

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
Governor

**JOSH GREEN**  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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**PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**MORRIS M. ATTA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**FEBRUARY 3, 2020  
1:15 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2711  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2711. This measure appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program and requires a report to the Legislature. The Department supports the intent of this measure, however, respectfully requests that the responsible agency be changed to the University of Hawaii, Community Colleges or the Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

The Department of Agriculture (HDOA) unfortunately does not have the human resources or expertise to implement this program. We would have to research the equipment to purchase, identify and acquire land to house the equipment, hire on site staff, develop a lending and tracking program, develop a repair and maintenance program, training program (including train the trainer for department staff), and collect information as to the usefulness and utility of the item. Then we would have to compile and analyze the data and draft a report, all within six months. Most likely, this would not give the farmer adequate time to effectively learn to use the item and report meaningful data.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Monday, February 3, 2020 at 1:15 p.m.

By  
Nicholas Comerford, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
And  
Michael Bruno, PhD  
Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 2711 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the intent of SB 2711 that establishes a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot project.

The idea behind the bill is worthy in that given the prevalence of small farms in the state, and the need to improve the technology used on those farms, and that typical farm equipment is not of the right size to be effective on small farms. The need for equipment of appropriate size is clear.

The issue we see with this bill is that it does not clearly identify objectives for the pilot program. As written it includes identifying foreign agriculture technology, purchasing equipment, and retrofitting equipment engines to comply with Environmental Protection Agency standards.

Not included in the objectives is a list of what foreign technology beyond small tractors should be considered; nor does it include testing of the equipment on small farms in Hawai'i. If the objective is to see if it can be done, then it would be more appropriate to give the task to a community college that has the appropriate shop(s) to do the retrofitting, as well as give students a useful educational experience. The shop program might also be able to test the machinery in the field.

If the future is to consider buying equipment and lending it out as needed, that is typically done, in other states, through the county Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

We recognize the need for this equipment, and we would support a stronger plan that includes the more appropriate state organizations, since the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture does not seem like the right organization in which to put this.

Given the above arguments, we support the intent of SB 2711 and express concerns.

**SB-2711**

Submitted on: 1/28/2020 8:40:30 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/3/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicole K Galase	Testifying for Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	No

Comments:



January 28, 2020

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

**Support of SB 2711, Relating to Agriculture (Appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture [DOA] to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.)**

**Monday, February 3, 2020, 1:15 p.m., in Conference Room 224**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of SB 2711** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands (IAL) in Hawaii.

**SB 2711.** This bill appropriates funds to the DOA to establish a pilot program to identify and purchase foreign agricultural technology, including small equipment tractors and retrofit engines to comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's emission standards, which is vital to farmers and ranchers who must resort to alternative means and technology to operate their farms due to the increase in demand for unskilled labor.

**LURF's Position.** LURF members include farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider such assistance very helpful, if not critical to the conduct of their operations and to help sustain their businesses.

The purpose of this bill is consistent with the underlying intent and objectives of the IAL laws (Hawaii Revised Statutes, Sections 205-41 to 52), which were enacted to fulfill the mandate in Article XI, Section 3, of the Hawaii State Constitution, "to conserve and

protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands.”

LURF therefore appreciates the objective of SB 2711, which is to support agriculture and provide needed assistance to agriculture-related or agribusinesses operations. Passage of the long-awaited IAL legislation would be meaningless without implementation of such measures. The establishment of the foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program is critically needed to help support viable agricultural activity in this State.

By recognizing the significance of, and need to assist the local agriculture industry, and implement incentives and measures which help to support the growth and maintenance of agriculture in the State, this bill significantly helps to promote economically viable agriculture and food self-sufficiency in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of this measure.



**MAUI**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 224  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2020 AT 1:15 P.M.**

To The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair;  
The Honorable Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair; and  
Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Environment;

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2711 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Aloha, my name is Pamela Tumpap and I am the President of the Maui Chamber of Commerce, with approximately 650 members. We appreciate the opportunity to support of SB2711 on a pilot program relating to ag equipment.

