

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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
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State of Hawai'i  
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**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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

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

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2025  
9:30 AM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1497  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1497 relating to agriculture. The bill requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to develop an online reporting tool for restricted use pesticide reporting and appropriates funds to convert temporary environmental health specialist III positions into permanent positions. The Department is in strong support of this bill.

In 2020-21, the Department developed an online reporting tool for restricted use pesticide reporting pursuant to Section 149A-26, Hawaii Revised Statutes, but has not had consistent staffing to conduct outreach and education for full implementation of the tool. The two temporary positions provided in Act 45, SLH 2018, have turned over five (5) times since their establishment. Converting the positions to permanent status will provide stability for staff and allow the Pesticides Branch to complete the outreach required to fully implement the online restricted use pesticide reporting tool.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





# HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

HB1497 – With Comments  
Relating to Agriculture

House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2025  
Time: 9:30 AM  
Place: Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide **comments regarding HB1497**, which requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to develop an online reporting tool for restricted use pesticide reporting and converts temporary environmental health specialist III positions into permanent positions.

HCIA appreciates this measure's attempt to streamline the reporting process and make it more effective. A user-friendly online reporting tool should help with producing more timely submissions, less paperwork, and efficient data collection. Reducing administrative burden, particularly for smaller farmers, allows the agriculture sector to put greater resources towards growing their businesses and expanding the industry as a whole.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB1497.

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

**HB-1497**

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 1:38:06 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition SUPPORTS!



## House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

### Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HB 1497 with amendments

Wednesday, February 12th, 2024 9:30 a.m. Conference Room 325

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

**HAPA supports HB 1497** which requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to develop an online reporting tool for restricted use pesticide reporting. Appropriates funds to convert temporary environmental health specialist III positions into permanent positions. We also suggest the following amendments:

- 1) Include provisions which require reporting of RUP usage within a square mile to provide more geographic specificity and consistency. California currently requires reporting within a square mile.
- 2) Require reporting in a consistent unit of measurement (pounds and pounds per acre), by TMK.

### **Hawai'i's Current RUP Reporting Regime Does Not Support Public Health**

**Assessment:** Pesticide exposure can cause significant harm to public health and the environment. Restricted use pesticides have been deemed to have a high potential to cause

As such, comprehensive pesticide use data is essential to accurately assess risks and ensure that communities are protected from adverse impacts. The US regulatory system often acts after an overwhelming amount of harm has occurred and been proven through long-term studies. **The current reporting regime in Hawai'i does provide geographically specific enough data to conduct credible public health studies.**

HAPA was founded in response to community members living near large agrochemical fields asking for the right to know what pesticides are being used adjacent to their homes, schools, waterways and other sensitive areas. After over a decade-long effort to provide residents with clear information on what they may be exposed to, the implementation of Act 45 still has not provided communities with that information.

### **The Need for More Geographic Specificity**

Publicly reported data on each RUP is summarized by island. Any resident who might have concerns about what is being used nearby has no way of gleaning more geographically specific information. This kind of reporting is essentially useless to someone who might be concerned



about exposure to drift. harm to surrounding communities, farm workers, pollinators, the environment, and other crops.<sup>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</sup>

The reporting for RUP (Restricted Use Pesticide) use data in Hawai'i, has only recently started to become available, as of 2019. Because of poor reporting, it has taken considerable effort to make sense of the data, do the calculations, and format them into consistent metrics.

Currently, users are required to report the address, tax map key (tmk), and location of the application site but are not required to provide specific geospatial data that could provide comprehensive mapping of pesticide impacts. This poses difficulties to communities who live adjacent to large tracts of agricultural land. Because TMK sizes vary widely, application data in larger TMK's doesn't provide the level of specificity that communities need, or that can be used to conduct peer reviewed studies. California currently requires reporting within a square mile, which allows enough specificity for peer-reviewed epidemiological studies to be conducted to meaningfully assess risk and health impacts.

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<sup>1</sup> Shelton J et al. Neurodevelopmental Disorders and Prenatal Residential Proximity to Agricultural Pesticides: The CHARGE Study. *Environ Health Perspect.* 2014 122(10) 1103-1109. <http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/1307044/>

<sup>2</sup> Shelton J and I Hertz-Picciotto. Neurodevelopmental Disorders and Agricultural Pesticide Exposures: Shelton and Hertz-Picciotto Respond. *Environ Health Perspect.* 2015. 123(4): A79–A80. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4384207/>

<sup>3</sup> Eskenazi B et al. Organophosphate Pesticide Exposure and Neurodevelopment in Young Mexican-American Children. *Environ Health Perspect.* 2007. 115(5): 792–798. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1867968/>

<sup>4</sup> Marks AR et al. Organophosphate pesticide exposure and attention in young Mexican-American children: the CHAMACOS Study. *Environ Health Perspect.* 2010. 118:1768–1774. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21126939>

