UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 9, 2012 at 2:10 p.m.
by
Dr. Lorna Tsutsumi
Professor, University of Hawai`i at Hilo

HB 2100, HD1 RELATING TO BEES

Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. Lorna Tsutsumi and I am a Professor of Entomology at the University of Hawai`i at Hilo, College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management. For over 20 years, UHH has offered the only credited catalogued beekeeping courses within the UH system. The two courses, beginning beekeeping and advanced beekeeping, provide UHH students with the opportunity to learn about honey bees and gain valuable hands-on experience in the maintenance and cultivation of honey bees.

Honey bees are responsible for the pollination of many important agricultural crops and their health and well-being is especially important as we strive to lessen our dependency on imports. There are several major pests of honey bees in Hawai`i such as the small hive beetle and the Varroa mite that are reducing colony numbers thus adversely affecting the beekeeping industry and crops that are dependent on honey bee pollination.

Recently, the University of Hawaii at Hilo partnered with a local chef to promote honey bee awareness through a program, "Adopt a Beehive with Alan Wong". The program serves as a medium that bridges the public and private sector for a common good that generates resources for UHH beekeeping students and allows for public involvement through student communication and activities.

There are presently 25 bee hives at the UHH apiary located on the 110 acre Panaewa farm that are used for the hands-on beekeeping laboratories. The hives are assigned to students who learn manipulation skills and then send public "adopters" monthly updates on the status of their hives. In addition to these hives, the UHH farm has a one acre bee friendly educational garden, Mapuhonehone. The garden contains 1) a variety of plants that are used by honey bees and man, 2) plants that are tied into the history of beekeeping in Hawai`i, and 3) other requirements for honey bee needs such as water.

An additional need to complement the teaching apiary and the educational garden and advance honey bee awareness is another apiary that will be used primarily for research. The hives in this apiary will be used for applied research projects to develop control measures and devices to help maintain healthy honey bee colonies. An area on the UHH farm has already been designated for this apiary and this bill will provide moneys to develop the area so that it can support a functioning research apiary. Since the research will be conducted on the bee hives at the farm, researchers and students will have the opportunity to conduct meaningful, applicable experiments to improve honey bee wellness and productivity for Hawaii.

Finally, we support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents approved supplemental budget.

Thank you for providing this opportunity to testify on HB 2100, HD1.

Hawaii Farm Bureau
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February 9, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

TESTIMONY ON HB 2100, HD1
RELATING TO BEES

Room 309
2:10 AM

Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Nakashima, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Chief Operating Officer and Government Affairs Liaison for the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF 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 interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFBF supports HB 2100, HD1, which appropriates $50,000 to the University of Hawaii for statewide bee hive research.

Honey bee problems are problems for all of us since many local crops are pollinated by bees. If we are unable to control pests and diseases that harm our honey bees, Hawaii's Agriculture Industry may suffer lower production and quality in tomatoes, melons, and cucumbers as well as coffee, avocado, macadamia nuts, and citrus.

We support UH's efforts to advance their honey bee research activities, and we encourage all them to collaborate their honey bee research efforts between islands and with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

I can be reached at (808) 848-2074 if you have any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TESTIMONY OF CARY DIZON, PAST PRESIDENT
BIG ISLAND BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
February 9, 2012
2:10 P.M.
HOUSE BILL NO. 2100
RELATING TO BEES

The Big Island Beekeepers Association supports the appropriation of money for honey bee research at the University of Hawaii, in particular, the funding of research at the UH Bee Lab in Manoa. Dr, Villalobos is known for her outreach to state beekeepers and was awarded the Western Apicultural Society Thurber Award for Inventiveness for her work in helping beekeepers on Hawaii Island and Oahu address the varroa mite problem.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.