Mr. Matsukawa supervised schedules for harvest,  
irrigation, pesticide, fertilizer and fungicide applications. He also modernized his family

business by installing accounting and payroll systems.

Mr. Matsukawa went on to become a DOA business loan officer where he was involved in all aspects of the industry; from initial loan interviews to loan closings and collections duties like loan modifications, forbearances and loan settlements. He worked on all islands and counties and became familiar with various crops, production techniques and challenges farmers face throughout the state.

This job gave Mr. Matsukawa a tremendous amount of insight into the agricultural loan industry. Through his hard work and leadership abilities, he became DOA's agriculture loan administrator. In that role, he managed the daily operations and developed long-term strategies for the Agricultural Loan Division. Mr. Matsukawa increased the division's loan portfolio, developed new loan programs and made public appearances on behalf of the program.

Mr. Matsukawa began serving as DOA Deputy Director in January 2024. His background, experience, knowledge and leadership abilities make him an ideal candidate to continue in that position.

I humbly ask that you support his confirmation. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

Testimony of Matthew K. Loke

Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Friday, April 4, 2025 at 1:00 PM, Conference Room 224

Testimony in Support of GM 697 – Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture

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

I am pleased to submit testimony in strong support of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. As his colleague at the Department, I have had the privilege of witnessing his diligence, commitment, and leadership in advancing Hawai'i's agricultural sector.

Since stepping into this role, Mr. Matsukawa has provided operational stability, implemented strategic improvements, and taken prompt administrative actions that have benefit both the Department and the agricultural community. His extensive experience, including his tenure as Agricultural Loan Administrator, has enhanced programs that provide vital financial support to local farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses.

Mr. Matsukawa possesses a diplomatic approach and has earned the strong support of the Department's employees, as well as the confidence of Director Sharon Hurd. Together, they make a dedicated team to further strengthen agriculture in Hawai'i, supporting agriculturalists statewide, and ensuring the Department operates effectively.

Confirming Mr. Matsukawa as Deputy Director will ensure the Department continues its progress under experienced and capable leadership. With over 32 years of experience, extensive industry knowledge, and strong qualifications, he is a valuable asset to the state. I respectfully urge the Senate to support his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Matthew K. Loke, Ph.D.

Administrator, Department of Agriculture

[Matthew.K.Loke@hawaii.gov](mailto:Matthew.K.Loke@hawaii.gov)

Testimony in Support of GM 697 – Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture

To: Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Keith Otsuka

Date: April 3, 2025

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Committee Members,

I am submitting testimony in strong support of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. As a long-time employee of the Department, I have known Mr. Matsukawa since I began working with the department back in 1991, and through the years, I have witnessed his leadership, efficiency, and commitment to advancing Hawaii's agricultural sector.

Since stepping into this role, Mr. Matsukawa has provided clear direction, operational stability, and strategic improvements that benefit both the Department and the agricultural community. His extensive experience, including his tenure as Agricultural Loan Administrator, has strengthened programs that provide essential financial support to local farmers and agribusinesses.

Mr. Matsukawa has the full support of the employees at the Department and the confidence of Director Sharon Hurd. Together, they make a strong team dedicated to strengthening agriculture in Hawaii, supporting farmers, and ensuring the Department operates effectively.

Confirming Mr. Matsukawa as Deputy Director will allow the Department to continue its progress under experienced and capable leadership. His qualifications, industry knowledge, and results-driven approach make him an asset to the state. I respectfully urge the Senate to support his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Keith Otsuka

Manager, Commodities Branch, Department of Agriculture

Phone: 808-832-0709, Email: keith.h.otsuka@hawaii.gov



BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT (AEN)

DATE: 4/04/25

TIME: 1:00PM

CONFERENCE ROOM: CR 224

BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS

Ethan West  
President

Nicole Galase  
Vice President

Trisha Yamato  
Treasurer/Secretary

Ramsey Brown

Michelle Dasic

John McHugh

Danny Rubenstein

EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

Dave Elliott

GM 697

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA FOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Dear Chairperson and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

