

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

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY AND WAYS AND MEANS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2025
10:14 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 211

SENATE BILL NO. 242, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 242, SD1 that prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land. This measure prevents agricultural land from being sold, transferred, or leased for a period exceeding five years, and requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture (Department). Violations of the chapter will result in to-be-determined fines and voidance of land transactions. There are equal appropriations over two consecutive fiscal years to be expended by the Department to maintain an online public registry of foreign-owned agricultural lands within the State. The Department offers comments.

The Department will work with the Department of the Attorney General and other relevant agencies regarding the content of the annual report from foreign entities with ownership or leasehold interest in agricultural land and develop the appropriate administrative process to utilize in the event of violations of the provisions of the proposed chapter.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.





**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 242, S.D. 1, RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY AND ON WAYS AND MEANS

DATE: Friday, February 28, 2025 **TIME:** 10:14 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 211

TESTIFIER(S): **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY.**
(For more information, contact Kelcie K. Nagata,
Deputy Attorney General, at 808-586-1800)

Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

The stated purpose of this bill is to ensure that Hawaii's agricultural land remains available and accessible to local farmers and agricultural enterprises by limiting foreign ownership of agricultural land and establishing transparency requirements. It prohibits any entity that is not incorporated or organized to do business in the United States from holding any real property interest in agricultural lands over a certain acreage. The bill carves out four exceptions to the prohibitions: (1) interests in land conveyed by inheritance; (2) land used for non-agricultural purposes, as approved by the Department of Agriculture; (3) leaseholds of five years or less for non-controlling interests in agricultural land; and (4) any interest in land held by a foreign entity before July 1, 2025.

The bill further provides that any foreign entity with any interest in agricultural land must file an annual report to the Department of Agriculture. Any foreign entity that fails to comply with the chapter or fails to report to the Department of Agriculture will be subject to civil penalties and fines. Moreover, in this bill, any land transaction that is completed in violation of this new chapter shall be deemed void and the possession of land will revert back to the transferor or the Department of the Attorney General.

The Department has serious concerns regarding the constitutionality and legality of this bill and the potential for this bill, as written, to subject the State to litigation and to cause the State to incur substantial monetary liability. Among other things, the Department has concerns grounded in the Commerce Clause, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, of the United States Constitution. Under the Commerce Clause, only Congress has the authority to regulate commerce with foreign countries and to regulate interstate commerce. Relatedly, the federal government has exclusive authority over foreign relations. Because this bill prevents foreign corporations from having any property interest in Hawaii's agricultural lands, it appears to intrude on the federal government's authority to control the foreign relations of the United States.

Further, this bill may be preempted by the federal government via the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act (FIRRMA). FIRRMA is one of the statutes that governs the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS). Briefly, FIRRMA gives CFIUS the power to review and potentially intervene in a transaction to address concerns with foreign entities, including land purchases. Article VII, Clause 2, of the U.S. Constitution is commonly referred to as the Supremacy Clause and establishes that federal law take precedence over state laws and constitutions. Because FIRRMA and CFIUS have already regulated transactions with foreign entities, this bill, should it become law, may be preempted.

Section -4(c), on page 4, lines 18-21, which provides that transactions will be voided and ownership will revert to the transferor or the State, may also run afoul of the Due Process clauses of the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution and article I, section 5, of the Hawaii State Constitution. In general, due process requires notice and an opportunity to be heard before the government deprives a person of property or liberty. *Brown v. Thompson*, 91 Hawai'i 1, 10, 979 P.2d 586, 595 (1999) (adequate notice must inform the affected parties of the action to be taken against them and procedures available for challenging that action). Here, with an immediate voiding of the transaction, there is no opportunity for the the parties of the transaction to challenge any actions taken against them. And, also, there is no procedure for the funds used in the transaction to automatically "revert" back to the transferor.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Donna Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

LATE

Friday, February 28, 2025, at 10:14AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

RE: SB242 SD1 Relating to Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land

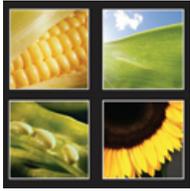
Aloha e Chairs Rhoads, Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber offers comments on Senate Bill 242 Senate Draft 1 (SB242 SD1), which prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land. Limits the lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities. Requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture. Appropriates funds.

The Chamber has concerns about the bill's potential economic impacts on Hawaii's agricultural sector, real estate market, and broader economy. By restricting foreign ownership and leasing of agricultural land, the bill could reduce demand for agricultural property, lowering land values and discouraging outside investment in Hawaii's agricultural infrastructure and innovation. While this may improve land access for local farmers in the short term, it could also limit the capital needed for modernization and growth. While the bill's intent to preserve agricultural land for local farmers and enhance food security is noteworthy, these economic concerns highlight the importance of balancing local agricultural interests with the need to maintain a stable investment climate, support economic resilience, and encourage innovation in Hawaii's agricultural sector.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

SB242 SD1 – In Opposition
Relating to Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land

Senate Committees on Judiciary and Ways & Means

Date: Friday, February 28, 2025
Time: 10:14 AM
Place: Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Joint Committees:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in opposition to SB242 SD1**, which prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land. It also limits the lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities and requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture.

Hawaii plays a critical role in agricultural research and development. Our tropical climate and agricultural infrastructure encourage both national and international entities to look at Hawaii as a prime location to conduct research for fruits and vegetables, seed crops, floral, and other types of crops. Hawaii should continue to be an international hub for agriculture research and development because it creates economic benefits to our local economy and small farming sectors.

HCIA is concerned about this bill's unintended consequences that could reverse Hawaii's economic growth since agriculture has been a steady business sector for many years. Our state should be focusing on getting more new farmers onto land, encouraging existing farmers to increase production, and increasing market development worldwide. Hawaii can be a mecca for both local production and the hub for international research and development. There are a lot of positive initiatives and programs to help local agriculture production and we should support those to further diversify Hawaii's economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices, and build a healthy economy.



