

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 FINANCE  
April 1, 2025  
2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 308  
& Videoconference

SENATE BILL NO. 1186 SD2 HD2  
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of Senate Bill 1186 SD2 HD2, which establishes the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Department of Agriculture, of which a representative of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) would be a member.

ADC is happy to continue working upon contributions made to the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group, as created through the passage of Senate Resolution 111, SLH 2024. This working group focuses on the farm-to-export pipeline, aligning inputs to the Food and Product Innovation Network, Department of Education's regional kitchens, and various Farm-to-State

initiatives, in an effort to fulfill the mandate outlined in Act 151 to double local food production and exports by 2030.

We recognize the Hawaii Department of Agriculture as a key partner in this effort to create a more resilient and sustainable food system for the State and defer all decisions regarding positions and funding considerations related to this measure.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



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

**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  
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Statement of  
**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
Director

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Tuesday, April 1, 2025  
2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of  
**SB 1186, SD 2, HD2**  
**RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS.**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) supports the intent of SB1186 SD2 HD2, which establishes the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) and appropriates funds for 3.00 temporary full-time equivalent positions for DBEDT.

DBEDT has established an internal working group comprising the ADC, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD), Department of Agriculture (DOA), University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UHCTAHR), and the Department of Education (DOE). This group focuses on addressing the farm-to-export pipeline, aligning inputs to the Food and Product Innovation Network (value-added production), DOE's regional kitchens (Farm-to-School, Act 175), and Farm-to-State initiatives (Act 176).

These collaborative efforts aim to fulfill the mandate outlined in Act 151 to double local food production and exports by 2030. DBEDT has shared its progress and findings with the interagency food systems working group during the interim, in accordance with SR111, and will continue to engage in these efforts. Our ongoing projects are designed to reduce Hawai'i's dependence on imports, strengthen our food security ecosystem, and support the construction of resilient food production facilities.

DBEDT respectfully requests 1.00 FTE permanent position: Crop Commodity Coordinator with a salary of \$85,765 for FY26 and \$83,315 for FY27. The Crop Commodity Coordinator will support Hawai'i's agricultural sector by providing strategic guidance, coordination, and market expansion for local crop commodities. This position will focus on identifying high-value crops, improving supply chain efficiencies, and developing strategies to enhance Hawai'i's agricultural competitiveness in both local and export markets. With the state's goal of doubling local food production, there is an urgent need to strengthen coordination among farmers, processors, and distributors. The Crop Commodity Coordinator will play a critical role in supporting growers, facilitating market linkages, and addressing production challenges such as pest and disease management, mechanization, and sustainability practices. This position will also assist in leveraging federal and state programs to support crop innovation and market access, ensuring a stable and resilient agricultural economy for Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure, and we look forward to continued collaboration to achieve our shared goals of enhancing Hawai'i's agricultural capacity and food security.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



STEPHEN F. LOGAN  
MAJOR GENERAL  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR OF  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
KAHU HO'OMALU PŌULIA

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA**  
**HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
4204 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4420

STATE OF HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1186 SD2 HD2,  
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
**FINANCE**

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

APRIL 1, 2025

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a testimony to **COMMENT** on Senate Bill 1186 SD2 HD2.

The Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency believes in this legislative measure as it aligns with our mission to enhance emergency management preparedness and response throughout the state of Hawai'i. HIEMA endorses any initiative that aims to strengthen and bolster the resilience of communities within the state.

We propose the establishment of an FTE position within HIEMA. This dedicated role would significantly reinforce our operational capacity and facilitate effective coordination among various state agencies involved in food systems management. By having an assigned resource focused on this initiative, HIEMA would support ongoing preparedness efforts related to food distribution.

We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and believe that it will strengthen our collective ability to respond to emergencies and ensure food security for our communities. HIEMA supports this measure, with the understanding that its passage will not negatively impact on the priorities outlined in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill SB1186 SD2 HD2.

