

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

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**FRIDAY MARCH 14, 2025
1:00 p.m.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & Videoconference**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 48, HD2
RELATING TO COFFEE LABELING**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards 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 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. This measure strengthens existing labeling laws by clearly distinguishing between geographic origin and regional origin, which is essential for protecting the reputation of coffee grown and processed in Hawaii, preventing deceptive marketing, and maintaining consumer trust. For clarification that this is only referring to geographic region coffee that is both grown and processed in Hawaii. Also, 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 with ACT 198 in 2024. DOA respectfully requests that funds be added to this bill to support one FTE Measurement Standards Inspector V SR-19 \$65,000 who will support and restore enforcement capability for all labeling regulations for Hawaii products such as coffee, macadamia nuts and mamaki tea. The inspector will inspect and enforce the new laws and existing ones. Note: this single position has been requested on bills relating to 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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HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

*County of Hawai'i
West Hawai'i Civic Center, Bldg. A
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy.
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March 12, 2025

TESTIMONY OF REBECCA VILLEGAS COUNCIL MEMBER,
HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL
ON HB 48 HD2 RELATING TO COFFEE LABELING
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of HB 48 HD2 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 Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment to support this measure. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at, (808) 323-4267

Mahalo for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Villegas".

Rebecca Villegas
Council Member, Hawai'i County Council



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March 14, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON HB 48, HD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

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 supports HB 48, HD2, 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, HD2 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, HD2 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-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 7:13:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and members of the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee.

Please support HB 48 to help the coffee industry shore up its defense to counterfeiting of our World reknown product. This bill will clearly define and specify the terms "grown" and "processed" in the current laws passed to protect our Hawaiian coffee growers. Even with the current anti-counterfeiting laws passed the abuse continues as new loopholes are found. This measure is a means to close those loopholes. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.