Testimony of **Lahaina Strong**
Before the Senate Committees on
Judiciary & Ways and Means

In Consideration of Senate Bill No. 242 SD1
RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

To Chair Rhoads, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Moriwaki and the honorable members of the committees,

We are writing on behalf of Lahaina Strong, an organization deeply rooted in our community's resilience and advocacy. Originally formed in 2018 following the Hurricane Lane fire in Lahaina and revitalized after the devastating fires of August 8, 2023, Lahaina Strong has become the largest grassroots, Lahaina-based community organization, with over 35,000 supporters. Our mission is to amplify local voices and champion community-driven solutions, which are more critical than ever as we continue rebuilding and recovering.

Lahaina Strong, stands in **support of Senate Bill 242 SD1**, which limits foreign ownership of agricultural land and strengthens food security for our people. As we saw firsthand after the August 8, 2023, wildfires, being cut off from the world was terrifying. With no outside help in those critical first hours and days, we relied entirely on our community to survive. It was a stark reminder of how vulnerable we are as the most remote islands in the world.

Even before the fires, the pandemic made it clear that Hawai'i cannot afford to depend on outside forces to feed us. Yet, despite these hard lessons, foreign ownership of our agricultural lands continues to grow, pushing local farmers out and leaving our food systems in the hands of those who have no stake in our community.

This bill is a necessary step in shifting our economy toward true resilience. It ensures that agricultural land remains accessible to those who will use it to feed local families,

not corporate profits overseas. It demands transparency, accountability, and a future where Hawai'i feeds Hawai'i.

Lahaina Strong respectfully urges you to **pass Senate Bill 242 SD1** to protect our land, our resources and our future.

Mahalo for your time and dedication.

Sincerely,

Lahaina Strong



LATE

P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 28, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 242, SD1
RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:14 AM

Aloha Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice-Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki, 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 respectfully opposes SB 242, SD1, which seeks to restrict foreign ownership of agricultural land and impose additional reporting and leasing limitations.

While we share the legislature's commitment to ensuring that agricultural land remains available for local farmers and food production, this bill raises significant concerns about its potential unintended consequences, particularly regarding investment, land availability, and the viability of Hawai'i's agriculture industry.

Farming operations in Hawai'i require substantial capital investment, often secured through private investors, joint ventures, and partnerships—some of which include foreign entities. Restricting foreign investment may discourage much-needed agricultural development, particularly in areas requiring infrastructure improvements, irrigation systems, and sustainable land use practices. This bill could deter partnerships that are beneficial to local farmers, particularly those seeking financial backing to expand operations or transition to more sustainable farming methods.

Many farmers rely on long-term lease agreements with various landowners, some of whom may be considered "foreign entities" under this measure. By limiting lease terms to five years, SB 242, SD1 could introduce significant instability for farmers who depend

on secure, long-term leases to justify investment in soil improvement, irrigation, and equipment.

If foreign landowners divest due to these restrictions, it could reduce the availability of agricultural land, leading to higher costs and fewer opportunities for farmers.

The bill requires annual reporting by foreign entities with ownership or leasehold interests in agricultural land, creating additional administrative burdens. The proposed public registry of foreign-owned agricultural lands may complicate land transactions, making it more difficult to buy, sell, or lease farmland efficiently. The fines and penalties for non-compliance may lead to unintended consequences, such as land being taken out of agricultural production if ownership disputes arise.

Some of Hawai'i's largest landowners may have international stakeholders, including corporations and trusts that lease land to local farmers. If restrictions force these entities to sell land or withdraw from Hawai'i, it may shrink the pool of available farmland—further exacerbating access challenges for farmers.

Rather than protecting agriculture, SB 242, SD1 may lead to land speculation, development pressures, and even increased fallow land if owners are unable to sell or lease under the new restrictions.

HFB supports efforts to preserve agricultural land for active farming and to enhance food security in Hawai'i. However, we believe SB 242, SD1 may have unintended consequences that harm the very farmers it aims to protect.

We urge the committee to consider alternative approaches, such as incentivizing local ownership rather than imposing strict prohibitions that may negatively impact agricultural investments and land access.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our input on this measure.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:58:37 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gene Harrington	Testifying for Biotechnology Innovation Organization	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) is the world's largest trade association representing biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations. Our key areas of focus are health biotechnology, industrial and environmental biotechnology, and food and agriculture biotechnology. We oppose SB242.

Hawai'i has served as home for our biotechnology seed partners who lease and own land to grow research crops due to the state's favorable year-round climate and strong regulatory environment of the USDA and State Department of Agriculture. These seeds are an important tool to help farmers improve productivity and reduce costly pesticides and other inputs such as water and fertilizers. Our seed partners also make their lands - both lease and owned - available to small farmers to grow complimentary crops. They have financially supported the purchase of the Kunia Ag Park so that the Hawai'i Ag Foundation could make land more affordable and available for lease by small farmers. Our small local farmers have also enjoyed the economies of scale provided through lower priced agricultural supplies. So while these foreign companies may own and/or lease these lands, their important work contributes to the long term viability of agriculture in Hawai'i.

We respectfully request that the committee hold SB 242.



LATE

January 27, 2025

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Strong Opposition to SB 242, SD1 RELATING TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND (Prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land. Limits the lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities. Requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/2050. [SD1])

**Friday, February 28, 2025, at 10:14 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth, housing, and renewable energy, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural, cultural, and agricultural resources, and public health and safety.

While LURF understands that some of the reasons behind this measure may be well-meaning, LURF must **strongly oppose SB 242, SD1**.

SB 242, SD1 This measure prohibits foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in more than an unspecified number of acres of agricultural land; limits the lease term for agricultural land by foreign entities; requires foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture; and appropriates funds.