James Barros: [james.barros@hawaii.gov](mailto:james.barros@hawaii.gov); 808-733-4300



LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**OFFICE OF PLANNING**  
**& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Late

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS  
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846  
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Written Only

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS, Director**

before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration of  
**SB 1186, SD 2, HD 2**  
**RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS.**

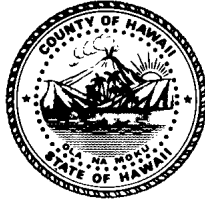
Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** SB 1186, SD 2, HD 2 which establishes the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

OPSD is proud to have contributed to the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group, playing an active role in the development of an interagency food systems plan through the passage of Senate Resolution 111 in 2024. Our Statewide Sustainability Branch is responsible for and has long been dedicated to developing and promoting policies that align with Hawai'i's sustainability and climate goals, and we are committed to fostering sustainable food systems across the state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this important initiative.

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.  
*Mayor*



Benson Medina  
*Director*

Dennis Lin  
*Deputy Director*

**County of Hawai'i**  
**DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**  
25 Aupuni Street, Room 1301 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-4252  
(808) 961-8366 • Fax (808) 935-1205  
E-mail: chresdev@co.hawaii.hi.us

March 31, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TUESDAY, April 1, 2025  
2:00 PM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

TESTIMONY ON SB 1186 SD2 HD2  
Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee,

I am Benson Medina, Director of the Department of Research and Development, County of Hawai'i. One of the agricultural objectives of this department is to "support collaboration, innovation, resource development, and programmatic sustainability throughout the food system to reduce food waste, improve producer viability and resilience, develop workforce development pathways, or increase access to locally produced food among low-income residents."

The County of Hawai'i provides written testimony in **SUPPORT of SB1186 SD2 HD2** to establish the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

The Agriculture and Food Systems Program in the County of Hawai'i Department of Research and Development supported the development of the Report of the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group in response to SR111, SD2, 2024 Legislature. Our department is in the process of facilitating community-led agriculture and food system planning to outline key strategies to support producers and improve food access. Connecting these community-level planning efforts to the Interagency Working Group proposed in SB1186 SD2 HD2 will streamline efforts to address our communities' most urgent and cross-agency issues.

The Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group proposed in SB1186 SD2 HD2 provide crucial coordination functions across all state agencies and counties, increasing communication and efficiency throughout the food system. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT of SB1186 SD2 HD2**.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "B. Medina", is written over a horizontal line.

Benson Medina  
Director

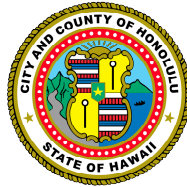


OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

KE KE'ENA LOLI ANIAU MĀLAMA 'ĀINA A ME KE OLA LOA  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 11<sup>th</sup> FLOOR • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
PHONE: (808) 768-2277 • EMAIL: [resilientoahu@honolulu.gov](mailto:resilientoahu@honolulu.gov) • INTERNET: [www.resilientoahu.org](http://www.resilientoahu.org)

RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR  
ME/IA



BENJAMIN SULLIVAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &  
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER  
PO'O HO'OKŌ & KAHU OLA LOA

KEALOHA FOX  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR &  
CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER  
HOPE PO'O & HOPE KAHU OLA LOA

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2025, 2:00 P.M.

STATE OF HAWAII  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 1186, SD2, HD2  
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**

BY,

KEALOHA FOX, Ph.D.  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY CHIEF RESILIENCE OFFICER  
OFFICE OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The City and County of Honolulu ("City") Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency ("Resilience Office") **supports** SB1186, SD2, HD2, which establishes the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

With nearly one in three Hawai'i households experiencing food insecurity, effective and cohesive coordination is essential to expanding access to affordable, nutritious food, supporting local farmers, and reducing dependence on imports. The O'ahu Resilience Strategy and *Climate Ready O'ahu*, the City's climate adaptation strategy, both emphasize the need for a resilient local food system, and the Resilience Office is currently developing O'ahu's first-ever Food Systems Plan to guide action in this area. Other recent City efforts, including adoption of Honolulu City Council Resolution 24-243, which reconvenes the Agricultural Development Task Force, reflect growing momentum to address the multifaceted needs of our island's food system.

