

Testimony  
For HB 316 Relating to Agriculture  
February 7, 2009  
9:00 am  
State Capitol  
CR 325

Honorable Representatives,

I support HB316. As a rancher in Ka'u, I can attest to the dramatic increase in the deterioration rate in fences, fence-post, gates and other equipment exposed to the elements. Fences and water-systems are key to productive and responsible land use for ranchers, and their rapid deterioration directly increases cost of operation, for replacement costs and increased maintenance costs. Vog also has affected the rate of regrowth for our pastures, especially the pastures closest to the volcano. Slower regrowth means less productivity and less income for our ranches. Any help that you can provide us in off-setting these losses will be much appreciated.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michelle M. Galimba  
PO Box 294  
Naalehu HI 96772  
Cell: (808) 430-4927  
[mgalimba@kuahiwiranch.com](mailto:mgalimba@kuahiwiranch.com)

**William P. Kenoi**  
*Mayor*



**William T. Takaba**  
*Managing Director*

**Walter K.M. Lau**  
*Deputy Managing Director*

## County of Hawai'i

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February 7, 2009

The Honorable Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Health Committee  
The Honorable Jerry L. Chang, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Higher Education Committee  
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Labor & Public Employment Committee  
The Honorable Joseph M. Souki, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Transportation Committee  
The Honorable Faye Hanohano, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Public Safety Committee  
The Honorable Clift Tsuji, Chair  
And Committee Members of the House Committee on Agriculture  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: House Bills 313, 318, 316, 312, 317, 314 and 315

Aloha, Chairpersons and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments in favor of these seven House Bills designed to cope with the health and economic effects from vog. We will provide more specific testimony on the individual bills, but please let me express my appreciation to members of the Legislature for addressing this serious problem that is affecting our people's lives and livelihoods.

As you know, sulfur dioxide emissions at the summit of Kilauea volcano began climbing in December 2007, and on March 12, 2008 increased sharply from the new vent at Halema'uma'u Crater. The trade winds have generally swept the gasses and acid rain southwest, causing major agricultural damage and particular hardship in communities such as Wood Valley, Hawaiian Ocean View Estates, Na'alehu and Pahala.

As you will hear today, crops have been damaged, agricultural infrastructure has deteriorated from the fumes, and people have become ill.

Ranchers, farmers and homeowners who have spent their lives building businesses and raising families in rural Ka'u, South Kona and Volcano have suddenly had to cope with completely unexpected economic losses and illnesses.

We deeply appreciate the efforts of Representative Herkes and all of the committee chairpersons and members in taking this time to search for the best methods of safeguarding the health of our Hawai'i Island residents, and the best ways to provide relief to businesses that are threatened by the increased emissions.

We particularly thank you for your willingness to address the problem in these difficult economic times, and welcome any assistance you can provide for our residents and for the many Hawai'i County agricultural operations that are trying to cope with this new threat.

Aloha,

Billy Kenoi

# LATE TESTIMONY

McCall Flower Farm, Inc.  
Mail to: P.O. Box 837  
Ship to: 96-1029 Center Rd.  
Pahala, HI 96777  
Phone (808) 928-6456  
Fax (808) 928-9016

TO:

FROM: Jeffrey McCall

DATE: February 7, 2009

I am offering this testimony in support of the following bills:

HB 318 Relating to Vog

HB 316 Relating to Agriculture

HB 312 Relating to Hazardous Substances

I am a farmer in Ka'u, growing temperate cut flowers for the local Hawaii market. We have been farming since 1983 and started our farm in Wood Valley in 1992. My business has been heavily affected by the vog from Halemaumau. Our farm had sales of \$870,000 in 2007 and 14 employees on payroll before the vog began affecting our crops. We are predicting sales in 2009 to be about \$250,000 and have had to lay off or reduce the hours of most of our employees. The majority of our crops have been killed or rendered unsalable by the vog. We are hanging on to the crops that are most resistant to the vog and have begun planting coffee on our outside fields. Our farm has been downsized and is no longer able to employ us all. I have taken outside employment and my son is now running the farm. My wife has developed an allergy to sulfites and we have moved to Hilo to avoid the worst of the vog.

Vog has affected our business and quality of life as it has for most residents of Ka'u. I ask for your support for any measures that will help us cope with this ongoing disaster.

# LATE TESTIMONY

AGR-HED-HLT-LAB-PBS-TRN Hearing  
Saturday, February 7, 2009  
9:00 am  
State Capitol  
CR 325

Testimony in support of:

HB 312  
HB 313  
HB 314  
HB 315  
HB 316  
HB 317  
HB 318

We are 100% on Bills 312,313,314,315,316,317 and 318.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Don and Martie Nitsche  
Ocean View Residents