

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

MARCH 31, 2021
2:30 P.M.

SENATE BILL NO. 855 SD1
RELATING TO COFFEE PEST CONTROL

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 855 SD1, relating to coffee pest control. This bill extends the pesticide subsidy program to June 30, 2023 and extends the position of the pesticide subsidy manager to June 30, 2024. The bill also expands the pesticide subsidy program to allowing reimbursements to growers for the purchase of biopesticides and fungicides to be used against the coffee berry borer and the coffee leaf rust. The pesticide subsidy program manager would process the applications for both pesticides. The Department supports this measure and offers the following comments. The pesticide subsidy program is currently funded by the pest inspection, quarantine, and eradication special fund. The department understands that the future of the special fund is uncertain, and we are also unsure whether the existing expenditure ceiling is adequate to fund and effectively perform the additional program responsibilities proposed in this measure.

Invasive species are a primary threat to Hawaii's agriculture and economy. The coffee berry borer (*Hypothenemus hampei*) is a significant coffee pest in Hawaii and the world. The extension of the subsidy program and program manager position will allow the Department to continue to support coffee farmers by partially offsetting the costs of purchasing certain pesticides that contain *Beauveria bassiana* as an active ingredient, and certain fungicides, such as Priaxor Xemium in order to control the coffee berry borer and the coffee leaf rust to mitigate the damage these organisms cause to the coffee beans and plants.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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

March 31, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 855, SD1
RELATING TO COFFEE PEST CONTROL

Conference Room 308
2:30 PM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports SB 855, SD1, which extends the sunset date for the coffee berry borer pesticide subsidy program and the program manager position and includes coffee leaf rust control as part of the pesticide subsidy program.

Coffee is one of Hawaii's signature crops; one that helps bring fame and tourists to Hawaii. Coffee Berry Borer (CBB) threatens the entire Hawaiian coffee industry. While the full tally is yet to be made, farms on Hawaii Island have experienced deep losses. Some have failed. Moreover, large quantities of coffee have been downgraded due to insect damage, reducing the value of the remaining crop. CBB is a serious threat to Hawaii's agriculture industry and the state's economy. While CBB is battled worldwide, no other coffee-growing origin shares Hawaii's high labor costs and restrictions on pesticides that may be used elsewhere to fight this destructive pest. This places the industry at a competitive disadvantage when compared to the rest of the coffee-growing world.

Fighting CBB is a priority in other coffee-producing countries. The USDA has expressed its support targeted toward research, education, and mitigation. The industry's response has been immediate and multi-faceted. A non-profit CBB task force has been formed, including growers, processors, HDOA, UH, USDA and county government. CTAHR and HDOA have been responsive and effective in their combined efforts. The industry has committed countless private-sector dollars and has leveraged both State and Federal funds.

A new threat, *Hemileia vasatrix* (coffee leaf rust), threatens the entire Hawaiian coffee industry. Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) is known to spread rapidly and leads to defoliation and tree death that can result in up to 70% loss of yield. CLR has already been identified on Hawaii Island, Maui, and Oahu. CLR is the most destructive coffee disease in the world and can kill an entire farm in a matter of weeks. This fungus is a serious threat to Hawaii's agriculture industry and the state's economy.

The extension of the CBB funding and the inclusion of CLR in the Pesticide Subsidy Program should be viewed as a modest investment in one of the state's largest and most important agricultural crops.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure of great importance.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.

By
Nicholas Comerford, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

SB 855 SD1 – RELATING TO COFFEE PEST CONTROL

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 855 SD 1 relating to the coffee berry borer (CBB).

According to the 2018 State Agriculture overview published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Hawai'i produced 5.4 million pounds (green weight) of coffee grown on 7,100 harvested acres, with an average yield of 1.92 tons/acre, at a unit price of \$19.40/lb., for a value of \$50.16 million. These data show the high value of this crop to Hawai'i agriculture since that value is based on using just 0.65% of farm acres operated.