The establishment of a Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and Interagency Food Systems Working Group would provide an invaluable platform for aligning City actions with those of the state and other key partners, ensuring that investments in our food system are collaborative, strategic, equitable, and impactful.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB1186, SD2, HD2.



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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Tuesday, April 1, 2025 — 2:00 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 1186 SD 2 HD 2, Relating to Sustainable Food Systems.**

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

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 SB 1186 SD 2 HD 2**, which establishes the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

This legislation takes crucial steps toward strengthening Hawai'i's food security and resilience by establishing a coordinated, interagency approach to addressing our food system challenges. The creation of the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and Working Group will help break down silos and foster the collaboration needed to achieve the state's food sustainability goals.

The bill thoughtfully brings together key stakeholders from agriculture, education, health, planning, and other sectors to develop coordinated solutions while providing necessary resources through new dedicated positions. By investing in this integrated approach to food systems planning and implementation, we can make meaningful progress toward increasing local food production, improving food access, reducing waste, and building a more sustainable and equitable food system for Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

**SB-1186-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 1:40:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

SUPPORT!



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)

April 1, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON SB 1186, SD2, HD2**  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, 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 SB 1186, SD2, HD2**, which establishes the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC). This measure aims to improve coordination among state agencies to strengthen Hawai'i's food system, requires reports to the Legislature, establishes positions, and appropriates funds for its implementation.

A coordinated approach to food system development can help address challenges related to local food production, distribution, procurement, and market access. Farmers and ranchers often face regulatory barriers and logistical challenges that limit their ability to expand local food production. By facilitating collaboration between government agencies and agricultural stakeholders, this initiative has the potential to streamline policies, improve procurement processes, and increase opportunities for farmers to participate in state food programs such as Farm to School and Farm to State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

**SB1186 SD2 HD2**  
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS.

Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 2:00 PM  
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB1186 SD2 HD2** which establishes the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Department of Agriculture.

The state has many goals for increasing local food production and increasing departmental local food purchasing. However, progress towards these goals have been slow and more attention is needed to identify where the bottlenecks are and what is needed to start meaningfully supporting our farmers and ranchers and making local food more accessible to our community.

We support this measure because Hawaii's cattlemen are ready and willing to supply a high quality protein for our community, but there are procurement and procedural issues to overcome. If solutions can be found for the state to begin consistently sourcing local beef, it would provide ranchers with a reliable market to encourage more local beef production, increase our access to a high quality protein source, improve community health, and move the needle on the states local food production goals.

In the 2023-2024 school year, beef contributed the highest number of local food purchasing for school lunches at 3%. The DOE is currently tasked with increasing local food served in public schools to 30% by 2030. Hawaii's paniolo can supply more than 3%, but the procurement system is a barrier. Our hope is that this Interagency Food Systems Coordination team will help us to help the state meet its local food goals.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director





## House Committee on Finance

### **Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB 1186 SD2 HD2**

April 1st, 2025 2:00 p.m. Conference Room 308

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee,

We support SB1186 SD2 HD2 which proposes to establish a Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and an Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Given the complexity and breadth of our local food system it is critical to support a coordinated approach which brings various stakeholders together to meet goals of increasing local food productions. Hawai'i's staggering rates of food insecurity, the challenges farmers face in accessing affordable land and water, increasing climate impacts and increasing invasive species threats are just a few of the many challenges that will need to be tackled to increase our local food security. These are challenges that require a coordinated approach across public agencies, stakeholders and sectors. A more resilient food system can address a variety of challenges facing Hawai'i, but only if we take a coordinated approach.

