

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY 11, 2022  
10:00 A.M.  
CR 325 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

HOUSE BILL NO. 1742  
RELATING TO THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Hashem and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No.1742, which establishes two positions on the Board of Agriculture ("Board") and specifies one shall be a resident of the island of Moloka'i and one shall be a resident of the island of Lana'i. The Department supports the intent of the measure provided it does not adversely impact the Department's priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.

It appears that this measure seeks to ensure representation of the of the Moloka'i and Lana'i agricultural communities on the Board by establishing positions that are geographically based. The Board was established with members from each of the four Counties to address that concern from its inception. Historically, the Board member representing Maui County has represented the interests of the entire county, including Moloka'i and Lana'i. Additionally, a member in one of the at-large positions on the board at this time is very knowledgeable of controlled environment agriculture on Lana'i which is an example of agricultural technology and innovation at its highest level in Hawai'i. The same member also has a diverse experience of agricultural production and food systems on the Island of Hawai'i. Currently any person as a resident of Moloka'i or Lana'i can also apply to be considered and nominated as an at-large member of the Board of Agriculture.

Within the department there is an exclusive opportunity for residents of Moloka'i to have a voice and decision-making vote as a member of the Moloka'i Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board for the Moloka'i irrigation system water service. It has been a challenge for the department to fill vacant advisory board positions with Moloka'i residents. The Department recently completed the 2020 Update to the Hawai'i



Statewide Agricultural Land Use Baseline that reported a significant increase in diversified crop acreage on Lana`i. In 2021, Moloka`i experienced specific challenges to animal disease and climate change. Adding two members to the board of agriculture to represent Moloka`i and Lana`i provides the desired diversity in statewide representation of knowledge and perspectives for providing broad operating policies for the Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Agriculture  
Friday, February 11, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

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

### HB 1742 – RELATING TO THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1742.

The Board of Agriculture (BOA) is charged with establishing broad operating policies for the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA), and is an executive board consisting of ten members—one from each of the counties of Hawai'i, Maui, Kaua'i; three at-large members; the Chair of HDOA; the Chair of the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources; the Director of the Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism; and the Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The BOA also exercises specific authority in such areas as granting permission for the importation of certain animal and plant species which, by regulation requires such action.

As each of the islands of the State has different natural resources, having a representative from each major island instead of a representative from each county the BOA will be better equipped to address each island's unique agricultural issues.

We support HB 1742, but defer to the HDOA as to their priorities.



*The Molokai Farm Bureau serves as Molokai's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community. We are also an arm of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, organized in 1948 and comprised of 1800 farm families statewide.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

February 11, 2021 @ 10:00AM, Via Videoconference, Conference Room 325

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1742 – RELATING TO THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso and Respected Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Nate Oswald and I'm the President of the Molokai Farm Bureau, serving our members here on the island of Molokai.

Molokai's agricultural environment, needs and realities are much different than the larger islands that currently hold *designated* seats on the Board of Agriculture.

Hoping for a voice through another island that may have completely different perspectives, challenges or opportunities, or through an at-large seat – is not a plan – it is not a commitment to Molokai that our concerns or ideas will be heard or included in discussions and decisions at such a pivotal level.

Molokai's agricultural infrastructure, resources, economies of scale, challenges to imports and exports, access to supplies and inputs, opportunities for growth, or pipelines to end-game markets are all drastically more complex and uniquely more fragile and costly.

Compounding these items, we understand the immeasurable serious and long-term impacts Molokai's agriculture (and all sectors of Hawaii) will face as we walk through this pandemic together.

For these reasons and more, **there has never been a more important time for ALL ISLANDS to have a voice at the table** on the Board of Agriculture – for agriculture to remain a sustaining sector in our state and local island economies.

We respectfully and STRONGLY SUPPORT HB 1742, and thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Molokai Farm Bureau,

*Nate Oswald*

Nathaniel Oswald  
President, Molokai Farm Bureau

**HB-1742**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 7:37:52 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/11/2022 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Brian Miyamoto	Hawaii Farm Bureau	Support	No

Comments:

Support

Council Chair  
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair  
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore  
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers  
Gabe Johnson  
Kelly Takaya King  
Michael J. Molina  
Tamara Paltin  
Shane M. Sinenci  
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura



Director of Council Services  
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services  
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

February 9, 2022

TO: Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
House Committee on Agriculture

FROM: Alice L. Lee  
Council Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee".

DATE: February 9, 2022

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF HB 1742, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to change the composition of the Board of Agriculture by providing representation from the islands of Molokai and Lanai. The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Each of the islands of the State has different water resources, and therefore unique agricultural issues.
2. Amending the composition of the Board of Agriculture by providing representation from the islands of Molokai and Lanai better addresses the complex needs of each island's agricultural community.

For the foregoing reasons, I **SUPPORT** this measure.

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**HB-1742**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 10:08:11 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/11/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dillon DeCoite	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill because I believe Molokai and Lanai needs a vioce in agriculture.

**HB-1742**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 10:08:12 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/11/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Russell DeCoite Sr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill because Molokai and Lanai should have a voice in what should or should not happen relating to agriculture on our islands.



**HB-1742**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 11:03:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/11/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Colette Torres	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill because I feel Molokai and Lanai should have a voice for decisions made regarding agricultural issues.

**HB-1742**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 2:28:19 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/11/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Larry Torres	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I believe Molokai and Lanai should have a voice regarding agricultural decisions this is why I strongly support bill HB1742