**The Hawai'i Ag Finance Network** (previously known as the Hawai'i Ag Finance or Ag Microfinance Hui) was founded in 2018 by Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm, in partnership with agricultural community lenders Feed the Hunger Fund, Slow Money Hawai'i, and The Kohala Center. The intent in bringing Hawai'i's agricultural funders together is to identify collective ways to address the financial needs of businesses operating across Hawai'i's food and agricultural sector. To date, more than 18 organizations have consistently participated in our Hui including:

- the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Loan Division, Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's (DBEDT)
- Business Development and Support Division, Community-based Economic Development (CBED)
- USDA Farm Service Agency (USDA FSA)
- Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)
- USDA Rural Development (USDA RD)
- Hawai'i Central Federal Credit Union (HCFCU)
- American AgCredit (AAC)
- Whole Foods Market (WFM), Loan Producer Loan Program (LPLP)
- RSF Social Finance,
- Commercial and Business Lending (CBL) represents First Financial Bank in Hawai'i
- Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA)
- Hawai'i Investment Ready (HIR)
- Pacific Gateway Center (PGC)
- Kamehameha Schools (KS)
- Slow Money Hawai'i (SMH)
- Feed the Hunger Fund
- The Kohala Center (TKC);
- Ulupono Initiative and others.

The group is currently supported by Ulupono Initiative with administration provided by staff at O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council (ORCD).

**The Hawai'i Ag Finance Network strongly supports** the confirmation of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Matsukawa's extensive experience and deep commitment to Hawai'i's agricultural sector make him exceptionally qualified for this role.

As a third-generation farmer from Windward O'ahu, Mr. Matsukawa has firsthand knowledge of the challenges facing Hawai'i's agricultural communities. His leadership, expertise, and experience will be invaluable in supporting farmers and enhancing food security statewide.

Throughout his career, he has been an advocate for local farmers, ranchers, and agricultural businesses. As Agricultural Loan Administrator from 2005 to 2022, he played a pivotal role in providing financial support to the industry. His return in 2025 as Deputy Director underscores his dedication to advancing the Department's mission and strengthening Hawai'i's agricultural future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support.

Sincerely,

Amanda Shaw  
Director of Food Systems



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

April 4, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON GM 697**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, DEAN MATSUKAWA, for a term to expire 12-07-2026.

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 strongly supports the confirmation of Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy to the Chairperson of the Department of Agriculture.**

Mr. Matsukawa is a highly respected member of the agricultural community with decades of experience, both as a farmer and a public servant. A third-generation farmer from the windward side of Oahu, Dean has firsthand knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing Hawai'i's agricultural producers. His family farm, which grew bananas, tropical flowers, and rotational vegetable and fruit crops, has been an integral part of Hawai'i's agricultural heritage.

Mr. Matsukawa has also served as a past County President of the East Oahu and Kona County Farm Bureaus, where he provided leadership and represented local farmers' voices in policy discussions. His deep understanding of local agriculture, built over generations, makes him uniquely qualified to help lead the Department of Agriculture.

Professionally, Dean has more than 30 years of experience at the Department of Agriculture. As the former Agricultural Loan Administrator, he was instrumental in expanding the department's loan portfolio from \$17 million to \$25 million and in creating new loan programs tailored to the needs of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers. His leadership in managing the Agricultural Loan Division, his work on legislative bills, and his

engagement with agricultural stakeholders statewide demonstrate his commitment to supporting the industry through sound financial and policy strategies.

Dean's work has earned him several accolades, including Manager of the Year and Team of the Year at the Department of Agriculture. He is a graduate of the Agricultural Leadership Program and the Hawai'i Leadership Academy, reflecting his long-standing commitment to professional growth and public service.

With a strong foundation in both agriculture and government service, Mr. Matsukawa offers a balanced and experienced perspective that will benefit the Department of Agriculture and the entire agricultural community. His leadership, dedication, and lifelong commitment to Hawai'i agriculture make him an excellent choice for Deputy Director. We respectfully urge the Senate to confirm Dean Matsukawa.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of his nomination.



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

**GM697**

Friday, April 4, 2025, 1:00PM  
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports GM697** for the confirmation of Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Matsukawa has a wealth of experience with the Department of Agriculture as shown by his many years of service. It is important to have this background knowledge of the department as well as his own farming experience. We look forward to engaging with Mr. Matsukawa on the challenges and opportunities for ranching in Hawaii and appreciate the work he has put in as the current Deputy Director.