LURF's Position. LURF members include farmers, ranchers, and landowners who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises and continue to be dedicated supporters of agriculture. Over the past century, LURF members led the state in acreage of agricultural lands and production, and over the past two decades have partnered with the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation and its Neighbor Island chapters (Hawaii Farm Bureau) and the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to advocate for, and pass numerous laws that support agriculture, including the Right to Farm and Important Agricultural Lands laws, and have consistently supported initiatives, funding, and incentives for diversified agriculture and a broad range of farming and ranching to sustain and improve Hawaii's agricultural industry and food security.

While LURF and its members appreciate and share the Legislature's support for local land ownership and agricultural operations, we must **strongly oppose SB 242, SD1** based upon the following unintended negative consequences for agriculture, farming, and ranching in Hawaii. Among other things, this measure could:

- be preempted by Federal laws relating to interstate and foreign commerce;
- be deemed arbitrary for its ___ acreage limit and 5-year ownership restriction, neither of which are supported by any reasonable factual justification;
- violate the due process and equal protection clauses of the Hawaii State Constitution;
- reduce the acreage of agricultural lands under cultivation in the state;
- decrease the production of local food and agricultural products;
- restrict foreign capital investment in agricultural infrastructure, irrigation systems, equipment, etc.;
- hinder international funding of agricultural research, development, and operations;
- discourage long-term lease agreements and international partnerships with local farmers, agricultural operators, and landowners;
- limit the flexibility and opportunities for long term financial stability for local farmers, ranchers, agricultural operators, and landowners; and
- be contrary to Hawaii's goals of viable agricultural operations and the diversification, conservation, and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands.

Instead of banning options for local agricultural stakeholders to be productive and financially successful, the Legislature could be exploring alternatives for incentives and other opportunities that encourage economic growth, agricultural diversity and international collaboration and cooperation. As it has been for decades, LURF and its members are willing to assist in continuing efforts to improve Hawaii's agricultural industry and food security.

For the above reasons, LURF **opposes SB 242, SD1** and respectfully urges your favorable consideration to **defer this bill and hold it in your Committees.**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |
Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e:
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*

LATE

TO: Committee on Judiciary and Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 28, 2025

TIME: 10:14am

RE: SB242 SD1 Relating to Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land

Position: Comments

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 opposition to this measure. We believe that the top priority for our agricultural land in Hawaii is to have it under active cultivation producing food and other agricultural products for our state. Active ag lands also create local jobs and help diversify our economy. Placing arbitrary restrictions on who can or cannot own agricultural land could lead to less agricultural land in the state being under active cultivation, and unnecessarily reduce production of local food.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 4:21:17 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krystal Cabiles	Testifying for Wailua Nui Kalo Farm	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Wailua Nui Kalo Farm LLC in strong support of SB242 SD1, This bill is crucial to protecting Hawai'i's agricultural lands from excessive foreign ownership, ensuring they remain accessible for local farmers and food production.

Foreign investment in agricultural land often drives up costs and limits opportunities for local farmers, particularly Native Hawaiians, to maintain sustainable operations. By restricting foreign ownership and requiring transparency, this bill helps safeguard our food security, cultural practices, and local economy.

We urge your support for this measure to protect Hawai'i's agricultural future.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Krystal K. Cabiles



TESTIMONY
SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY & WAYS AND MEANS
SB242_SD1 FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND
Friday, February 28, 2025, at 10:14 AM
State Capitol Conference Room

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Committee Members:

Submitted in STRONG SUPPORT by Jamie Detwiler, Hawaiian Islands Republican Women

There is increasing concern about the ownership of large amounts of Hawai'i's agricultural lands by foreign corporations and foreign individuals.

Foreign owned corporations from several countries often buy land for an average of just \$6 to \$8,000 an acre while locals can't afford to own enough land.

Foreign companies often also pay far less for water. In the case of foreign ownership by giant chemical companies that have been fined for knowingly dumping pesticides like Bayer-Monsanto.

Foreign individuals have purchased and leased land in Kunia and it appears that those areas are not monitored for permitting violations. Furthermore, these foreign individuals are profiting off land that could be better utilized by U.S. Citizens.

Foreign ownership of land creates an increasingly uneven playing field for local producers who are struggling to gain access to affordable land. It is critical for Hawaii to have food security.

As a Kanaka Maoli, the state should prioritize access for local producers, and Native Hawaiian practitioners with lineal ties to the 'aina. More than 20 states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands and Hawaii should be the next state to do the same.

Please do the right thing and vote YES for SB242.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Detwiler, President
Hawaiian Islands Republican Women

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 4:39:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Cordery	Testifying for Aloha Freedom Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB242 because Hawaii needs to protect it's natural resources!

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 5:42:38 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John R. Gordines	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Keep Hawaiian lands in Hawaiian hands

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 5:48:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support this important bill. Mahalo.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 6:28:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am glad to see this bill advance through our legislative process. Autocratic adversaries constitute a significant, strategic threat to Hawaii, and the United States writ large. We cannot allow them to purchase critical agricultural land or other property.

I do ask the Committee to consider amendments to restrict ownership and other transaction by foreign, sanctioned entities. However, I ask the Committee to continue supporting this bill!

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 6:30:57 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Legrande	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in favor of this bill because far too much land & housing is owned by out of state buyers/developers. As an island state, we need to start providing more of our local food and keeping our agricultural land local will help because we have our families here to provide for.

Thanks for the opportunity to testify. Linda Legrande

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 6:44:40 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Otto Zaa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support for SB242!

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:03:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Corinne Solomon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB242. Please pass this bill!

