



**HB205 HD1**  
**RELATED TO AGRICULTURE**  
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
Senate Committee on Agriculture

March 20, 2015

1:15 p.m.

Room 224

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** HB205 HD1, which is part of OHA's 2015 Legislative Package. HB205 HD1 promotes the food security, self-sufficiency, and cultural heritage of our islands, by recognizing the perpetuation of Native Hawaiian traditional farming techniques and crops and the growth and development of small farms, as agricultural objectives of the State.

OHA is the constitutionally-established agency responsible for protecting and promoting the rights and interests of Native Hawaiians. Accordingly, OHA has a kuleana to ensure the perpetuation of traditional practices and technologies, as well as advocate for the appropriate and sustainable use and development of our beneficiaries' ancestral lands.

Time-tested Native Hawaiian traditional farming methods represent successful agricultural technologies that are ecologically sustainable, culturally significant, and critical to Hawai'i's long-term food security and self-sufficiency goals. Traditional Native Hawaiian farming techniques, such as loko i'a and lo'i kalo, are integrated into natural ecological systems, and have a minimal impact on our environment while allowing our agricultural resources to remain viable for generations. These agricultural methods and crops are particularly suitable for our climate, and history demonstrates their ability to sustain a population commensurate with that of our islands today. In addition, traditional farming communities act as critical repositories of cultural knowledge and values. Therefore, promoting traditional farming methods and crops also supports the cultural heritage of our state.

Similarly, supporting Hawai'i's small farms, many of which already utilize such traditional farming methods, would also provide a substantial and durable increase in local food production. As noted in this bill, the United Nations Committee on Trade and Development strongly urges the promotion of both traditional farming methods and small farms as an essential response to the threat of climate change to regional food security. The flexibility and resilience of a well-developed small farm network will provide the greatest assurances of a local food supply notwithstanding changing environmental conditions, while also reducing our dependency on imported agricultural products.

In addition, OHA notes that this measure may represent an investment in our islands' economic stability. Small farms are small businesses. Supporting small farming operations in Hawai'i supports our local economy and the spirit of entrepreneurship, in the same manner as supporting other sectors of the small business community.

Finally, this bill levels the playing field for traditional agriculture and small farms, by expressly allowing state agencies to consider these important components of food

security and self-sufficiency in supporting programs, leasing lands, and taking other relevant actions. It would ensure that traditional Hawaiian agriculture and small-scales are prioritized equally while maintaining the priority for large-scale farming operations that are already recognized in the state planning act. A diversified agriculture portfolio with both small- and large-scale farming operations, along with a variety of crops and farming technologies, will enhance our islands' food security and resilience to unexpected impacts, while also celebrating our cultural heritage and values.

Therefore, OHA urges the Committees to **PASS** HB205 HD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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### Written Only

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
And

Senate Committee on Agriculture  
Friday, March 20, 2015 at 1:15 pm

By

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor

And

Maria Gallo, Dean

And

J. Kenneth Grace, Associate Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 205 HD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairs Shimabukuro and Ruderman, Vice Chairs Galuteria and Riviere, and members of the committees, we respectfully submit testimony in support of HB 205 HD1, which updates the State's agricultural planning statute to add the growth and development of traditional Hawaiian farming systems and traditional Hawaiian crops, and the growth and development of small-scale farms, as agricultural objectives.

We fully support both inclusion of traditional crops and agricultural practices, and support for small farms in the economic objectives for the State of Hawai'i. The most recent (2012) census documents that 63% of the 7,000 farms in the State are less than 10 acres in size. These very small farms produce family food, vegetables and animal products for local sale and consumption, and such high value crops as herbs and cut flowers. Further, 88% of our farms are less than 50 acres in size, and would still be considered small by many standards. These small and very small farms represent diversified agriculture in Hawaii, and in large part are the agricultural clients served by the extension service of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Traditional crops such as taro and breadfruit are nutritious, culturally significant and viewed as essential components of food security in Hawai'i; and are also now recognized as having great potential value for export as well (e.g., gluten-free breadfruit flour). Traditional agricultural practices are not only valuable means of crop production, but also serve to inform all agricultural development in the Hawaiian Islands.

Thank you for this opportunity to express the support of the University of Hawai'i for HB 205 HD1.

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**Date:** Wednesday, March 18, 2015 11:24:33 AM

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**HB205**

Submitted on: 3/18/2015

Testimony for HWN/AGL on Mar 20, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Z. Arakawa	Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii	Comments Only	No

Comments: The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii SUPPORTS HB 205, HD1, RELATED TO AGRICULTURE, which includes traditional Hawaiian farming and small-scale farming to the objectives and policies for the economy. (HB 205 HD1)

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*Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce*

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nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.com • nhccoahu@gmail.com

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Testimony of Leilani Williams Solomon  
President, Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce  
Before the Joint Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs,  
and the Senate Committee on Agriculture  
March 20, 2015

House Bill No. 205, HD1  
Relating to Agriculture

Aloha Chair Shimabukuro, Chair Ruderman, and members of the committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support** of HB 205. The Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce's (NHCC's) mission is to connect and strengthen Native Hawaiian businesses, professions and communities and we represent nearly 200 individual members and organizations.

The State Planning Act currently establishes several objectives for Hawai'i's economy with respect to agriculture, including the continued viability of our sugar and pineapple industries; the growth and development of diversified agriculture; and the maintenance of agriculture as a dynamic and essential component of the state's strategic, economic, and social well-being. This measure will level the playing field for traditional agricultural methods and small farms by adding them as additional agricultural objectives of the state. We urge the support for traditional Hawaiian agricultural technologies such as loko i'a (fishponds), māla (cultivated gardens), and lo'i (irrigated patches) that have historically sustained significant populations for generations.