CBB is found in most coffee growing countries of the world and was discovered in Kona, Hawai'i in 2010. It has the potential to be a devastating disease for this industry. It is established on Hawai'i Island, and can be found now on other islands. CBB is endemic to Central Africa. It belongs to a subfamily of beetles that houses some of the most important pests world-wide. Female beetles bore into the berry and lay eggs inside the seed and the brood then feasts on the coffee seed. As this phase of the CBB life occurs inside the berry and seed, it can be difficult to control.

An integrated pest management program (IPM) developed Best Management Practices to control CBB. Collaborative research has shown that sanitation along with biocontrol can be effective. Cooperative Extension Agents with the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) have estimated pre-pandemic that about 80% of coffee farmers are familiar with the IPM program. CTAHR Cooperative Extension Agents further estimate that the IPM program has directly saved more than \$11 million in farm gate value, and saved another \$11 million in efforts to control the spread of CBB. Realizing the direct and indirect effects highlights the value that this IPM program has for the coffee industry and the state of Hawai'i.

The IPM program uses an insecticide (pesticide), known as a mycoinsecticide, to control the borer. A fungus, *Beauveria bassiana*, is a biological control material and is

bought commercially. The Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) was empowered in the past to develop and manage a CBB pesticide subsidy plan, allowing as much as \$600/acre for the grower. The basic approach of this bill is to maintain parts of that program into the future, until 2026.

The IPM program has been shown to be effective in the control of CBB. There is concern that without a full functioning subsidy program, efforts to apply IPM would be reduced; thereby reducing the on-farm and regional effectiveness of the strategy. A survey of coffee growers indicated that nearly 38% of growers would reduce the rate of the pesticide applied if the program was detrimentally affected. It is reasonable to assume that this would negatively affect the control and spread of CBB.

Given the estimated \$22 million/year effectiveness of the IPM program that includes a biological insecticide, we are in strong support of SB 855 SD 1 and will continue, through Cooperative Extension, to educate and train growers on the use of the IPM program. We thank the committee for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill. We understand that in this time of budgetary challenges, we also defer to HDOA as to their priorities and budgetary requirements.

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 5:58:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bruce Corker	Rancho Aloha	Support	No

Comments:

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

I am a coffee farmer in the North Kona District of Hawaii County and I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association.

I strongly support SB855 to extend the HDOA’s subsidy program for control of Coffee Berry Borer (CBB) and to add subsidies to combat Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) to the existing program. This subsidy program will encourage farmers to adopt measures to control CBB and CLR—and help to preserve the economic viability of coffee as a commercial agricultural crop in Hawaii.

Also, in order to prevent further introduction of coffee pests and diseases into Hawaii, I request that the Committee add provisions to the bill to require and fund an investigation by the HDOA into how CBB and CLR were brought into the state—and mandate the HDOA to develop a vigorous program (similar to California’s protections for its farmers) for preventing entry of invasive pests and diseases in the future. How the system failed needs to be determined in order to strengthen it and to protect against future introductions damaging to Hawaii agriculture.

When we fly to the Mainland, our luggage is scanned, and fruits and vegetables are removed to protect Mainland farmers. When we fly into Hawaii, it is the “honor system” with amnesty bins in the airport. HAWAII NEEDS TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF HAWAII FARMERS.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Corker

Holualoa, Hawaii County

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 6:56:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Harold M Hoogasian	Kona Perfect (Member of Kona Coffee Farmers Association)	Support	No

Comments:

Many industries have suffered during the recent times. The coffee farms of Hawaii have dealt with recent times and Coffee Berry Borer and Coffee Leaf Rust, as well. Please help our Hawaii Coffee Farmers survive! Support SB 855!

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 7:32:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bill Dwyer	Kona Mountain Coffee	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

We are a Kona Coffee Farm with 105 acres and we support SB855.

Sincerely,

Bill Dwyer

President/CEO

Kona Mountain Coffee LLC

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 7:36:35 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Koontz	Konaloha Farms	Support	No

Comments:

Please help support the farmers who strive to keep Kona coffee as an important Hawaiian crop. We have been hit with CBB, CLR, pandemic, labor shortages, and blends; all taking it's toll. It's an uphill battle.....Please help us to mitigate some of the damages these things have had on small farmers. Mahalo!



