

**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 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
TOURISM AND SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025**  
**1:01 PM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 229**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 774, H.D. 2**  
**RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS**

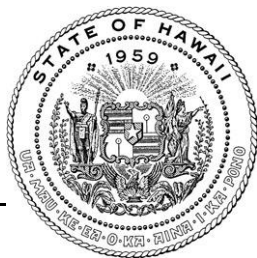
Chairs DeCoite and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Wakai and Richards, and Members of the  
Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 774, H.D. 2. This bill seeks to establish a food and product innovation network within the Agribusiness Development Corporation, enabling local businesses to scale up new products from research and development to manufacturing and commercialization. The Department of Agriculture (Department) supports this initiative.

The food and product innovation network proposed in this measure includes a range of robust facility partners on Kauai, Hawai'i, Maui, Molokai, and Oahu. The Department believes this network has the ability to significantly assist Hawai'i's agricultural businesses by offering space, equipment and specialized expertise to local farmers and other entrepreneurs for creating value-added products using locally grown and raised agricultural products. Additionally, it may serve as a catalyst for innovations in food products, processing technologies, packaging and labeling processes, export certification, inventive supply chain logistics, and new marketing channels.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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

**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

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

Tuesday, March 18, 2025  
1:01 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of  
**HB 774, HD2**  
**RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS**

Chairs DeCoite and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Wakai and Richards, and members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 774, HD2, which proposes the establishment of the Agribusiness Development Corporation's (ADC) Food and Product Innovation Network. This initiative is pivotal to addressing systemic challenges in Hawai'i's agricultural sector and fostering a resilient and diversified economy that benefits all residents.

**Key Benefits of the Food and Product Innovation Network**

**Value-Added Production Opportunities:**

The network will empower farmers and food entrepreneurs to transform raw agricultural products into high-value goods. Access to centralized processing, packaging, and product development facilities will enable producers to generate greater revenue, extend product shelf life and reduce waste.

**Support for Local Farmers and Entrepreneurs:**

Many of Hawai'i's small-scale farmers and entrepreneurs lack the resources to develop and commercialize new products. Shared facilities, technical assistance, and training programs will level the playing field, enabling these businesses to compete in both local and global markets.

**Enhanced Food Security and Resilience:**

By increasing local food production and processing capacity, this initiative will reduce Hawai'i's reliance on imported goods. This strengthens the state's resilience against supply chain disruptions and aligns with Hawai'i's goals for food security and sustainability.

**Economic Development and Job Creation:**

The network will drive economic growth by supporting new and existing businesses, fostering innovation, and creating jobs in agriculture, food manufacturing and related sectors. Investments in facilities and equipment will provide the infrastructure needed to support these activities.

**Alignment with Sustainability Goals:**

The network promotes sustainable practices by encouraging the use of local ingredients, reducing food waste, and supporting environmentally friendly production methods. These efforts will contribute to Hawai'i's broader climate and sustainability objectives.

**Statewide Benefits and Regional Equity**

The establishment of a statewide network ensures equitable distribution of resources and opportunities across counties, addressing the unique agricultural strengths and needs of each region. Examples include:

- O'ahu: Leverage urban infrastructure for processing and distribution.
- Maui: Support diversified agriculture and innovative value-added products.
- Hawai'i Island: Focus on livestock processing, specialty crops and rural development.
- Kaua'i: Promote niche markets such as tropical fruits and agroforestry products.

Positioning future facilities on ADC-owned lands in Kekaha, Hawai'i Island, Maui and Moloka'i ensures greater access to value-added resources for local producers while utilizing existing infrastructure. This will help maximize the impact on Hawai'i's agricultural sector by fostering entrepreneurship, innovation and economic growth across the islands.

This bill is a forward-thinking measure that addresses critical gaps in Hawai'i's agricultural sector while creating opportunities for economic growth and resilience. By establishing the Food and Product Innovation Network, we can support small farmers and entrepreneurs, enhance food security and advance our state's sustainability goals.

We respectfully urge the Committee to pass this important measure and thank you for your dedication to Hawai'i's agricultural future.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
HUI HO'OULU AINA MAHIAI

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**LATE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM  
AND  
AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

March 18, 2025  
1:01 p.m.  
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

HOUSE BILL NO. 774 HD2  
RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

Chairs DeCoite and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Wakai and Richards, and Members of  
the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill No. 774 HD2, which proposes the establishment of the Agribusiness Development Corporation's (ADC) Food and Product Innovation Network across the state of Hawai'i. This initiative represents a transformative opportunity to strengthen the state's agricultural sector, diversify the local economy, and enhance Hawai'i's food security and sustainability efforts.

