

THE SENATE

Committee on Judiciary and Labor
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Thursday, February 25, 2016; 9:01 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 2787, SD1
RELATING TO INDUSTRIAL HEMP**

The ILWU Local 142 supports S.B. 2787, SD1, which provides the authority, procedures, and licensing requirements related to the production of industrial hemp as an agricultural product. Also requires the Department of Agriculture to promote industrial hemp research and development of markets for industrial hemp and requires the possession, use, sale, or transfer of industrial hemp for research and development purposes to not constitute certain offenses involving a detrimental drug.

Since the decline of pineapple production and the impending closure of the last sugar plantation in Hawaii, acres of good agricultural land have remained fallow or have undergone or will undergo extensive development. While other crops have been introduced to replace sugar and pineapple and provide jobs for hundreds of people, some of them have faced stiff opposition from environmentalists and others who oppose genetically modified organisms (GMO) and large-scale pesticide use. The irony is that those who oppose GMO's also oppose expanded development and want to "keep the country country."

Hawaii's economy needs diversification. Tourism may be our number one industry but cannot be the state's sole economic driver. Indeed, tourism needs agriculture for its survival as much as it needs beaches and good weather. Flying over Maui and seeing acres of green, growing sugar cane is a delight for both visitors and residents, but that will end before too long. The State recognized the importance of agricultural lands on the North Shore of Oahu and wisely appropriated funding to obtain lands owned by the Galbraith Estate, but more must be done to ensure that agriculture has a future in Hawaii.

S.B. 2787, SD1 offers an opportunity for another crop to make use of vacant agricultural lands, provide jobs, stave off development, and preserve open spaces. That crop is industrial hemp, which is not the same as marijuana used for medicinal and recreational drug purposes. While from the same family as marijuana, industrial hemp is low in THC, scientifically different from marijuana, and cultivated differently. Industrial hemp is grown for its seed and fiber content and is used to produce food, oil, furniture, and fabric.

S.B. 2787, SD1 will legalize the cultivation of industrial hemp and promote the development and marketing of industrial hemp as a viable crop.

We believe industrial hemp is a crop worth considering for its economic potential. The ILWU urges passage of S.B. 2787, SD1. Thank you for considering our testimony.