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:10:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Wing	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:23:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bronson Teixeira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I stand in strong support to this bill. Mahalo

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:24:01 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie A Carter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Only American citizens should own land in the US

I SUPPORT this bill

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:36:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dorinda Ohelo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:38:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joelle Seashell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Perfect. Well done. Finally a bill that puts the people you represent and your country first.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 8:47:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deirdre Madrid	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Agricultural land makes up nearly half of the state of Hawaii. Foreign entities should absolutely not be allowed to own, lease, or hold a controlling interest in agricultural land. It becomes a matter of national security. Allowing only US citizens to own, lease, or hold a controlling interest would keep American dollars circulating through our local and national economy.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 9:06:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealohi Hanohano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill to the fullest! This is the kind of bills I like to see our money working for.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 9:32:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martin Dixon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 9:57:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zac Nosugref	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 9:58:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharron VanDeusen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 10:01:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mahealani Bernal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB242 SD1.

Mahea Bernal

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 10:18:57 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lawrence Ramirez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Public Testimony in Opposition to SB 242 SD1

Submitted by: Lawrence Ramirez

Date: February 27, 2025

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

I am submitting this testimony in opposition to SB 242 SD1 as it currently stands. While I appreciate the intent behind the bill to address foreign investment in Hawaii’s agricultural lands, I strongly believe it does not go far enough to protect our islands’ resources, communities, and future. Until this measure is amended to include a comprehensive ban on foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding any controlling interest in all lands in Hawaii—not just agricultural lands—I cannot support it.

Hawaii’s land is more than just property; it’s the foundation of our culture, our identity, and our way of life. For too long, we’ve seen outside forces drive up costs, displace local families, and erode our ability to steward these islands for future generations. SB 242 SD1 takes a step in the right direction by requiring foreign businesses and governments to disclose their interests in agricultural land, but this is a half-measure when what we need is a full commitment to keeping Hawaii’s lands in local hands.

The current version of the bill leaves gaping loopholes. It focuses narrowly on agricultural land while ignoring residential, commercial, and other critical areas where foreign entities can still exert influence through ownership, leasing, or controlling stakes in businesses that hold land. We’ve seen the housing crisis push local families out of their homes as prices soar, often fueled by outside investment. We’ve seen our natural resources strained and our communities reshaped by those who don’t call Hawaii home. Disclosure alone won’t stop this—it’s a bandage on a wound that needs a stronger cure.

I urge you to amend SB 242 SD1 to prohibit foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding any controlling interest in any land across the state. This isn’t just about agriculture; it’s about sovereignty, security, and ensuring that Hawaii remains for Hawaiians—those who live here, work here, and are rooted here. Other places, like New Zealand and parts of Southeast Asia, have taken bold steps to restrict foreign land ownership entirely. Hawaii should do no less.

Until this bill reflects that broader vision, I respectfully oppose it. We can’t settle for partial solutions when the stakes are this high. Let’s craft a policy that truly safeguards all of Hawaii’s lands for our people, now and for generations to come.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Thank you for your efforts,

Lawrence Ramirez

lardg@yahoo.com

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 10:23:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elliot Miles	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Definitely, do not allow foreign nationals, foreign banks/investors, nor foreign countries from buying any kind of land in Hawaii--especially China. But this law seems to allow some concessions to foreigners. Why? And why is this bill effective in 2050? Why not now?

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 10:54:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Garcia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill . I went to the Philippines 10 times not once can my wife who lived their for 26 years and now is a American citizen. We can not purchase any property unless we live their . We are we allowing foreign countries to buy any land in Hawaii or in America. I am a strong no to that .

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 11:51:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **strongly support** This Bill. I urge all members of the Committee to **VOTE YES** on this Bill.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 12:03:26 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Nishimura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is an important step to prioritize agricultural lands for local food producers. Twenty five states already have restrictions on foreign ownership of agricultural lands. Please support SB242.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 2:45:27 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candace Vizcarra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hallelujah, finally a bill that supports Hawaii!!

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 3:40:33 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ruiz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Keep Hawaii lands local.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 7:27:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James K. Rzonca	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's about time we stop foreigners from buying our land.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:00:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stanley Mendes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly agree with SB242 SD1

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:01:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Schultz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this initiative. Too many local farms have disappeared and are being replaced by coporate farms with no ties to the communities.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:33:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Nichols	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wholeheartedly support Senate Bill No. 242 (S.D. 1) because I believe it's a crucial step toward protecting Hawaii's agricultural land for our local farmers and communities. I'm alarmed that 12.8% of our agricultural land was owned by foreign entities in 2022—it's a wake-up call that we're losing control of a resource vital to our food security and way of life. I think limiting foreign ownership and leases is a smart move to keep this land in the hands of people who live here and understand our needs. It gives me hope that local farmers, who often struggle to compete for land, will have a better shot at thriving and feeding our state.

I also appreciate the transparency this bill demands. I like that foreign entities will have to report their holdings every year and that the Department of Agriculture will put it all online for everyone to see. It makes me feel more secure knowing we'll have a clear picture of who's controlling our land. I'm okay with the exceptions, like inherited land or short-term leases, because they seem fair and practical, but I'm glad the bill still sets firm boundaries. The fines for breaking these rules make sense to me too—they'll discourage foreign entities from overstepping, and I think that's necessary to enforce this protection.

The funding for the public registry feels like a worthwhile investment to me. I see it as the state putting money where its mouth is, showing it's serious about keeping our agricultural future local. Sure, the effective date of July 1, 2050, is far off, but I view it as a thoughtful long-term plan to get this right, giving everyone time to adjust. I believe this bill strikes a balance between openness to the world and loyalty to our own people, and I'm proud to back something that prioritizes Hawaii's farmers and food independence over foreign interests.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:34:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

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

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT.

FOREIGN OWNERS COULD SEND THEIR PRODUCT TO THEIR COUNTRY, LEAVING US FURTHER DEPENDENT ON IMPORTED FOOD.

MAHALO!

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:58:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Reid Oya	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB242

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 9:56:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Dillon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chairs, Vice Chairs and members of the JDC and WAM committees.

I urge you to support this bill and vote YES to support it. This is a critical issue that can and will affect Hawaii and most likely the entire United States if it is not curtailed. Please support this measure and stand firm.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joy Dillon, Hilo Resident

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 9:59:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jr Tupai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and mahalo to the JDC/WAM committees for the opportunity in support of SB242.