**The Importance of a Food and Product Innovation Network**

Hawai'i's agricultural industry faces a range of challenges, including limited processing infrastructure, barriers to market entry, and dependence on

imported goods. A statewide Food and Product Innovation Network can address these challenges by fostering collaboration, innovation, and value-added production. This network will provide essential resources and facilities that support farmers, ranchers, and food entrepreneurs in transforming raw agricultural products into high-value goods.

### **Key Benefits of the Proposed Network**

#### **1. Value-Added Production Opportunities:**

By providing access to facilities for food processing, packaging, and product development, the network will enable farmers and producers to create value-added goods that generate higher revenue and extend the shelf life of local agricultural products.

#### **2. Support for Local Farmers and Entrepreneurs:**

Many small-scale farmers and food entrepreneurs lack the resources to develop, test, and commercialize new products. The network's shared facilities and technical assistance will level the playing field, empowering them to compete in local and global markets.

#### **3. Enhanced Food Security and Resilience:**

Expanding local food production and processing capacity will reduce Hawai'i's reliance on imported goods, increasing the state's resilience to supply chain disruptions and advancing its food security goals.

#### **4. Economic Development and Job Creation:**

The network will spur economic growth by supporting new and existing businesses, fostering innovation, and creating jobs in agriculture, manufacturing, and related sectors.

#### **5. Sustainability and Climate Goals:**

The network can encourage sustainable practices by promoting the use of local ingredients, reducing food waste, and supporting environmentally friendly production methods.

#### **Statewide Benefits and Regional Equity**

The establishment of a Food and Product Innovation Network across Hawai'i ensures that resources are distributed equitably among counties, allowing for regional specialization and addressing the unique agricultural strengths and needs of each area.

- **O'ahu:** Leveraging urban markets and infrastructure for processing and distribution.
- **Maui:** Supporting diversified agriculture and innovative value-added products.
- **Hawai'i Island:** Focusing on livestock processing, specialty crops, and rural development.
- **Kaua'i:** Promoting niche markets, such as tropical fruits and agroforestry products.

Recommendations for Implementation

To ensure the network's success, I recommend the following:

- **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Engage farmers, producers, academic institutions, and community organizations in the planning and implementation process to ensure that the network meets local needs.
- **Streamlined Access:** Simplify application processes and provide technical assistance to ensure equitable access to facilities and resources, particularly for small-scale producers and underserved communities.
- **Focus on Education and Training:** Include programs that provide hands-on training in food safety, product development, and marketing to equip producers with the skills needed for success.
- **Sustainability Metrics:** Incorporate metrics to evaluate the network's impact on food security, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

House Bill 774 HD2 represents a bold and necessary step toward strengthening Hawai'i's agricultural economy and ensuring the long-term viability of local food production. By establishing the Agribusiness Development Corporation's Food and Product Innovation Network, we can empower farmers and producers, foster innovation, and build a more resilient and sustainable food system for the state.

I respectfully urge you to support this measure and prioritize its passage. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and for your commitment to

advancing Hawai'i's agricultural future. We support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.





**UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM**

**‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII**

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 1:01 p.m.

By  
Della Teraoka  
Interim Vice President for Community Colleges  
University of Hawai'i System

## HB 774 HD2 – RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

Chairs DeCoite and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Wakai and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 774 HD2, which establishes under the Agribusiness Development Corporation a "food and product innovation network" providing access to facilities, resources, expertise and education to capitalize on the "Made in Hawai'i", "Produced in Hawai'i", or "Processed in Hawai'i" brand, critical to meet the State's agricultural and economic diversification goals.

Synergies between partner and primary network members can expand access statewide, and leverage resources while avoiding unnecessary duplication in support of innovation and business development.

Critical to the success of exports and commercialization of value-added products is the establishment of facilities with the capacity to support growing businesses in scaling up production, to support economic diversification through off-shore markets.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 774 HD2, on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 774 HD2.