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



**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:48:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alan Gottlieb	Testifying for Ponoholo Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support Dean Matsukawa for Deputy Director of HDOA



## **HAWAII AGRICULTURE RESEARCH CENTER**

94-340 Kunia Road Waipahu, HI 96797

Ph: 808-621-1350/ Fax: 808-621-1399

[www.harc-hspa.com](http://www.harc-hspa.com)

**Testimony in Support of GM 697 –**  
**Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director**  
**For the**  
**Hawaii Department of Agriculture**  
**Date: April 2, 2025**

Chairperson Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN):

My name is Robbie Melton. I am Executive Director of the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center (HARC). I am testifying today on behalf of the center and our research and support staff.

I strongly support the confirmation of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. His extensive experience and commitment to Hawaii's agricultural sector makes him highly qualified for this role.

Mr. Matsukawa has dedicated his career to supporting local farmers, ranchers, and agricultural businesses. As Agricultural Loan Administrator from 2005 to 2022, he played a key role in providing financial assistance to the agriculture industry. In 2025, he returned to serve as Deputy Director, demonstrating his commitment to moving the Department forward in a positive direction.

A third-generation farmer from Windward Oahu, Mr. Matsukawa, understands the challenges facing Hawaii's agricultural communities. His leadership, knowledge, and experience will strengthen the Department's efforts to support farmers and enhance food security.

I respectfully urge the Senate to confirm Mr. Matsukawa's nomination.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support.

**LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC  
PO BOX 27  
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759  
(808) 688-2892**

**GM 697, Dean Matsukawa  
Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture  
Senate AEN Committee  
Friday, April 4, 2025  
1:00 PM**

**Testimony by: Larry Jefts  
Position: Support**

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

I am Larry Jefts, owner and operator of Larry Jefts Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. Our family farms grow about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. I am a volunteer director, serving as Chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have also served as an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

Your support and confirmation of Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture is appreciated.

Dean Matsukawa is a third-generation farmer from Windward Oahu. He has firsthand knowledge of the needs of agriculturists and Hawaii agriculture. This practical experience enabled him to connect with farmers and ranchers who needed financial assistance, first as a Business Loan Officer and then as the Administrator of the Agricultural Loan Division.

His more than 30 years of work experience with the Department of Agriculture is a strong foundation for achieving the Department's goals, which seek to enhance, promote, and protect Hawaii's agriculture and aquaculture industries.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
Friday, April 4, 2025 — 1:00 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports GM 697**, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, Dean Matsukawa, for a Term to Expire 12-07-2026.

Dear Chair Gabbard 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 and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

**Ulupono supports GM 697.** Mr. Matsukawa's combined agricultural and government service uniquely qualifies him for this leadership role. His many years working closely with local producers to secure low-interest loans and financing, not to mention his experience as a farmer himself, will provide key insight and input to assist in leading the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture. With the many years he has served the State of Hawai'i working at the Agricultural Loan Division as both a Loan Officer and the Division's Administrator, Mr. Matsukawa was tasked with understanding local farmers' needs and seeking out innovative solutions to expand the economic viability of many agricultural operations across the state. His wealth of knowledge and genuine care for the future of agriculture in Hawai'i will undoubtedly be a true asset as the Deputy Director at the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 8:40:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Warren Watanabe	Testifying for Maui County Farm Bureau	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Maui County Farm Bureau strongly supports Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

Mahalo

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 3:40:52 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sydney Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Governors Message GM697

My name is Sydney Smith and I'm writing in support of Dean Matsukawa for Deputy Director of The Hawaii Department of Agriculture. He came out of retirement to assist our struggling agriculture sector and I really appreciate him doing that in these stressful times.

He has vast knowledge from working in this field before and we really need him there where he can help Ms. Hurd in overseeing this important Department and in her quest for qualified applicants for vacant positions.

Lack of qualified personnel is a problem nearly every department here in Maui County has. Positions that call for 10 people are staffed with just one or isn't staffed at all. Competing with the private sector and our high costs of living are challenging to say the least.

I believe Mr. Matsukawa is our best choice to help.

Sydney Smith

Maliko Estate Coffee

808-268-3646

malikoestate@icloud.com

Testimony in Support of Gubernatorial Nominee Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture

To: Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)

Subject: Testimony in Support of GM 697 – Confirmation of Dean M. Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for the confirmation of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Matsukawa's extensive experience and unwavering dedication to Hawaii's agricultural sector make him exceptionally qualified for this role.