This legislation would be vital to the protecting of future generations being able to have something here in Hawai'i. The added requirement of foreign entities that own or lease interest in agricultural lands to file an annual report with the Department of Agriculture would be excellent oversight to guarantee these elements are conducting business that is conducive to the interests of Hawai'i.

SB242 would start the trend of insulating Hawai'i from foreign interests and would protect her people and future businesses who possess the heart and aloha that makes Hawai'i Hawai'i. With that said I humbly ask these committees to support SB242, fulfilling our state motto and perpetuating righteousness for future generations.

Mahalo and aloha.

LATE

Aloha Gabbard, Awa, Moriwaki. My name is Kaylynn Mahoe, a student at UH Manoa, I am writing in **support** of Bill SB242. I support this bill in the sense that the land if it is agriculture land then it should be used as such. There should be a way where you need to show that there is agriculture growing on the land. Help Hawai'i be self-sustained again. There is so much lush land that Hawaiians could use to become self sustained again. Allowing foreigners to buy up the agricultural land can stop locals here from being able to buy or use the land to help Hawai'i get back to its roots. I would love to see the land being used as it is intended and people being held accountable to owning land. Hold them to a standard of accountability when using Hawaiian lands.

Thank you for taking the time and consideration.

Kaylynn Mahoe

kaylynnchk@gmail.com

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 12:47:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Skylar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Keep Hawaiian lands in Hawaiian hands! Get enough foreigners own land in our islands!!!!

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 12:55:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mahealani Kamau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

With the current Governors emergency proclamation claim to "affordable housing." This bill would support that. This bill will support local people and families born and raised in Hawai'i. This bill supports the people of Hawai'i who make Hawai'i, Hawai'i. I wholeheartedly support this bill.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:13:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Coke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this bill.

I live in rural Kau and am a farmer.

I have had so many Chinese and Canadian "buyers" appear at my gate and try to buy.

These are not people that are want to farm and ranch, but they are corporations buying on behalf of investors. They have explained the whole process in detail and are not shy about it.

They want the land, so they can change zoning, then plan a resort or neighborhood for the rich.

we need to protect our farmers and ranchers and this is a good start.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:24:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tracy Gillard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. I've wondered why we would have to bring a law for this, this should be common sense. I support foreigners not being able to buy any agricultural land, we need to keep this land for our people. When the AG says its unconstitutional, who does the constitution support, the locals or the foreigners? Our constitution should be for our people, not foreigners. .

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:27:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan Kapeliela	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Jordan Kapeliela am in support for bill SB242. This bill should be a "no brainer" decision for the people of Hawaii. We asked for solutions that have failed, but when we actually have a solution to help our Lahui, it seems as though our government is in opposition to helping its people. We had to get Mr. Awa involved because he is the individual that we Kanaka oiwi trust in when the rest of this westernized government has failed us.
Mahalo!

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:27:40 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Rickard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in firm support of SB242 SD1, as are likely many others who are either native Hawaiian or who have lived here for many generations. Protect our homes and land, let us provide opportunities for the future generations to remain and be able to afford a home in Hawaii.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:30:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David E Shormann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is common sense and perpetuates righteousness for Hawaii and America.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:34:02 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doreen Sokolowski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill to not let foreigners obtain properties in Hawai'i and for those who own properties need to submit a report on a regular basis. The people of Hawai'i need to be the ones to keep Hawaiian land in Hawaiian hands.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:34:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deanne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please allow the generations of hawaii to afford land hear as a priority and not sell out to foreigners.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:34:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of SB242 SD1

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:45:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Maurer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support senator Awa in standing against foreign purchases of any land in Hawaii

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 1:58:43 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bruce Javellana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill for Hawaii!

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 2:23:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Macahdo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom this concerns.

I am a multigenerational resident. My family has been here since day one. And we have seen people move here and granted land here and there. While Hawaiians can't get a home and/or farm land. This has to be a problem.

There is more Africans in Africa than anywhere else. More Asians in Asia than anywhere else. Indians in India than anywhere else. Native-Americans in America than anywhere else. But there is less Hawaiians in Hawaii!

Stop selling land to out-state, foreigners, military till every single Hawaiian nuclear family has a house and/or ag land.

If rent for a townhouse is \$3000 monthly than make it \$3000 a month mortgage to own for Hawaiians.

Stop trying to make Hawaii California. Go there if California is what you want.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 2:26:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Koch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha chair and committee members,

I support this measure because it's common sense. People from here can't even afford land because the supply is limited and there's big money buying up what's available. This makes the market tight and further worsens the probability that people from here will ever own their own farm. As a farmer, I see land all around me getting snapped up by big money and many are foreign Chinese nationals. These people have offered to buy my land many times. I can't understand why we allow this. If you go to China, you can buy their land. We are so accommodating to our own peoples detriment. We need representatives that enact the will of the people and we do NOT want foreigners buying up our AG land. Any representative that put foreign entities over Hawaiians and Americans should be ashamed of themselves. This is a betrayal of public trust and we did not put you in office to serve the needs and wants of foreign entities and in fact you were sworn and took an oath to that effect I'll remind you. I support this bill, I support Brenton Awa and would like to thank this man for representing the people. Mahalo Brenton!

Eric Koch

Naalehu HI

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 2:59:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaio Cardoza	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am against this. Oppose 👎

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 3:09:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mercedes Renken	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This testimony is in support of SB242.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 3:10:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
FEORA CADINA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB242 and keeping agriculture land available and affordable for local families/farmers.

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 3:12:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jesse Kealiinohomoku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and Vice Chair's of the WAM/ADC Committee's,

I stand in support of Senate Bill 242 SD1 - Clarifying our needs for agriculture productions begins with supporting local farmers. The biggest barrier for our local farmers is access to fertile land. I am saddened to see many of our agriculture lands under development for homes. Hawaii imports a staggering number that cripples our capacity to be emergency prepared with the current and ever growing island population here on Oahu. Although i stand in support of this bill, i do believe in staying open to foreign help and foreign resources that our local farmers are willing to work with.