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)

March 18, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON HB 744, HD2**  
RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference  
1:01 PM

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and Gabbard, Vice-Chairs Wakai and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

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 744, HD2**, which establishes a food and product innovation network within the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

As expenses rise, increases in farm revenues and profits are critical to the continued viability of farms and ranches. Farmers can do this by "adding value" to raw agricultural crops. Currently, off-grade and excess production is sometimes wasted due to market conditions. Converting them into value-added products will increase farm revenue and provide new business opportunities, increase employment opportunities, and address Hawai'i's goals of increased self-sufficiency and sustainability.

High production costs are a major driver of narrow profit margins for Hawai'i's farmers and value-added food producers. Labor, taxes, land, transportation, utilities, and supplies are all costs of doing business that often result in value-added food producers just breaking even.

If a Hawai'i farmer or entrepreneur wants to process an off-grade product into a value-added product they are usually forced to send it to the mainland because Hawai'i lacks value-added processing facilities. This cost of transportation to and from the mainland is often enough to discourage farmers from pursuing value-added production.

Hawai'i is potentially losing millions of dollars because of the cost of processing agricultural crops into value-added products. A network of food and value-added facilities in Hawai'i will support the production of new value-added products so that farmers can increase their income while allowing locally produced value-added goods to compete with imported products, and expand into new export markets, strengthening our local economy.

The strength of Hawai'i's economy depends upon a diversity in commerce that is resilient to economic downturns and aggressive in creating new growth opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



## SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

## HB 774 HD2 – RELATING TO VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 774 HD2.



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
P: 808-533-1292 | e:  
[info@hawaiiifood.com](mailto:info@hawaiiifood.com)

#### **Executive Officers**

**Maile Miyashiro**, C&S Wholesale Grocer, *Chair*  
**Kit Okimoto**, Okimoto Corp., *Vice Chair*  
**Jayson Watts**, Mahi Pono, *Secretary/Treasurer*  
**Lauren Zirbel**, HFIA, *Executive Director*  
**Paul Kosasa**, ABC Stores, *Advisor*  
**Derek Kurisu**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Economic Development and Tourism and Committee on Agriculture and Environment

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 18, 2025

TIME: 1:01pm

RE: HB774 HD2 Relating to Value Added Products

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. Increasing local food production is a goal we all share. When more of the food that is consumed in Hawaii is made in Hawaii our state becomes more resilient, more sustainable, and stronger economically. State support for value added products is a key component of increasing local food production.

HFIA has proudly produced the Made in Hawaii Festival for 30 years. Each year Made in Hawaii Festival vendors find ways to add value and create a range of amazing products using locally grown fruits, vegetables, meat, flowers, wood, and more. We know there is tremendous potential for growth in this sector. Creating a Food and Product Innovation Network is the kind of support that can enable our local businesses to grow and thrive and create more Hawaii food and products for Hawaii consumers.

We encourage the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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

SENATE COMMITTEES ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM & AGRICULTURE  
AND ENVIRONMENT

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 — 1:01 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 774 HD 2, Relating to Value-Added Products.**

Dear Chair DeCoite, Chair Gabbards and Members of the Committees:

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 HB 774 HD 2**, which establishes a food and product innovation network within the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Farmers can increase their profitability by creating value-added products with their off-grade produce. Off-grade produce can be perfectly edible and nutritionally sound, but might not be “good looking” enough for grocery shoppers. With off-grade produce comprising 10% to 40% of typical harvests,<sup>1</sup> this network would help enable farmers to generate revenue from currently unused crops.

We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production and the success of our farmers and ranchers in scaling up to help our state meet its agricultural and economic diversification goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.salon.com/2019/09/08/study-finds-farm-level-food-waste-is-much-worse-than-we-thought\\_partner/](https://www.salon.com/2019/09/08/study-finds-farm-level-food-waste-is-much-worse-than-we-thought_partner/) and <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344919301296>



**Hawai'i Forest Industry Association**

7192 Kalaniana'ole Hwy  
Suite A-143A, #249  
Honolulu, HI 96825  
Phone: 808/933/9411  
Email: hfia@hawaiiiforest.org

**Date:** 03/17/25

**TO:** EDT Chair DeCoite, AEN Chair Gabbard and EDT/AEN Committee Members

**FROM:** Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

**SUBJECT:** In Support of HB774 HD2 Relating to Value Added Products

Dear Chair DeCoite, Chair Gabbard and EDT/AEN Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), please support HB744 HD2 Relating to Value-Added Products..