Historically, agriculture has been very important to our community, but it is a difficult industry to successfully start and operate. Use of technology and modernization is key. We support efforts that seek to sustain and support agriculture as the industry is currently struggling with a labor shortage, in addition to other factors. We appreciate that this bill takes a new approach to supporting the industry by establishing a pilot program to look for more efficient equipment and ensuring it is compliant with EPA regulations.

Mahalo for your consideration of our testimony and we hope you will move this bill forward.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



# HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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## TESTIMONY FROM THE HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

### In Support of SB2711 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Monday, 02-03-20 1:15PM  
Senate conference room 224

Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Ruderman, and members of the committee:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) is in support of SB2711, which would appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

Hawaii's farmers and ranchers need to identify ways to reduce the need for labor to operate their farms through the use of technology, such as small equipment tractors. Currently, however, engines attached to affordable options from foreign countries like Japan are not in compliance with the EPA's standards. This bill will allow farmers to retrofit their equipment to come into compliance, and potentially reduce the operational costs of farming and ranching.

Please vote in support of SB2711 to support the livelihood of Hawaii's farmers. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Emmanuel Zibakalam, Program Director  
Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

*The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices, and build a healthy economy.*



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February 3, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2711**  
RELATING TO THE AGRICULTURE

Room 224  
1:15 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB 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 interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports SB 2711**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program. Requires a report to the Legislature.

As the demand for agriculture labor continues to increase, while the availability of labor decreases, farmers and ranchers continue to look for alternative means to operate their farms through technology, like small equipment tractors. A limited number of weed management solutions and the increase in labor costs have made weed management a major challenge for many small farmers in Hawaii. Many small farmers also have a need for smaller harvesting and field prep equipment that is not readily available in Hawaii. These growers include vegetable crops, wetland crops, and livestock forage crops. There is a need to identify high technology small equipment and evaluate its applicability for Hawaii's diverse agriculture systems.

Countries such as Japan have small equipment that is suitable for Hawaii's small farmers, however, the engines that are attached to small equipment from foreign countries like Japan are not in compliance with EPA standard regulations. This pilot program would help identify desired small equipment as well as finding solutions that would allow Hawaii farmers to import foreign equipment that complies with EPA standards.

We recommend that the pilot project include, among other things, the following:



- Establish contact with manufacturers of small equipment in Japan and other countries.
- Work with EPA to identify EPA standard and compliance requirements for small foreign ag equipment.
- Collaborate with Agriculture and Ag Professionals from foreign countries on management practices.
- Bring harvesting, weed management, and field prep machinery into the State of Hawaii for evaluation.
- Conduct on-farm trials to evaluate the efficacy and applicability to multiple growing systems (wetland, conventional, organic, forage crops, etc.) statewide.
- Conduct education and training workshops statewide to update agriculture producers on available technology.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

**SB-2711**

Submitted on: 1/30/2020 3:29:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/3/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Megan Blazak	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-2711**

Submitted on: 2/2/2020 4:26:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/3/2020 1:15:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
J Ashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

## **gabbard2 - Sydney**

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**From:** James Tavares <tavaresjam@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 31, 2020 12:23 PM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Subject:** I support SB2711

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Chairman Gabbard,

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Ruderman, and members of the committee,

I support SB2711, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

This measure supports the demand for agriculture labor, which continues to increase. Farmers and ranchers continue to look for alternative means to operate their farms through technology, like small equipment tractors. Although engines attached to small equipment from foreign countries like Japan are not in compliance with EPA standard regulations, this pilot program would explore retrofitting foreign equipment to comply with those standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo!

Sincerely,

James Tavares  
Owner  
The Grassmaster  
PO Box 3037  
Kahului, HI 96733  
tavaresjam@gmail.com

**Multiple Testifier list for SB 2711**

Phil Becker  
Kim Kawahara  
Frederick Mencher  
Luana Beck  
Domingo Loero  
Corey Barth  
Richard Ogoshi  
Sandi Kato-Klutke  
Ken Hirata  
Randy Cabral  
Randall Francisco  
Glen Toyama  
Susan Cabral  
Brian Watanabe  
Robert Paull  
James Tavares  
Alan Gottlieb  
James Gomes