UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI SYSTEM
ʻŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAIʻI

Legislative Testimony
Hōʻike Manaʻo I Mua O Ka ʻAhaʻōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education & Technology
February 15, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.
By
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HB 876 HD1 – RELATING TO NATIVE POLLINATORS

Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 876 HD1, which requires the University of Hawaiʻi to develop native pollinator habitats to be deployed on all campuses in the University system. While the University of Hawaiʻi (UH) is supportive of the broad objective in this bill which is to increase the presence and visibility of native hawaiian plants and pollinators on campuses across the UH system, in examining the science and mechanics that would be placed on the UH as an obligation, we find that this necessitates time to consider systemwide implementation requirements.

Therefore, UH would respectively request that this measure be amended to create a pilot project to develop native pollinator habitats to be deployed at both UH Mānoa and UH Hilo, which encompasses two islands and two different ecosystems, and both with research faculty expertise in this area. A pilot project could demonstrate that incorporating the right types of native landscaping to attract and sustain native pollinators within a certain level of resources. Such plantings serve aesthetic, educational and conservation goals in addition to providing testing grounds for the use of native plants in the horticultural industry across the state. In addition, UH respectfully request an appropriation be added to this measure to adequately support this pilot project. A good order of magnitude appropriation would be $150,000 per year per site. This would fund a position for a technician, as well as student help, and supplies.

There already exists on some UH campuses native landscaping and exclusively native plant landscaped areas. The UH has found that invasive or non-native plants that do not support yellow-faced bee species would need to be eliminated or managed in any habitat such that they do not adversely affect yellow-faced bee host plants. The habitats necessary for recovery in each geographic unit will require long-term management and protection in perpetuity. UH Mānoa currently has native plant gardens on its campus.

The UH also continues to conduct a bee research and academic program. Currently, UH Hilo has a 110-acre farm located in Panaʻewa that supports hands-on teaching,

research and community outreach. The farm has a 3-acre area dedicated to honey bees that has supported the beekeeping courses and a certificate, walking tours and community outreach activities. While honey bees are essential to the pollination of agricultural crops and show the importance of the relationship of pollinators to food production, native pollinators, primarily the solitary Hawaiian yellow-faced bee, are more selective towards the pollination of native plants. Regardless, the same relationship exists with both types of bees, without the pollinator, the plants would not thrive or possibly exist.

The UH Hilo farm includes an area to promote resource needs for native pollinators including birds and insects which would be a good fit and add even more understanding to the relationships between plants, animals, and humans for students and the community alike. In addition, UH Hilo is currently transitioning to the use of more native plants on their main campus as part of their sustainability efforts. A portion of that area will be dedicated to native plantings and a complementary native pollinator habitat that can be used for credited course learning in multiple disciplines and on-site community programming.

For the above reasons, UH believes that identifying UH Mānoa and UH Hilo as the two campuses to conduct this pilot project, makes the most sense. Thank you for your consideration of our amendments and the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-876-HD-1
Submitted on: 2/13/2023 7:16:56 PM
Testimony for HET on 2/15/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB876 HD1.

HB-876-HD-1
Submitted on: 2/13/2023 11:02:15 PM
Testimony for HET on 2/15/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **support HB876 HD1** to assist the revitalization of native pollinators by requiring the University of Hawaii to create native pollinator habitats on campuses across the University system.

Pollinators are vital to our local food security. Yet Hawaii's native pollinators are facing the threat of extinction. State institutions must play a role in nurturing ecosystems that support both native plants and pollinators. The University of Hawaii is well positioned to create these ecosystems on its campuses.

Please support and pass this important measure. Mahalo!

HB-876-HD-1
Submitted on: 2/14/2023 7:51:20 AM
Testimony for HET on 2/15/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HD1. Thank you.

HB-876-HD-1
Submitted on: 2/15/2023 2:49:40 AM
Testimony for HET on 2/15/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Love	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support this. No pollinators=no food