As a third-generation farmer who grew up on his family's farm in Windward Oahu, Mr. Matsukawa possesses deep-rooted knowledge of the challenges and opportunities within our agricultural communities. His firsthand experience has instilled in him a profound commitment to supporting local farmers and their families.

Professionally, Mr. Matsukawa has demonstrated exemplary leadership within the Department of Agriculture. Serving as the Agricultural Loan Administrator from May 2005 to March 2022, he played a pivotal role in providing financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, and aquaculturists across the state. In January 2024, he came out of retirement to assume the position of Deputy Director, further showcasing his dedication to advancing Hawaii's agricultural industry and interests.

Mr. Matsukawa's academic credentials further attest to his preparedness for this position. He is a graduate of the University of Washington and an alumnus of the Agricultural Leadership Foundation of Hawaii's Class VI, reflecting his commitment to continuous learning and leadership development.

Given his comprehensive background and steadfast dedication, I am confident that Mr. Matsukawa will continue to lead the Department of Agriculture forward positively and effectively. His confirmation will undoubtedly benefit our farmers, our community, and the broader agriculture sector in Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui loa for considering this testimony in support of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa's nomination.

With Aloha,

Cedric Gates

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 11:27:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of GM 697 Dean Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. I have worked with Mr. Matsukawa for 8 years and he has over 31 years of professional and administrative experience with the Department along with a business background in family farming growing bananas and tropical flowers in Windward Oahu. Mr. Matsukawa is knowledgeable of the functional organization and responsibilities of 7 divisions of the department, the legislative process, and challenges and needs of agricultural producers. He has assisted former administrations with strategic planning, and countless departmental committees. His willingness to serve as Deputy Director will be an asset to the department and the Agricultural industry. Please recommend to advise and consent the nomination of Dean Matsukawa. Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support.

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:52:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lon Paresa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Dean Matsukawa as Deputy Director of Department of Agriculture. Thank you.

Lon Paresa

Retired Military and Legislative Officer

Testimony of Isaac Maeda, DVM

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

APRIL 4, 2025

1:00 PM

CONFERENCE ROOM 224

GM 697

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS DEPUTY TO THE  
CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE,  
DEAN MATSUKAWA

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

I support Dean Matsukawa's nomination for Deputy to the Chairperson of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (Department).

Dean has a broad and deep understanding of the Department from time as the Administrator for the Agricultural Loan Division. Through the years he has acquired extensive institutional knowledge of the organization and how the Divisions interact and support agriculture. His experience gives him keen insight into land and financial issues facing producers and the state. Dean is hard working, intuitive and communicates with staff and colleagues well . He is a reliable resource, willing to help, responsible with communications and effectively deals with ambiguous situations. Therefore, Dean Matsukawa is well suited to serve as Deputy to the Chairperson.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my testimony.

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 4:47:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ken Kakesako	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the Committee,**

**My name is Ken Kakesako and I am writing in strong support of GM 697 for consideration and confirmation of Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture (Department).**

**I had the distinct pleasure of working with Dean when he served as the Agricultural Loan Administrator for the Department. I worked with Dean in my capacity as the legislative coordinator for the Department and then later as the Deputy to the Chairperson, and I always found Dean to be forthright and knowledgeable. His long history interacting with farmers and ranchers was evident in his approach to the agricultural loan program; always doing his best to push and advocate for the local agricultural industry. His understanding of the hardships and challenges facing our farmers and ranchers was reflected in the care and dedication with which he approached the agricultural loan program.**

**Farmers and ranchers need to make money in order to continue to provide the robust local agricultural economy that is envisioned for Hawaii. Dean understands the financial challenges that farmers and ranchers grapple with and can bring that perspective to his role as the Deputy Director of the Department.**

**I am excited to see the vision and leadership that Dean would bring to the Department in his role as Deputy Director.**

**Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony in support of the nominee.**

**Sincerely,**

**Ken H. Kakesako**

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 5:20:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brendan Balthazar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I personally know Dean for over 20 years . He has helped a lot of farmers and rancher qualifying for agg loans . And made sure he was accessable if they had any problems. He has been with the department for a lot of years and is very knowlegable about what DOA should be doing to help farmers and ranchers. And unlike others who just are there to collect a pay check ,he is genuinely concerned about the operation and their success. He calls and checks on them every so often. He is a great choice to be the deputy of DOA.

