

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
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TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 20, 2025
2:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 329 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

HOUSE BILL NO. 48, HD1
RELATING TO COFFEE LABELING

Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about this important measure that clarifies the labeling and advertising requirements for coffee that is grown and processed in the State. Defines regional origin. The Department of Agriculture (DOA) strongly supports this measure.

This measure clarifies wording from the original language in Section 486-120.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes to change the language from Hawaii-grown and Hawaii processed coffee; labeling or advertising requirements, to Hawaii-grown and processed coffee; labeling or advertising requirements. Also, this bill clarifies that the definition of "regional origin" only applies to a coffee growing region of the world that is outside the State of Hawaii.

Since funds were not appropriated for increased labeling inspections under Act 198 (2024), DOA respectfully requests that funds be added to this bill to establish a Measurement Standards Inspector V position (SR-19, \$65,000), to restore DOA's capability for enforcement of packaging and labeling regulations. The inspector will



enforce the new labeling laws for coffee and other Hawaii-made products such as mamaki tea and macadamia nuts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about this measure.

REBECCA VILLEGAS

*Council Member
District 7, Central Kona*



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LATE

HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL

*County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740*

February 20, 2025

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS COUNCIL MEMBER,

HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL

ON HB 48 HD1 RELATING TO COFFEE LABELING

House Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

Thursday, February 20, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

Chairperson Matayoshi and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of HB 48 HD1 relating to coffee labeling. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Hawai'i County Council.

The purpose of this measure is to clarify the labeling and advertising requirements for coffee that is grown and processed in the State and define regional origin. This measure will ensure truthful representation of coffee produce geographically origin, which will protect consumers from fraud and deception in coffee labeling and advertising and will protect the integrity and reputation of Hawai'i grown coffees specifically including the heritage coffee grown in the Kona region.

For these reasons stated above, I urge House Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection to support this measure. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at, (808) 323-4267

Mahalo for your consideration.

Rebecca Villegas
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council

HB-48-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 2:41:09 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| David Bateman | Heavenly Hawaiian Farms | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun and Committee Members,

Heavenly Hawaiian Farms **strongly supports** HB48 HD1.

HB48 HD1 makes clear the distinction between "geographical" Hawai'i grown and processed coffee products and "regional" foreign grown and processed coffee products for labeling purposes. The language of this bill corrects prior confusing language conflating the two sources.

This bill helps protect the integrity of the superior premium quality of Hawai'i grown and processed coffee from misrepresented lesser quality regional coffees. It makes clear to the buying public what they are purchasing and paying for. This transparency is essential in protecting the good name and reputation of Hawai'i's coffees.

We **strongly support** HB 48 HD1 and request your committee vote favorably on the measure and move it forward out of committee.

Mahalo nui,

Dave Bateman, President

Heavenly Hawaiian Farms

Holualoa, HI



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February 20, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 48, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 329 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice-Chair Chun, and Members of the Committee:

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

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 48, HD1, which clarifies the labeling and advertising requirements for coffee that is grown and processed in Hawai'i. Ensuring accurate labeling for Hawai'i-grown coffee is critical to protecting local farmers, maintaining the integrity of the state's premium coffee brands, and providing consumers with transparent information about the origin of their coffee.

Hawai'i-grown coffee is globally recognized for its high quality and unique flavor profiles, making it one of the most valuable crops in the state. According to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, the estimated production value of Hawai'i-grown coffee for the 2023-2024 season was \$48.2 million, ranking it among the top agricultural commodities in the state. However, misleading labeling practices have continued to pose a challenge, allowing coffee blends with only a small percentage of Hawai'i-grown beans to be marketed in ways that confuse consumers and devalue local coffee.

HB 48, HD1 strengthens existing labeling laws by clearly distinguishing between **geographic origin** and **regional origin**, ensuring that coffee labeled with a Hawai'i geographic reference genuinely originates from the state. This distinction is essential to protecting the reputation of Hawai'i coffee, preventing deceptive marketing, and maintaining consumer trust. Farmers and processors who invest in producing high-quality, 100% Hawai'i-grown coffee should not have to compete with misleadingly labeled products that contain primarily foreign-grown beans.

Hawai'i's coffee industry is already facing significant challenges, including rising production costs, labor shortages, and threats from invasive pests such as coffee berry borer and coffee leaf rust. Ensuring that only authentic Hawai'i-grown coffee is marketed as such will help preserve the industry's value, support local farmers, and reinforce consumer confidence in Hawai'i coffee products.

We urge the committee to pass HB 48, HD1 to protect the integrity of Hawai'i-grown coffee and ensure fair and transparent labeling for consumers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-48-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:19:13 AM

Testimony for CPC on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| James Kimo Falconer | Hawaii Coffee Growers Association | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun and members of the House Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee,

On behalf of the coffee growers here in Hawaii, I am writing in support of HB 48 HD1, a measure that clarifies and distinguishes the difference between Geographical origin and Regional origin as it relates to Hawaii Coffee labeling.

False labeling is difficult for a farmer to reasonably find recourse without a law to back his or her claim against a counterfeiter. That farmer needs to be able to protect their reputation in the market place insuring their integrity and consumer trust. By making it clear the difference between these two origin types, we gain yet another means to stop the abuse.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify today.



Food+ Policy Internship 2025

food@purplemaia.org

LATE

February 19, 2025

Subject: HB48 *Consumer Protection; Coffee Labeling; Hawai'i-Grown and Processed Coffee; Geographic Origin; Regional Origin*

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Chun, and Members of the Consumer Protection and Commerce Committee,

Hawaii Food+ Policy is in support of HB48 to clarify the labeling of coffee for what is grown and processed within Hawaii. With the clarifications of this bill it will close any loopholes and end confusion regarding coffee that is grown out of state but processed within Hawaii. With the passing of HB48 the state would be protecting the value added product of Hawaiian grown coffee, produced by our own local businesses. The “Made in Hawaii” value upon a product is important in upholding the integrity of our local coffee farms and businesses, for we want their hard work to be rightfully recognized.

In establishing these clarifications, the state would be protecting the quality of our Hawaiian coffee, as well the earned integrity of our coffee producers. In establishing the difference between “geographical and “regional”, we are also securing fair market prices for our local coffee businesses. For these reasons we ask that you support in passing HB48, to protect the production, integrity and market of our local coffee. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,
The Hawaii Food+ Policy Team

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

In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergrads and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.