March 30, 2021

Aloha House Finance Committee Chair and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association (KCFA), please accept this testimony in support of SB855.

Our non-profit is a membership organization of over 200 current active members. The purpose of KCFA is to support and protect the economic interests of Kona coffee farmers, and the nearly 200 years of heritage of Kona coffee.

Since Coffee Berry Borer Beetle (CBB) is established in Hawaii, with no expectation to fully eliminate, farmers are slowly adapting to control as efficiently as possible; however it still costs time and money.

With the recent confirmation of Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) as a relatively new pest, the many farmers who experienced a light coffee harvest year last season are now faced with unclear and complicated advice of extensive and expensive inputs in order to seek to abate this new problem. Assistance is needed to combat this serious concern.

Note that one of the potential inputs that should be subsidized equally as others is fertilization, since tree health is a vital component of fighting the CLR infestation (much like human immune systems in fighting off a viral infection). Inputs can be pesticides, however of equal value for many farmers, especially the organic farming system focused ones, is the expense of the inputs of additional fertilizer to maintain tree health. Please include this note to HDOA in the language of the final copy of SB855.

Bringing these programs (CBB & CLR) together to operate a subsidy-support mechanism under the direction of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) is both logical and efficient, and will work well for farmer access.

Please work with KCFA and others in the coffee industry (as we have diligently attempted to do ourselves) to ensure that farms do not go out of business because of emergency pest control needs.

We are happy to discuss amendments details.

Many thanks for the opportunity to testify in support of SB855, and to share the position of our farmer-based coffee organization.

Sincerely,

Colehour Bondera
President, Board of Directors





Hawaii Coffee Association
PO Box 168, Kealahou, HI 96750

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
March 31, 2021

RE: Testimony in Support of SB855 SD1

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and members of the committee,

I am Chris Manfredi, President of Hawaii Coffee Association (HCA).

The Hawaii Coffee Association strongly supports SB855 SD1. The CBB Pesticide Subsidy Program has been a success story for Hawaii's coffee producers. It helps offset some of the high costs of coffee production, making Hawaii more competitive with growers located across the globe.

Moreover, the HCA welcomes the additional support offered to control and mitigate the impacts of Coffee Leaf Rust.

Coffee leaf rust (CLR) has been discovered on Hawaii Island, Maui, Oahu and Lanai. CLR poses a devastating threat to Hawaii's coffee industry. CLR is known to spread rapidly and leads to defoliation and tree death. The discovery of Coffee Leaf Rust in Hawaii is an emergency and requires an emergency response.

Coffee is ranked by USDA as Hawaii's second highest value crop, second only to seed corn. The typical coffee farm in Hawaii is a small family farm, yet the largest farm in the state is also a coffee farm. For more details regarding Hawaii's coffee industry impacts on the State's economy, please see the attached document: [What's at Stake: The Loss of Hawaii's Coffee Industry, A Major Economic Driver](#)

In response, the HCA has been coordinating weekly conference calls among HDOA, USDA, APHIS, PBARC UH CTAHR, HARC, lawmakers, other commodity groups and industry leaders. We have developed a Strategic Plan and working on its implementation.

We are working on approvals for systemic fungicides for use on coffee that are already approved for use on other food crops. Our entire industry is working collaboratively to accelerate this process. We are also working to source, evaluate, import and distribute rust resistant varieties that are successfully grown elsewhere. We are working with USDA and HDOA to streamline the importation and quarantine process for these rust resistant varieties and to build capacity of quarantine facilities.

Like so many other industries, ours is reeling in the wake of COVID. Our member surveys indicate that most producers' sales were severely impacted, but unlike many other industries ours is layered with a devastating coffee disease that threatens our existence.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your support for Hawaii's coffee and this measure.