Since 1989 HFIA has worked towards actualizing healthy and productive forests across the state of Hawaii and recognized Hawaii's opportunity for economic growth and diversification. We've taken much pride in encouraging our members to create products utilizing locally sourced materials. We've done this via our Hawaii's Wood Brand program which represents fine items made from wood grown in the Hawaiian Islands. The program requires participants to meet certain criteria ensuring their products are Hawaii Made and of good quality. Roughly 40% of HFIA's members are woodworkers, the vast majority of whom utilize woods sourced locally. Many HFIA woodworkers sell their finished products both locally and out of state. These sales of high quality, Hawaii Made products, to out of state buyers are a small-scale example of what HB744 HD2 could yield on a broader scale across various food and product categories.

It is also important to note that Hawaii is home to millions of acres of land zoned as Conservation Reserve. These lands hold forest resources that could be utilized for innovation and to create value-added, Hawaii Made products. Extracted resources could be replenished for future harvest and use. These lands also hold wild game that could be processed to feed local families or exported as a Hawaii Sourced product with the support of a Food and Product Innovation Network.

Ultimately, a successful Food and Product Innovation Network could yield various benefits including economic diversification and growth, job creation, business innovation and networking and resource sharing amongst entrepreneurs in the State of Hawaii. For these reasons we hope that you will support HB744 HD2.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

*Guy Cellier*

Guy Cellier, President

Hawaii Forest Industry Association

*HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 130 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.*

**HFIA Board of Directors**

Officers: President Guy Cellier, Vice President Irene Sprecher, Secretary Taylor Coons, Treasurer Wade Lee  
Directors: Jeremy Campbell, Doug Gordon, Nicholas Koch, Michael Sowards, Aileen Yeh



# Food+ Policy Internship 2025

[food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org)

**LATE**

3/17/25

Subject: HB 774, *Agribusiness Development Corporation Food and Product Innovation Network*

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and Gabbard, Vice Chair Wakai and Richards, and Members of the Economic Development & Tourism/Agriculture & Environment Senate Committees,

Hawaii Food+ Policy is in support of HB 774, which seeks to establish a statewide Food and Product Innovation Network. This initiative is critical for enhancing Hawai'i's agricultural economy, fostering economic diversification, and strengthening our position in the global marketplace.

Hawai'i has a rich tradition of unique and high-quality agricultural products. However, many local businesses struggle to scale their operations due to limited access to advanced manufacturing equipment and industry expertise. The establishment of an open-access network for food and value-added product development will provide essential resources that empower local entrepreneurs to develop, manufacture, and commercialize new products efficiently.

By supporting HB774, the Legislature will help businesses capitalize on the globally recognized "Made in Hawai'i," "Produced in Hawai'i," and "Processed in Hawai'i" brands. This will not only promote local innovation but also create jobs, drive economic growth, and enhance our state's competitive edge in national and international markets.

Furthermore, this bill aligns with Hawai'i's goals of sustainability and self-sufficiency. By investing in infrastructure that supports local food production and product innovation, we can reduce dependence on imports and build a resilient economy that benefits residents, businesses, and future generations.

We urge you to pass HB774 and support Hawai'i's local entrepreneurs in achieving their full potential. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,

The Hawaii Food+ Policy Team

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**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.





**MAUI**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**LATE**

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM  
and  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 229  
Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 1:01 P.M.**

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair  
Members of the committee on Economic Development and Tourism  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair  
Members of the committee on Agriculture and Environment

**SUPPORT HB774 HD2 RELATING TO RESILIENCY**

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS HB774 HD2** which establishes a Food and Product Innovation Network within the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) to support Hawaii's agricultural and economic diversification goals.

The Chamber recognizes that the creation of a food and product innovation network is essential to achieving the state's agricultural and economic diversification objectives. This network will enable businesses in Hawai'i to capitalize on the global appeal of the "Made in Hawai'i," "Produced in Hawai'i," or "Processed in Hawai'i" brand. It will also facilitate the creation of world-class products and increase production capacity by providing businesses with access to a wide range of manufacturing equipment and industry expertise.

We wholeheartedly support initiatives that promote our local businesses and farmers.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT HB774 HD2** and respectfully request its passage.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

**HB-774-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 7:37:49 AM

Testimony for EDT on 3/18/2025 1:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

A great way to help local farmers, food sustainability and the economy. Mahalo!