Mahalo for your folks time to hear my testimony

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 4:00:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiare Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

****Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 424****

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tiare Smith, a Native Hawaiian and resident of Kahalu‘u, O‘ahu, where I have lived for 45 years. As a daughter of this ‘āina, I write to express my unequivocal support for Senate Bill 424, a prescient and necessary measure to safeguard Hawaii’s agricultural lands from the precipitous rise of foreign ownership. This bill addresses a critical issue that threatens not only our local farmers and food security but also the cultural and economic sovereignty of our islands—a sovereignty deeply rooted in our relationship with the land.

Hawaii’s agricultural lands are not mere commodities; they are the lifeblood of our communities and the foundation of our resilience. The legislature’s finding that 12.8 percent of our agricultural land is foreign-held—the second-highest percentage in the nation—underscores an alarming trend. This statistic is not an abstraction; it reflects a tangible disenfranchisement of local farmers, like those I have known in Kahalu‘u, who face escalating barriers to accessing arable land. The unchecked proliferation of foreign ownership risks transforming our agricultural districts into speculative assets, antithetical to the sustainable stewardship that has defined Hawaiian land use for generations.

SB424’s provisions—limiting foreign entities to ownership, leases, or controlling interests in agricultural land, and mandating transparency through annual reporting and a public registry—are both pragmatic and principled. By capping foreign holdings and restricting long-term leases, this bill ensures that our lands remain available to those who cultivate them for the benefit of our people, not distant investors. The exemptions for inheritance, short-term leases, and pre-existing ownership as of July 1, 2025, demonstrate a balanced approach, preserving flexibility while addressing the core issue. Moreover, the appropriation of funds to the Department of Agriculture for a public registry exemplifies a commitment to accountability, empowering residents like me to understand who controls our agricultural resources.

The federal directive in the 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act, which calls for scrutiny of foreign investments in U.S. agricultural land, amplifies the urgency of SB424. Hawaii, with its unique geographic isolation and dependence on local food production, cannot afford to lag behind this national reckoning. The economic resilience of our food systems and the vitality of

rural communities—like Kahalu‘u—hinge on our ability to prioritize local stewardship over foreign speculation.

As a Native Hawaiian, I view this bill through the lens of kuleana—our collective responsibility to the land and to each other. For 45 years, I have witnessed O‘ahu’s transformation, often to the detriment of our local identity and self-sufficiency. SB424 offers a rare opportunity to reclaim control of our agricultural destiny, ensuring that our lands serve our people, not absentee profiteers. I urge you to pass this bill with the full force of your legislative authority, affirming that Hawaii’s future rests in the hands of those who call it home.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiare Smith

Kahalu‘u, O‘ahu

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 4:03:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Olivia Filoteo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the bill to ban foreigners to purchase ag lands. Any land in Hawaii belongs to Hawaiians & should rightfully go to Hawaiians. Hawaii should not be for sale!

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 4:04:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joni Keamoai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This should not be necessary. We, the people of Hawai'i should NOT have to be the ones fighting for this Bill to pass. Our leaders should be the one advocating for us. We do NOT want foreigners buying land here in Hawai'i. Residential or Agricultural! We oppose them buying up our land. We need land to call home. We need land to build houses that we are hoping to own, if it was affordable. But since our leaders who should be helping us, by hopefully making housing available, automatically think we will never be able to, decides "why not make money on it instead?" And so they sell it off to anyone who has the money. Most of them are foreigners. Keep Hawaiian Lands in Hawaiian Hands...Always!!!!

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 4:27:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Miranda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF HAWAI‘I’S AGRICULTURAL LAND

Chris Miranda

858 Puu Kula Dr

Pearl City

2.27.25

I am writing in strong opposition to any policy or legislation that allows foreign entities to purchase agricultural land in Hawai‘i. As a resident of our islands, I am deeply concerned about the long-term consequences of foreign ownership on our local economy, food security, and cultural sustainability.

LEGAL AND PROFESSIONAL REASONS TO OPPOSE FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

1. Threat to Local Food Security and Self-Sufficiency

Hawai‘i already imports over 80% of its food, making our islands extremely vulnerable to supply chain disruptions. Foreign ownership of agricultural land risks prioritizing export-driven profits over local food production. By keeping land in the hands of local farmers and ranchers, we can work toward greater food independence and resilience.

2. Rising Land Prices and Barriers for Local Farmers

Foreign investment in real estate has historically driven up land values, making it increasingly difficult for local farmers to afford or lease agricultural land. This speculative market forces many small farmers out of business or prevents the next generation from entering the industry. Keeping agricultural land in local hands ensures that it remains accessible for its intended purpose—farming, not investment speculation.

3. Potential for Land Misuse and Resource Exploitation

Foreign entities often operate with profit-driven motives rather than community stewardship. There have been numerous cases worldwide where foreign investors purchase agricultural land but leave it fallow, misuse water resources, or repurpose it for non-agricultural activities. Without strong enforcement mechanisms, there is little guarantee that foreign buyers will uphold responsible land management practices that align with Hawai‘i’s environmental and cultural values.

4. National Security and Strategic Concerns

Agricultural land is not just an economic asset; it is a critical resource for national security. Other U.S. states, such as Texas and Iowa, have already enacted restrictions on foreign ownership of farmland, particularly by entities from countries with competing strategic interests. Given Hawai‘i’s strategic location in the Pacific, similar protections should be in place to prevent potential geopolitical risks and ensure that land use decisions prioritize local and national interests.