<sup>5</sup> Gonzalez-ALzaga B. A systematic review of neurodevelopmental effects of prenatal and postnatal organophosphate pesticide exposure. *Toxicol Lett.* 2014. 230(2):104-21 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24291036>

<sup>6</sup> Roberts EM, et al. Maternal residence near agricultural pesticide applications and autism spectrum disorders among children in the California Central Valley. *Environ Health Perspect.* 2007. 115(10):1482-9. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17938740>

<sup>7</sup> Deziel NC et al. A Review of Nonoccupational Pathways for Pesticide Exposure in Women Living in Agricultural Areas. *Environ Health Perspect.* 2015. 123 (6) 515-524. <http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/1408273/>

<sup>8</sup> Simcox NJ Pesticides in household dust and soil: exposure pathways for children of agricultural families. *Environ Health Perspect.* 1995. 103:1126–1134. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1519258/>

<sup>9</sup> Waimea Community Dust Impacts, Preliminary Evaluation Report, Knox Hoversland Architects LTD. Jim A'Ana et al. v. Pioneer HiBred International, Inc. Feb 24, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Stemp-Morlock G. Reproductive Health: Pesticides and Anencephaly *Environ Health Perspect.* 2007 Feb; 115(2): A78. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1817703/>

<sup>11</sup> Lacasaña M. Maternal and paternal occupational exposure to agricultural work and the risk of anencephaly. *Occup Environ Med.* 2006 Oct; 63(10): 649–656. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2078046/>

<sup>12</sup> Brender JD et al. Maternal Pesticide Exposure and Neural Tube Defects in Mexican Americans. *Annals of Epidemiology*, Dec 2009, 20(1):16-22 <http://europepmc.org/article/med/20006272>



## **The Need for Consistent Units of Measurement**

HAPA worked with our partners to convert the 2019 data into a consistent unit of measurement (pounds), as data is reported in gallons, pounds and ounces, to GIS map the amounts used per TMK, pounds per acre, frequency of application, and combinations of pesticides. We have begun to analyze hotspot areas such as Central O'ahu-North Shore O'ahu for areas of concern and share that data out with those local communities. A recent presentation in Whitmore Village documented by 'Ōlelo can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/3gwVotI-Y1w>

Each RUP formulation requires a different calculation to convert usage data into a consistent unit of measurement. This is important to allow for an “apples to apples” comparison of RUP usage in each community and statewide. Having all of Hawaii's RUP usage data converted pounds also allows for comparison with other states lbs/acre rates. For example, by converting all the 2019 data into pounds we could compare Hawaii's fumigant usage with California and other major agriculture producing states. Hawaii usage appears to be some of the highest in the nation.

California's Department of Pesticide Regulation currently converts all RUP usage data into pounds for public reporting purposes. We recommend a system similar to California. HAPA contractors have already generated the needed formulas for data conversion and would be happy to share our research efforts with the Department of Agriculture.

## **Why Improved Data is Critical to Assessing Risk**

According to the state sponsored Joint Fact Finding Group study, Pesticide Use by Large Agribusinesses on Kaua'i (2016)<sup>13</sup>, "more information is needed about the time and place of applications along with greater oversight to ensure compliance on all Islands.

California appears to lead the nation in studies of chronic health effects and/or associations with pesticide use. They are able to reach this level of scientific inquiry because they require careful reporting of pesticide applications that specify what was sprayed, where, when, and in what quantities."<sup>14</sup> Improved reporting in Hawaii can provide policymakers and public health experts with important data with which to make evidence based decisions about pesticide use.

When Hawai'i became the first state to ban chlorpyrifos, many of the studies conducted in California's central valley provided long-term epidemiological research that proved the neurological harm to fetuses and children. It was due to this research that state regulators and ultimately the EPA banned this dangerous neurotoxin, but only after decades of harm had already occurred. This type of study and research was only possible due to more geographically

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<sup>13</sup> Pesticide Use By Large Agribusiness on Kaua'i: *Findings and Recommendations of the Joint Fact Finding Study Group*; <https://www.accord3.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/jff-kauai-final-report1.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> A Guide to Pesticide Regulation in California: <https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/pressrls/dprguide/chapter9.pdf>



specific data. Applicators need to record this information to ensure they are properly treating target areas and following the label. It is not a matter of whether this data is available, but rather whether the state is willing to require that it be publicly reported.

**Creating an Online Reporting Tool Will Streamline Data Collection and Save Resources:**

The creation of an online portal for RUP users to upload their usage data and for public reporting would require an initial investment, but ultimately would save considerable time and resources once established. Formulas for converting data into a consistent format/unit of measurement could be automated, users could simply input use data into the portal and community members interested in local RUP usage could easily search for what is being used in their local community.

Please support HB1497.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

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

Anne Frederick  
Executive Director

**HB-1497**

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 7:11:09 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn Poiani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support with hesitation 1497 HB RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

This bill is a great idea, but there needs to be financial cap on expense for this bill.

Thank you,

Dawn P. Honolulu, HI 96813