Traditional farming communities act as repositories for traditional knowledge and help perpetuate Native Hawaiian culture and lifestyles. Small farms contribute significantly to our local economy, and provide a range of local agricultural products to help meet our local food needs and enhance our visitors' culinary experiences.

For these reasons, we ask for your support in passing this measure. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to present our testimony.

Me ka mahalo,

Leilani Williams-Solomon

**Testimony of  
TARO SECURITY AND PURITY TASK FORCE**

**MARK ALAPAKI LUKE  
Chair**

**Before the Senate Committees on  
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS and AGRICULTURE**

**Friday, March 20, 2015, 1:15PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 205 HD1  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

House Bill 205 HD1 seeks to amend the Hawai'i's State planning goals for agricultural under HRS226-7 to include the growth and development of traditional Hawaiian farming systems and traditional Hawaiian crops, as well as the growth and development of small-scale farms. **The Taro Security & Purity Task Force strongly supports this measure.**

Over the previous two legislative sessions, the taro task force has included similar language to HB205 HD1 within our own legislation package. In recognition of the importance that traditional Hawaiian food crops and planting systems play in local food security, the task force supports this amendment to the agricultural objectives for the State.

Hawaiian food crops and cropping systems are what provided a foundation for prosperity in Hawai'i. These crops far surpassed even sugar in total acreage of food production prior to 1800. Kalo and kalo farming has played a key role in Hawai'i's cultural identity and economy for the last 1,200 years, and even though severely diminished in acreage, that continues in the present. Today the demand for locally-grown kalo, ulu, 'uala and other indigenous crops is rising again after a century of declining production. The traditional Hawaiian practices and agricultural technologies used in taro farming have a demonstrably positive impact on soil health, water quality, and aquifer recharge.

The existing goals for agriculture under HRS 226-7 have not been revisited for more than 20 years. They recognize our primary export crops and the drive for export markets, but none of our oldest history, cultural origins, nor our need for a greater focus on local food self-sufficiency. Adding traditional Hawaiian crops and practices to Hawai'i's goals for agriculture gives guidance to the State to encourage best agricultural practices for our islands and supports the physical and social health of the community. It recognizes that traditional Hawaiian crops are a vibrant and vital part of our economy, and provides the Department of Agriculture with enriched guidance for future food security.

We encourage full support from House committee members to adopt HB205 HD1 as a

measure to encourage future policies that support small-scale family farms and food security in Hawai‘i.

Mahalo nui loa

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mark Alapaki Luke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Alapaki Luke, Chair  
Taro Security and Purity Task Force

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**HB205**

Submitted on: 3/20/2015

Testimony for HWN/AGL on Mar 20, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Redfeather	Hawaii Island School Garden Network	Support	No

Comments: The Small Family Farm is already the backbone of Hawaii's local food system. Mahalo to this Bill by OHA for bringing local and Hawaiian crops into the light to be taken seriously for our future food needs.

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**HB205**

Submitted on: 3/18/2015

Testimony for HWN/AGL on Mar 20, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James Gauer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Date:** Thursday, March 19, 2015 8:11:33 AM

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**HB205**

Submitted on: 3/19/2015

Testimony for HWN/AGL on Mar 20, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kama Hopkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Date:** Wednesday, March 18, 2015 1:07:04 PM

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**HB205**

Submitted on: 3/18/2015

Testimony for HWN/AGL on Mar 20, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

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

Comments:

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Date: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 9:09:45 PM

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## **HB205**

Submitted on: 3/17/2015

Testimony for HWN/AGL on Mar 20, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
penny levin	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: The existing goals for agriculture under HRS 226-7 include perpetuating the viability of sugar and pineapple; growth and development of diversified agriculture; and an agriculture industry that continues to constitute a dynamic and essential component of Hawaii's strategic, economic and social well-being. These objectives have not been revisited for more than 20 years. While they recognize our primary export crops and the drive for export markets they have never acknowledged our oldest and most important cultural origins in agriculture. In the last 20 years we have shifted our awareness to the need for a greater focus on local food self-sufficiency. Eighty-five percent of our food is import dependent. This is our greatest security risk. None of the existing objectives for agriculture address this as an issue of primacy. All of the objectives point to economics as the source for social well-being, missing a more holistic approach both to agriculture and well-being.

Abundance springs from a connection to place and people; not just revenues. As the conditions of our soils and water resources have declined we would do well to consider that none of the objectives address the critical need for focus on restorative agriculture practices if we are to continue to have a vibrant agricultural economy. The perpetuation, promotion and increase of traditional Hawaiian crops and practices, and the growth of small farms will move us one small, but important measure towards addressing some of these missing piecing. Both these objectives are embraced as mechanisms for encouraging agricultural practices attentive to the land and enhancing community well-being, family and cultural resilience. They provide the Department of Agriculture with enriched guidance for future food security. The proposed additions to Hawai'i's planning goals and objectives for agriculture recognize that traditional Hawaiian crops and small farms are a vibrant and vital part of our economy. I strongly support this bill. Mahalo.

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**Date:** Thursday, March 19, 2015 8:13:49 AM

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**HB205**

Submitted on: 3/19/2015

Testimony for HWN/AGL on Mar 20, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert K. Lindsey, Jr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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