We can meet our goals of increasing local food production while also diversifying our local economy. Because our food system is so broad and complex, a plan will be needed to identify how the various sectors of our food system can work together to increase local food security.

A coordinated food systems plan led by key stakeholders across our food system can help connect the dots between local food producers, consumers, state institutional purchasing and community anti-hunger efforts. This work is critical to identify and advance solutions to fix our reliance on imports and to create a sustainable and equitable food economy.

Please support SB1186 SD2 HD2 to establish a Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and an Interagency Food Systems Working Group.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is placed below the 'Respectfully,' text.

Anne Frederick  
Executive Director



BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS (AGR)

DATE: 04/01/2025

TIME: 2:00 pm

CONFERENCE ROOM: CR 308

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DIRECTOR

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SENATE BILL NO. 1186 HD2

RELATING TO RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of SB 1186 HD2** establishing a Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and Food Systems Working Group.

**We support this measure as written.** Similar to other models throughout the U.S., funding for the coordination team is essential to helping accelerate progress on these goals and mandates. Indeed, the following are just a few of the goals, mandates and visions we have for our local food and agriculture system:

*Ensure 50% of foods are local agriculture or valued-added/food products within key state institutions by 2050 (Act 176, SLH 2021).*

*Farmers, ranchers, aquaculturists, and plant nursery growers experience reduced risk to production, broaden local and export markets, and receive effective support to detect and control pests (Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan, Vision Section 1.1).*

*Double local food production by 2030 (Act 151, SLH 2019).*

How are we currently coordinating a systematic effort to achieve them?

**With uncertainty about the role of federal funding in our state economy, bolstering our efforts to enact our statewide food systems mandates and goals is paramount.**

This bill allows us to make progress on institutional purchasing, local agricultural production and food access and security goals. In addition, it will align investments and priorities to support the Hawaii Farm to Families Program and the Agribusiness Development Corporation's Product Innovation Network.

Our farmers, food producers, distributors and most importantly, residents, are depending on our efforts.

Mahalo nui for your consideration of this vital measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Amanda Shaw".

Amanda Shaw

**Director of Food Systems**





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

#### **Executive Officers**

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**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 Finance

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: April, 2025

TIME: 2pm

RE: SB1186 SD2 HD2 Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

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. As the measure notes, food insecurity in Hawaii is alarmingly high, and there are many barriers that make it challenging for businesses that want to produce food locally. HFIA has long advocated for initiatives that will reduce food insecurity; supported local food manufacturing and other local businesses; and served as the voice of Hawaii's food and beverage industry. We have high level understanding of Hawaii's food systems and industry expertise.

We are in agreement with this measure that "achieving a sustainable, resilient, and equitable food system requires collaboration across state agencies, producers, retailers, non-governmental organizations, and community members."

As one of the tasks of the Interagency Food Systems Working Group the measure states that the group shall:

"(2) Coordinate with county and community-led organizations that are involved with food systems planning;"

We urge the group to reach out to HFIA during this coordination with community-led organization so that we and our members may lend our expertise to the group. We encourage the Committee to pass this measure, and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



April 1, 2025

Subject: Hawai'i Foodbank in Support of SB1186, SD2, HD2, Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, I express our support for SB1186, Relating to Food Systems. This bill establishes the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Department of Agriculture, requires reports to the Legislature, establishes positions, and appropriates funds.

As the state's largest hunger-relief organization, Hawai'i Foodbank has been committed to ensuring no one in Hawai'i goes hungry since 1983. We work with over 250 hunger-relief partners on O'ahu and Kaua'i to distribute food, and programs like Food 4 Keiki and 'Ohana Produce Plus provide nutritious meals to children and families. In addition to addressing daily needs, our organization mobilizes during emergencies to provide immediate relief and aid long-term recovery efforts.

