

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

JAMES J. NAKATANI
Deputy to the Chairperson

TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2011
TIME 9:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 312

HOUSE BILL NO. 1275
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 1275. This bill provides a grant to the *4Ag Hawaii* non-profit corporation to expand the "Buy Local, It Matters" campaign. The Department of Agriculture supports the intent of this bill.

The "Buy Local, It Matters" slogan campaign aims to encourage residents and visitors to support Hawaii farmers by making conscious decisions to purchase locally produced agricultural products. Since its launch in November 2009, various promotional events were held at Tamarind Park, the 2010 State Farm Fair, and a flower show at the Department's Plant Quarantine Branch facility. Additionally, paid advertisements were featured on several local television and radio stations.

The Department is a strong advocate for local farmers and believes that buying local helps to promote improved food self-sufficiency; and keeps money circulating in the state's economy to generate additional sales, income, tax revenue and create new jobs.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

P O Box 437199 Kamuela HI 96743
Phone (808) 885-5599 • Fax (808) 887-1607
e-mail: HCattlemens@hawaii.rr.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Friday February 4, 2011 9:00 a.m. Room 312

HB 1275 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

Provides a grant to the 4 Ag Hawaii nonprofit corporation to expand its "Buy Local, It Matters" campaign.

Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

My name is Alan Gottlieb, and I am a rancher and the Government Affairs Chair for the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc. (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 130+ member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of approximately 25% of the State's total land mass.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **strongly supports** HB 1275.

The State of Hawaii and the Legislature has recognized that farming and ranching is important to the State's Food Security, economy and environment. Though Hawaii produced farm products are superior to those imported into the State, at times and for a variety of reasons, they are often more expensive than the inferior imports. Without Hawaii consumers making the connection that buying local matters more than just the price we see at the store, Hawaii ranches and farms will fail. The "Buy Local, It Matters" campaign helps connect the dots with consumers and has been a huge success when it has aired, but getting the word out by mass media is very expensive. The grant proposed by HB 1275 will allow 4AgHawaii to expand the "Buy Local, It matters" campaign and this is important to every resident and visitor to the State of Hawaii.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in favor of this very important issue.