Brendan Balthazar

Diamond B Ranch LLC

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 11:22:47 AM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bobbie Patnode	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Dean Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

He has been doing the job since January and has been a great help to Sharon Hurd..

As a farmer I ask you to please confirm him so we can continue to recieve excellent service from the DOA. Thank you.

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:37:45 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 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 GM 697 for consideration and confirmation as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture, Gubernatorial Nominee, DEAN MATSUKAWA. He is a friend of farmers and ranchers.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

Thompson Ranch

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 10:56:33 AM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jason Moniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support Mr. Dean Matsukawa as the Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 1:59:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marci Clingan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Committee Members:

I am submitting testimony in strong support of Mr. Dean Matsukawa's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture.

I have had the privilege of knowing Mr. Matsukawa for the past 10 years while working here at the Department. He holds a lot of experience and knowledge in agriculture and he is a great pleasure to work with. Mr. Matsukawa will make an excellent Deputy and I ask the Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members to accept the Governor's nomination of Mr. Dean Matsukawa.

Thank you,

Marci Clingan

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/2/2025 6:49:29 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
earl yamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY OF EARL YAMAMOTO

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2025

1:00 PM

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 697

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION AS

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,

GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, DEAN M. MATSUKAWA, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE

12-07-2026

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

Thank you for the privilege of testifying before you **in support** of the confirmation of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. I am the senior planner in the Department with 43 years of service and a former part-time farmer.

I have full confidence in Dean to help bring the Department of Agriculture up to full functional capacity. In doing so, Hawai'i's farmers will be able to increase their production and market presence and be profitable doing so. Dean is energetic and earnest and has decades of experience meeting with commercial farmers asking for assistance with their operating and capital loan needs. Most importantly, Dean, as a former self-employed farmer, intimately knows the business of agriculture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Testimony in Support of GM 697 – Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture

To: Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Hawai'i Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Bonhee J. Keanu

Date: April 2, 2025

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Committee Members,

I am submitting my testimony in strong support of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. As an employee of the Department, I have witnessed his leadership, efficiency, and commitment to advancing Hawaii's agricultural sector.

Mr. Matsukawa is also a man of good character and decency. Mr. Matsukawa listens attentively to employees, offering practical advice, guidance, and support to those facing challenges or issues.

Confirming Mr. Matsukawa as Deputy Director will allow the Department to continue its progress under experienced and capable leadership. His qualifications, aloha spirit, industry knowledge, and result-driven approach make him a great asset to the state.

I respectfully urge the Senate to support his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,

Bonhee J. Keanu

Economist, Department of Agriculture

Email: [bonhee.j.keanu@hawaii.gov](mailto:bonhee.j.keanu@hawaii.gov)

Phone: 808-973-9593

**GM-697**

Submitted on: 4/3/2025 2:51:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Annette Niles	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in full support for Dean Matsukawa as Deputy Director of agriculture Mahalo Annette Niles

Testimony in Support of GM 697 – Dean M. Matsukawa for Deputy  
Director of the Department of Agriculture

To: Chairperson and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture  
and Environment (AEN)

From: Randall DeAguiar

Date: April 4, 2025

Dear Chairperson and Committee Members,

I strongly support the confirmation of Mr. Dean M. Matsukawa as Deputy Director of the Department of Agriculture. His extensive experience and commitment to Hawaii's agricultural sector make him highly qualified for this role.

Mr. Matsukawa has dedicated his career to supporting local farmers, ranchers, and agricultural businesses. As Agricultural Loan Administrator from 2005 to 2022, he played a key role in providing financial assistance to the agriculture industry. In 2024, he returned to serve as Deputy Director, demonstrating his commitment to moving the Department forward in a positive direction.

A third-generation farmer from Windward Oahu, Mr. Matsukawa understands the challenges facing Hawaii's agricultural communities. His leadership, knowledge, and experience will strengthen the Department's efforts to support farmers and enhance food security.

I respectfully urge the Senate to confirm Mr. Matsukawa's nomination. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support.

Sincerely,

Randall DeAguiar

