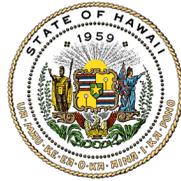


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

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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WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2025
10:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 77, HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 69
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO DESIGNATE
KUNIA, LEILEHUA PLATEAU, AND POAMOHO AS THE CENTRAL OAHU
AGRICULTURAL CORRIDOR AND TO ESTABLISH A LIST PRIORITIZING
POTENTIAL AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS
THAT WOULD PROVIDE THE MOST VALUE TO THE STATE.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Concurrent Resolution No. 77 and House Resolution 69. These resolutions request the Department of Agriculture (Department) to designate Kunia, Leilehua Plateau, and Poamoho as the Central Oahu Agricultural Corridor and to establish a list prioritizing potential agricultural infrastructure improvement projects that would provide the most value to the State. These resolutions also request the Department of Transportation to consider traffic signage for speed limits and "no passing" zones. The Department offers comments on the proposed Corridor designation and establishing a list of prioritized agricultural infrastructure improvements.

With respect to the requested designation of the proposed Central Oahu Agricultural Corridor, the Department would consider identifying, rather than designating, the Corridor, as we have no program or authority to formally designate a geographic area. We also recommend the resolutions declare a purpose for the proposed designation or identification of the Corridor. For the Committee's information, the Department has identified and testified about the need to protect the "Kunia Corridor" from non-agricultural uses and activities. As we informally describe it, the "Kunia Corridor" extends from the Royal Kunia community and the Hawaii Agricultural



Research Center to the south and Schofield Barracks and Wheeler Army Airfield to the north, with the Kunia Road at its core.

The resolutions request the Department to “establish a list prioritizing potential agricultural infrastructure improvement projects that would provide the most value to the State...” The resolutions identify infrastructure needed by farmers to include roads and water systems. The resolutions should specify whether this list of prioritized infrastructure is to be limited to the proposed Central Oahu Agricultural Corridor or the island of Oahu, or the entire State. If the list of prioritized infrastructure is specific to the agricultural lands within the proposed Corridor, then the Department would respectfully recommend that the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism be the requested agency in these resolutions as the ADC controls thousands of acres of agricultural land, operates the Waiahole Ditch, and is a major party to the Wahiawa Irrigation System.

The Department notes that “potential agricultural infrastructure improvement projects” may be expressed in general terms in county plans. County zoning ordinances and State land use law identify permitted and permissible uses on agricultural land and do not identify specific infrastructure projects. Therefore, there is little, if any, utility to include county zoning and State land use law in establishing the list of prioritized potential agriculture infrastructure improvement projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these resolutions.

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

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEM

March 21, 2025
10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 77/HOUSE RESOLUTION 69

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO DESIGNATE KUNIA, LEILEHUA PLATEAU, AND POAMOHO AS THE CENTRAL OAHU AGRICULTURAL CORRIDOR AND TO ESTABLISH A LIST PRIORITIZING POTENTIAL AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS THAT WOULD PROVIDE THE MOST VALUE TO THE STATE.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of House Concurrent Resolution 77 & House Resolution 69, requesting the Department of Agriculture to designate Kunia, Leilehua plateau, and Poamoho as the Central Oahu agricultural corridor and to establish a list prioritizing potential agricultural infrastructure improvement projects that would provide the most value to the state.

Some of Hawaii's largest diversified farmers operate on the central plain of Oahu. Investing in the region's aging plantation era infrastructure is of critical importance not only because of the impact on the production of crops, but also

because of the economic impact on the community. Making these investments will ensure the infrastructure can support agriculture production for centuries to come.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

HR-69

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 5:50:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/21/2025 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Brian Miyamoto | Hawaii Farm Bureau | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Support this!



Hawaii Agriculture Research Center

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE and FOOD SYSTEMS

HOUSE CONTINUING RESOLUTION 77 AND HR 69

- REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO DESIGNATE KUNIA, LEILEHUA PLATEAU, AND POAMOHO AS THE CENTRAL OAHU AGRICULTURAL CORRIDOR

MARCH 21, 2025

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch and members of the committee:

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.

HARC strongly supports HCR77 and HR69 requesting the department of agriculture to designate Kunia, Leilehua plateau, and Poamoho as the central Oahu agricultural corridor and to establish a list prioritizing potential agricultural infrastructure improvement projects that would provide the most value to the state.

Central Oahu has is the pinnacle region of agriculture on Oahu. The HARC Kunia Experiment Station has been active for over 50 years conducting agriculture experiments and educating farmers across Hawaii on its research findings of best practices, new crop varieties with traits like disease resistance and higher productivity. We focus on crops that will strengthen Hawaii's agricultural sustainability.

The Kunia Experiment Station is the gateway to this agricultural district. Over the generations as the island has developed it has become less friendly to agricultural businesses in the designated area. There is much infrastructure that needs to be upgraded or developed.

For example, the current speed limit on Kunia Road is 35 MPH. Very few people actually drive the speed limit making it very difficult for farmers to enter and exit their property. Installing speed humps and other traffic measures would make a big difference.

To achieve Hawaii's goal of reducing food imports and increasing Hawaii's food production, creating this agriculture corridor will ensure Hawaii will have a thriving agriculture industry.

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

HR-69

Submitted on: 3/20/2025 4:02:56 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/21/2025 10:00:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Alan Takemoto | Bayer | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloe and members of the committee:

Bayer strongly supports HCR 77 / HR 69 which recognizes the best and most productive agricultural lands in central Oahu. It highlights the need to support and fund the necessary irrigation infrastructure and roadways for farming to be viable in this ag corridor.

We respectfully urge the passage of these resolutions.

Mahalo.