Hawaii Coffee Association
PO Box 168, Kealahou, HI 96750

What's at Stake: The Loss of Hawaii's Coffee Industry, A Major Economic Driver

As growers of the #2 crop in the State, we are just under 1,500 strong who tend more than 10,000 acres. The value of our coffee is second only to Hawaii's seed cropsⁱ. For the 2019-2020 season, Hawaii's unroasted coffee was valued at \$102.91 millionⁱⁱ, while its roasted value was more than \$148.48 million.

Now, we're facing the most destructive coffee disease in the world: Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR), a fungus that can kill an entire farm in a matter of weeks. Annually, CLR causes \$3 billion in damage and lost income around the world.

In Hawaii, the stakes are higher than elsewhere. While most other coffee-growing regions have planted rust-resistant varieties, all of the ones commercially grown in Hawaii are not resistant. And the best fungicides used to fight this disease have not been approved here.

CLR has been identified on Hawaii Island, Maui, Oahu and Lanai. Its spores are spread freely by wind, workers, rain, equipment and tourists. As a result, farmers are facing defoliation and a loss of yield up to 70% or more.

To help save our industry, as well as the communities and families that depend on it, we need State, Federal and private support and we need it NOW.

Without action, we stand to lose hundreds of millions of dollars in Hawaii's economy – a contribution that far exceeds the value of the beans themselves. To grow our coffee, we hire thousands of workers and buy from local industries such as transportation and vendors of agricultural supplies. This so-called "downstream economic impact" is valued at about \$210.97 millionⁱⁱⁱ.

Then there is the "upstream economic impact" of Hawaiian coffee, which is unquantified. Compared to most other crops grown here, coffee offers two advantages: 1) Its worldwide popularity boosts the tourism potential of events such as the Kona Coffee Festival. 2) It is shelf stable. That makes Hawaiian coffee a major attraction for the souvenir market, drawing tourists to shops, cafes and agritourism operations statewide. In turn, these visitors create more worldwide demand for Hawaiian coffee once they return home. For example, foreign exports of coffee from Hawaii, valued at \$9.20 million^{iv} in 2019, are an ongoing international advertisement for the Hawaii islands.

The economic losses from CLR would have an outsized impact in rural areas, where few other industries exist. Remember the collapse of the local sugar industry? We can expect similar results: dramatically increasing unemployment – especially of historically underserved and minority

populations – accompanied by increasing crime and drug use. Not to mention the harm to almost 200 years of coffee-growing history and the cultural heritage of our islands.

What We Need:

- Statewide approval of the most effective CLR fungicides, and subsidies for farmers to purchase them.
- Support for development of the best CLR-management strategies in Hawaii, as well as support to educate farmers of them.
- Support for research of the best CLR resistant varieties that will maintain the quality of Hawaii coffees. Also support for the importation, propagation and distribution of CLR-resistant varieties, including expanded plant-quarantine facilities. (This is a 5-10 year project.)
- Support for farmers to replace their existing fields with rust-resistant varieties.
- *Support for other ways to build capacity and resilience within farm communities.*

Contact:

- Chris Manfredi, President, Hawaii Coffee Association president@hawaiicoffeeassoc.org
- Suzanne Shriner, Administrator, Synergistic Hawaii Ag Council suzanne@shachawaii.org

ⁱ \$50.16 million vs \$105.7 million for Seed Crops (including seed corn), in 2018. Source: State of HI, HDOA Market Analysis and News Branch “Top 20 Agr Commodities Produced: State of Hawaii, 2018

ⁱⁱ \$102.91 million. Source: USDA-NASS. Jan 2021. “Coffee”.

ⁱⁱⁱ Using multiplier of 2.05. Correspondence from HDOA chair P. Shimabuku to USDA Secretary S. Perdue, dated November 19, 2020

^{iv} \$5.33 million in roasted coffee from Hawaii + \$3.87 million in unroasted coffee from Hawaii. Source: USDA Global Agricultural Trade System. 2019 data.



In Cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture
 National Agricultural Statistics Service, Pacific Region

Top 20 Agricultural Commodities Produced State of Hawaii, 2019

Commodity	Rank	Value of Production (1,000 dollars)
Seed Crops	1	109,500
Coffee	2	54,298
Macadamia Nuts	3	48,840
Other Aquaculture ¹	4	47,937
Cattle	5	41,387
Algae	6	32,652
Basil	7	28,030
Food Crops Grown Under Protection	8	11,000
Milk	9	9,492
Landscape Palms	10	7,914
Orchids-Other Potted Orchids ²	11	6,685
Papayas	12	4,943
Bananas	13	4,659
Dendrobiums-Potted	14	4,091
Sweet Potatoes	15	3,630
Phalaenopsis-Potted	16	3,509
Palms-Potted for indoor or patio use	17	3,426
Lettuce-Leaf	18	3,260
Anthuriums-Cut	19	3,192
Cabbage-Chinese	20	2,830

¹ Excludes algae and ornamental aquaculture. ² Excludes dendrobium, oncidinae and phalaenopsis potted orchids.

Sources:
 USDA-NASS and HDOA-MANB

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 8:14:02 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Walter Bowen	UH CTAHR	Support	No

Comments:

I will be available for questions.



RE: SUPPORT for SB855
RELATING TO COFFEE BERRY BORER
Coffee Berry Borer; Coffee Leaf Rust, Subsidy Program

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

The Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council stands in support of this Bill. Our three founding associations - the Hawaii Papaya Industry Association, the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association, and the Hawaii Coffee Association - represent 1,000 businesses, from growers to processors and shippers, stretching across the State of Hawaii.

The coffee berry borer (CBB) is a devastating invasive pest that continues to spread around the state. Economically, many smaller farms struggle to keep up with the cost burdens that CBB has introduced. Close to 1,000 farms have been impacted by the beetle. This subsidy increases the participation of growers in pest management and has made control much more effective regionally. By lowering the cost of the product, more growers are likely to treat the pest, and the overall quality of the crop increases.

For every \$50 in subsidy costs spent per acre, approximately \$600 in improved crop value is returned to the farmer. This has the potential to increase income by up to \$2.4 million across our Kona, Ka'u and Maui coffee communities. The University of Hawaii estimates that each agricultural dollar circulates 11 times through the community, via local wages, goods and services. Supporting ag is good for the economy.

This program should be funded at a minimum of \$200,000 per year to continue the current rate of subsidy, including the provision for program staffing.

Thank you for considering support to this bill. Your attention makes a difference in the lives of hundreds of farmers.

Mahalo nui loa!

Suzanne Shriner
Administrator

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 3:22:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandra Scarr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To the Committee:

I have been a coffee farmer in Holualoa since 2000. After CBB invaded Kona in 2010, the State helped farmers to afford the beauveria bssiana required to control CBB. Now we have to treat our trees for Coffee Leaf Rust that appeared in Kona last year. We need the State's help to make topical and systemic treatments for this terrible disease, which kills coffee trees.

Please pass SB855 to extend subsidies for CBB control and to authorize subsidies for CLR treatments. We farmers are suffering financially from the damage these invasive pests inflict on our crop. We need your help to make possible the adoption of sprays by all coffee farmers, because these diseases spread throughout our farms. Thank you for the assistance to save coffee in Hawaii.

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 6:14:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cecelia Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I urge that you pass SB855 to help Kona coffes farmers with the subsidy to use to combat the Cofee Berry Borer (CBB) and the even more dangerous Cofee Leaf Rust(CLR). Please undestand it is critical that we farmers handle these 2 problems and with your assistance, it will make it more feasible to do so.