5. Loss of Cultural and Generational Stewardship

Agriculture in Hawai‘i is deeply tied to Native Hawaiian culture and traditions. ‘Āina (land) is not just a commodity—it is a living entity that connects generations of families. When foreign

entities acquire land, it removes opportunities for local families to continue their ancestral stewardship. Instead, policies should support kama'āina farmers and ranchers who have a vested interest in maintaining Hawai'i's agricultural heritage.

CONCLUSION

Hawai'i's agricultural lands should remain in the hands of those who live, work, and contribute to the well-being of our islands. Allowing foreign ownership threatens our local food security, raises land prices, and risks misuse of our natural resources. Instead of opening our agricultural lands to foreign investors, we should focus on policies that support local farmers, increase agricultural productivity, and promote sustainable land management.

I urge the committee to take a stand in protecting our agricultural lands for the benefit of current and future generations of Hawai'i's residents.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Chris Miranda

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 4:35:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Kekiwi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is David Kekiwi, and I submit this testimony as a farmer in strong support of SB242 SD1. This bill is critical to protecting Hawai'i's agricultural lands from unchecked foreign ownership, which threatens local food security, cultural preservation, and the survival of small farmers.

Hawai'i's agricultural lands should be feeding our communities, not serving as speculative investments for foreign entities with no stake in our islands' future. As land prices skyrocket, local farmers—especially Native Hawaiians—are being pushed out, leaving us more reliant on imports and less able to sustain ourselves. SB242 SD1 is a necessary step to keep agricultural lands in the hands of those who work and depend on them.

We cannot afford to wait. Without immediate action, foreign interests will continue to erode our ability to grow food and sustain local agriculture. I urge you to pass SB242 SD1 to protect Hawai'i's land, farmers, and future.

Mahalo,

David Kekiwi

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 5:05:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle R Stefanik	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB242 and urge you to VOTE YES!

Hawaii is a special place and as such has special needs. One of those most important needs is the ability to be self-sustaining. If we allow foreign entities to buy up our agricultural land we could put the local population in risk of having to rely on other people for our food. Our land must be protected. I ask you all to vote YES and support this Bill to protect our Hawaiian Residents.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 6:01:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Easter K. Logan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 6:08:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Crystal Pang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

****Testimony in Support of SB242****

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for SB242, which aims to prohibit foreign entities from owning, leasing, or holding a controlling interest in agricultural land beyond a specified limit. This legislation is crucial for safeguarding the integrity and sustainability of our agricultural resources.

Agriculture is the backbone of our local economy and plays a vital role in ensuring food security for our communities. By limiting foreign ownership and control over agricultural lands, we can protect local farmers and promote the interests of our residents. This bill not only preserves our agricultural heritage but also ensures that our land remains in the hands of those who are directly invested in our community's well-being.

Furthermore, the requirement for foreign entities to file annual reports with the Department of Agriculture is a necessary measure to maintain transparency and accountability. This provision will allow us to monitor foreign interests in our agricultural sector and ensure compliance with our local regulations. Such oversight is essential in protecting our land from exploitation and ensuring that it is used sustainably.

The appropriation of funds to support the implementation of this bill highlights our commitment to investing in our agricultural future. It sends a clear message that we prioritize the interests of our local farmers and the integrity of our agricultural lands.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support SB242 and urge the committee to pass this important piece of legislation. Protecting our agricultural resources from foreign ownership is vital for preserving our local economy, ensuring food security, and maintaining the integrity of our land for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 6:24:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelley Costa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Kelley Costa, support this bill.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 6:41:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Naomie Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As Kanaka and as a local born and raised in Hawai'i nei, I support this bill.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:06:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kira Mahoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please allow this bill to be passed. Every year that goes by there is less and less land available for Native Hawaiians and the multigenerational locals.. We need to give them the first choice. If we spend more time taking care of the people who have been here already we can solve ALOT of our problems and issues that continue to rise by the second.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:09:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberley Limasa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and mahalo for taking time to read my personal testimony in favor of banning foreigners from buying land in Hawaii, in relation to proximity of military installations. I strongly support this bill for the safety of our isolated island communities. I also feel that allowing foreigners to purchase land on a small island chain should be banned based on the limitation of land that is available to current residents. The infrastructure of our islands isn't not properly equipped to support current development, let alone additional developments. There is already a housing and overpopulation crisis and banning foreign purchases would be one way to address that. Having said that, security is the most important issue in my opinion. The military installations within our state are so crucial to the safety of Hawaii and the entirety of the USA. Allowing foreigners to purchase land so close to military installations could put our country at great risk. Thank you for considering my testimony.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:16:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kysen Alonzo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

All I can say is, it's about time. Many have struggled to find a home in OUR home as k̄anaka 'ōiwi because of the amount of haole purchasing and owning our land. This is only a small step. Keep Hawaiian Lands in Hawaiian Hands.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:29:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealii Makekau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Pass this bill

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 8:41:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Esther M Chavez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill to no longer allow foreigners to buy any properties in Hawaii

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 9:26:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deven English	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of this bill, Locals only, no foreigners should be obtaining any land here in Hawaii.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 9:41:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shavanna-Britney Santiago	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this SB242 because my children who were born here deserve to be raised where their Kupuna fought for their rights and recognition.

For generations state representatives have failed us, the people of Hawai'i. Nobody in the last 30 years cared about us not being able to afford the continuous inflated cost of living. All we got were comments like "that's the price of paradise" or "to be grateful, we have beautiful scenery" while allowing foreign entities to buy our land and flourish while we suffer with taxes after taxes on everything but literally the air we breathe, actually there is a carbon footprint tax in there too probably. Greedy ones that held office made so much money selling us out. But that stop with this bill.

Hawai'i is beyond unique. Our lands and our Aloha are unmatched. But that doesn't mean you can take advantage of it. Good people get tired of being good. For any foreigner that buy any type of land must pay the higher price AND for any foreign business that opens owes local people royalties on that business. The royalties would pay for the ridiculous taxes that are imposed on us. Which is how it should be.

Crazy how the Department of Hawaiian homelands can sublease for Hawaiians to live on but not keep and then allow other counties to buy and own the land. So backwards.