Food insecurity is a growing crisis in Hawai'i, with nearly 1 in 3 households struggling to access adequate food. One in ten households go a whole day without food some or most months. A statewide strategy developed in collaboration with partners across the food system is a necessary step to developing a more sustainable and resilient food system in Hawai'i, and we are supportive of this important effort.

With aloha,

Amy Miller

President and CEO, Hawai'i Foodbank



Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Hawaii Food Plus Policy **strongly supports SB1186** and urges the committee to pass this critical bill. SB1186 establishes a statewide approach to food systems coordination, ensuring more efficient use of resources and addressing long-term costs associated with food insecurity, environmental impact, and public health.

Hawaii's dependence on imported food leaves the state vulnerable to supply chain disruptions, climate change, and natural disasters. SB1186 provides a strategic solution by formalizing collaboration across agencies, stakeholders, and sectors through the Hawaii Statewide Interagency Food Systems Process within the Agribusiness Development Council. A unified approach will strengthen our local economy by reducing reliance on imported food, enhancing local production, and supporting critical programs like farm-to-school initiatives and disaster preparedness.

Hawaii will be better equipped to handle emergencies that impact food supply with the passing of SB1186. It also removes barriers for local farmers by improving access to essential resources such as land, water, and infrastructure therefore reducing long-term costs while building a more self-sustaining food system.

**Passing SB1186 is an investment in Hawaii's future.** Without stronger coordination, food insecurity will worsen, our dependence on imports will keep us at risk, and local agricultural potential will remain underutilized.

We ask for your support in **passing SB1186** to create a more resilient, efficient, and effective food system for Hawaii.

Mahalo,  
Hawaii Food Plus Policy

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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 undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food 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.



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Mason Scharer  
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Moloka'i

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Natalie Urminska  
Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports SB1186.**

SB1186 is a significant measure aimed at transforming Hawaii's agricultural landscape through the establishment of the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group. The bill reflects a comprehensive and integrated approach to bolstering local food production, reducing food insecurity, and enhancing overall sustainability. The creation of these interagency bodies will facilitate a necessary collaboration across various state departments, local communities, and stakeholders, thus maximizing efforts towards achieving a balanced and resilient food system in Hawaii.

To ensure the success of this transformative initiative, it is essential that SB1186 includes dedicated positions and adequate funding. The roles of a food systems specialist, policy analyst, and administrative assistant are essential to effectively implement the strategies and foster the interagency collaboration needed. Additionally, the financial provision of sufficient funding over two fiscal years is necessary to demonstrate the state's steadfast commitment to addressing food security challenges. Such investment will enable the working group to coordinate resources efficiently, promote transparency through regular reporting to the Legislature, and continually adapt strategies to meet the established goals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Farmers Union



# HAWAII APPLESEED

## CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Support for SB 1186 – Relating to Sustainable Food Systems  
House Committee on Finance  
Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 2:00PM

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Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 1186, which would establish the Statewide Interagency Food Systems Coordination Team and the Interagency Food Systems Working Group within the Department of Agriculture (DOA).

Ensuring a healthy and sustainable food system requires the work of many stakeholders, including farmers, food retailers, consumers, and community groups. Government agencies also have a critical role to play. They regulate access to land and water, administer state and federal funding, and even procure food for various programs.

It is long past time the state recognize the critical importance of coordinating these activities across the various agencies involved. With every disaster that strikes, we witness the devastation to farmers on the one hand, and are faced with the stark realities of household food insecurity on the other. While the DOA is a critical player, they do not manage all of these roles, nor should they. However, establishing this interagency food systems coordination team will be a huge step in streamlining all fo the various government roles toward achieving the goal of a stronger and more resilient local food system.

This bill is a progressive and forward-thinking proposal that prioritizes government efficiency, public health, and a strong local food economy. Thank you for your consideration.

**SB-1186-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 11:37:56 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this important bill. Mahalo.

**SB-1186-HD-2**

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 6:23:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Good idea to move the state to food security, growth, diversity and sustainability. Mahalo!