Mahalo and with aloha,
Cecelia Smith
Kona Coffee farmer
Honaunau mauka

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 7:39:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Franz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This program is crucial in assisting coffee farmers to combat CBB and CLR, as well as to help sustain Coffee as an economically viable crop in Hawaii

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 9:01:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Luis F Aristizabal	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Legislature Members,

Today we as coffee farmers have two major issues affecting our coffee crops. The CBB an insect pest and CLR a coffee plant disease. Those issues are totally devastating our coffee industry. We need the support from the State of Hawaii for keep producing one of the best specialty coffees around of the world. For control CLR we must to spray fungicides, since all coffee plants are susceptibles to this pathogen. If we do not spray with preventive or systemic fungicides, we cannot produce coffee. We need to do a substitution of coffee plants resistant to CLR as well, but this is going to take several years. For now the only alternatives are improving agronomy practices and spray fungicides. This is expecting to increase the cost for produce coffee in Hawaii.

I hope we can keep getting the support of all of you.

Best regards!

Luis F. Aristizabal

Independent Consultant on Coffee Production

Coffee farmer

As a small farm, (The 4 Sens, LLC., Captain Cook) hands on, coffee producer and a member of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association my business is in jeopardy due to the introduction of Coffee Borer Beetle and Coffee Leaf Rust to the State. The introduction of these potentially devastating disorders was brought onto the coffee industry by careless introduction. Small farmers like myself operate on a limited budget with small positive margins. It is important for SB855 – CBB/CLR Subsidy Program to be passed to assist farmers to maintain their farms in the face of two very debilitating conditions that could possibly wipe out the small coffee farm component of the Islands. Please vote to maintain a viable small coffee farm industry by supporting SB855.

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 9:14:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jim Monk	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am a Kona coffee farmer and a member of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association. I support this bill. I have been a regular participant in the Coffee Berry Borer (CBB) subsidy program because the CBB are causing me to lose a significant part of my crop and seriously affecting the price I get for the rest of the crop. The cost of the CBB spray is outrageously high. The subsidy program helps we small farmers to be able to afford to protect our crop. Now we are faced with an even more dangerous pathogen that has gotten lose in Hawaii – the Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) fungus. The fantastic Kona coffee flavor depends on our Kona Typica coffee trees which are an Arabica coffee type plant. They, as far as we have been told, are especially susceptible to CLR. The fungus doesn't just reduce the crop – it so damages the trees that they die! We desperately need support to battle this new danger if the Kona coffee industry is to survive. For both those reasons, please pass this bill, SB855.

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 9:16:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lawrence Ford	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support SB855 . It will continue to allow coffee to be a viable crop on Hawaii island. Hawaii needs to support agriculture as one of the ways to uphold employment and generate income from this state.

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 9:21:55 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thomas Butler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Senate Members,

The coffee industry in Hawaii is at risk. It is just so hard to make ends meet and these new hardships makes it more of a threat to continue farming coffee in Hawaii. It is expensive and backbreaking. This third largest industry in Hawaii supports the first largest, tourism, in making Hawaii a tourist destination. The possible loss of coffee farms will make one more reason not to visit Hawaii. Please support our states regional product.

Sincerely,

Thomas Butler, owner and manager, Paradise Found Farm

SB-855-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 9:22:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/31/2021 2:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Wells	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The arrival of CBB and now CLR on our island has been a gut punch to the coffee growers. The profit margins have been razor thin and for those of us who are certified organic the pain is even greater. These subsidies help keep a unique Hawaiian asset viable. Mahalo.

Dear Committee Chair Luke and Members,

We have been growing, processing and selling 100% Kona coffee at our farm near the village of Holualoa for 22 years. We strongly support SB855.

Farming has always been challenging; and the costs seem to rise exponentially. Besides fertilizer and other soil amendments, we now need to treat the coffee orchards for coffee berry borer, cercospora, scale, and fire ants. Now we have another threat – coffee leaf rust (CLR), far more threatening than coffee berry borer. The treatment for CLR is costly and will increase the already high expense of producing coffee.

This bill that provides for the extension of the HDOA pesticide subsidy program to combat the coffee berry borer and authorizes subsidies to combat coffee leaf rust will be very beneficial to Hawaii coffee farmers. It is vital for the continuation of a successful agricultural industry in the State.

Please support the growers of fine Hawaii coffees and pass this bill.

Mahalo,
Clare & Phil Wilson
Huahua Farm
Holualoa, Hawaii

Member, KCFA