I am a Native Hawaiian and I support this bill. To keep Hawaiian lands in Hawaiian hands, and upcharge ANY outside entity from thriving off of us as a sublease with restrictions. If you care about Hawai'i at all, you will support this bill too. Otherwise why call yourselves a "State Representative" when you really don't care.

Mahalo.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 10:20:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heavenly Liua	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Heavenly and I have lived on Oahu majority of my life, growing up in Kailua and eventually moving to Kapolei. I cherish this island and the culture. I am testifying today in strong support of bill SB242, which seeks to preserve our valuable agricultural land for local citizens rather than allowing foreign entities to purchase and control these essential resources. Agricultural land is the backbone of our local food system, providing food and jobs for our local communities. It also provides cultural heritage and economic stability. Allowing foreign entities to purchase any amount of this land would shift control away from our local farmers, possibly reducing food production and increasing reliance on imported goods. Clearly, this could lead to increased land speculation and rising prices that make it more difficult for local citizens to afford or even access agricultural opportunities. By ensuring that agricultural land stays in the hands of our citizens, we strengthen our food security, preserve our environment and protect our local economy. I urge you to protect what's left of our agricultural land and support bill SB242 as it is crucial to the future of Hawaii.

Thank you for your time.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 10:37:43 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Huihui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of SB242 SD1 for the simple fact that this should have always been.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 11:05:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Kalama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha esteemed members of the legislature,

I strongly support SB242 SD1, the “About Time” Bill, to restrict foreign entities from buying agricultural land in Hawai‘i. When foreigners purchase our land, it drives up prices, making it harder for local families—especially kanaka maoli—to afford and access the ‘āina that rightfully belongs to us. This threatens our food security, culture, and future generations.

Passing SB242 SD1 ensures that Hawai‘i’s lands remain in the hands of those who cherish and depend on them. Please protect our ‘āina and our people.

Mahalo for your time.

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

Barbara Kalama

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/27/2025 11:19:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Germaine Balino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I'm writing in full support of this bill. Please support my voice by supporting this bill too.
Mahalo

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2025 12:27:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doneileen Willets	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

I strongly support this bill and truly believe it is owed to the long awaiting natives of this land and to hear what they have to say. I would love nothing more than to see our legislature take part on preserving the land we have remaining. We are stripping away what is left, and would like to see more farms, more natural resources, more being done to preserve the culture of the Hawaii. It saddens me to see our natives leaving their home to make a living elsewhere, if they ever plan to how can we bring them back? Hawaii is being marketed for the rich, and we are losing out on all our resources because of it. Please I urge you, to please pass this Bill.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of bill SB 242

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2025 1:05:45 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alfred Piliialoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

What is determined to be a 'foreigner'. Can or was it defined. Nonetheless this is a good bill to start. No entity should be permitted to own any land of Hawai'i nei. That means no agricultural land AND private land.

Private entities, individuals, must be and prove to be a Hawai'i 'resident' for at least 7 years in order to purchase any commercial or private land, real estate, home, etc. in Hawai'i nei. These entities must have lived in Hawai'i, bank accounts, drivers license. Job, home of record, etc, to prove Hawai'i residency!

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2025 4:54:26 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kira Lyn Marzan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my letter in support of this bill. This bill will help local people by keeping our lands in the hands of our people. This will create businesses and jobs for locals and help our people thrive. Please help the people of Hawaii by preventing foreigners from buying our land. We have lost so much already and may never get it back.

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2025 5:23:05 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rene Ferreira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB242 SD1: Prohibiting Foreign Ownership of Agricultural Land in Hawaii

Submitted by: Rene Ferreira

Date: February 28, 2025

Dear Members of Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for SB242SB1, which seeks to prohibit foreigners from owning agricultural land in Hawaii. As a resident of this state and a concerned citizen, I believe this measure is a necessary step to protect Hawaii's unique agricultural resources, ensure local food security, and preserve the cultural and economic sovereignty of our islands.

Hawaii's agricultural land is not just an economic asset—it is the backbone of our heritage and a critical component of our self-sufficiency. With only a finite amount of arable land available, allowing foreign entities or individuals to purchase and control these precious resources poses a serious risk. Foreign ownership can drive up land prices, making it harder for local farmers—many of whom are already struggling—to compete or expand their operations. This threatens not only their livelihoods but also our ability to produce food locally, leaving us increasingly dependent on imports in an era of global uncertainty.

Moreover, foreign ownership often prioritizes profit over stewardship. Non-resident landowners may lack the deep connection to Hawaii's land and culture that local farmers bring to their work. They may not prioritize sustainable practices or the preservation of our natural environment, which are vital to maintaining the long-term health of our islands. In some cases, foreign investors may simply hold land as a speculative asset, leaving it fallow rather than contributing to our agricultural economy. This undermines the spirit of aloha 'āina—caring for the land that sustains us.

National security is another compelling reason to support this bill. In an increasingly volatile world, control over food production is a strategic priority. Allowing foreign entities to own Hawaii's agricultural land could expose us to external influence or manipulation, especially if those owners hail from nations with interests contrary to those of the United States. By keeping this land in local hands, we safeguard both our state and our country.

I recognize that some may argue this bill could discourage foreign investment. However, Hawaii's economy thrives on tourism, innovation, and the resilience of our local communities—not on handing over our most vital resources to absentee landlords. The benefits of protecting our agricultural land far outweigh any short-term economic concerns.

In conclusion, I urge you to vote in favor of this bill. This legislation is a proactive measure to ensure that Hawaii's agricultural land remains a resource for its people, not a commodity for foreign interests. Let us prioritize our farmers, our food security, and our future as a self-reliant island state.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your service to the people of Hawaii.

Sincerely,
Rene Ferreira

LATE

SB-242-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2025 8:23:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/28/2025 10:14:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carm Akim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support to keep our islands in the hands of our Kanaka.