

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2023
1:35 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

SENATE BILL NO. 792
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 792. This measure establishes a local agriculture transportation cost reimbursement incentive program to be administered by the Department of Agriculture to reimburse eligible producers for a portion of the producer's costs to transport agricultural commodities. DOA supports this bill and offers comments.

The Department suggests revisions. Page 1, line 11 define or delete "parcel". Page 1 line 15 be changed to "Be a farmer or rancher who operates within the State of Hawaii." Also, page 2 lines 6-7 be deleted because section 145-21 defines "agricultural commodity" as any fruit, nut or vegetable that is the food product of any tree, vine, or plant, or any aquacultural, horticultural, silvicultural, or floricultural product. This definition excludes animal proteins and does not align with the ranching industry.

The Department defers to the Department of the Attorney General for any related standards that may apply with respect to this cost reimbursement incentive program.



The Department would request 1 FT Office Assistant staff to manage the local agriculture transportation cost reimbursement incentive program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-792

Submitted on: 2/14/2023 5:56:13 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/15/2023 1:35:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Goeggel	Testifying for Animal Rights Hawai'i	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ARH opposes SB792. It addresses only livestock transport costs and it is not fair to limit any financial assistance to livestock shippers alone.

Mahalo



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Rufina Kaauwai
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Negus Manna
Lāna'i

Brynn Foster
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki
Kauai

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports SB792.**

As an archipelago, Hawaii faces significant challenges when it comes to the transportation of goods, particularly agricultural products. Through reimbursing eligible producers for a portion of their transportation costs, this program would make it more feasible for small and medium-sized farmers to get their products to market. This financial assistance can help increase the profitability and competitiveness of local agriculture, which is essential to the state's food security and sustainability goals.

This bill is especially important given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have highlighted the need to strengthen local food systems and reduce dependence on imported food. The local agriculture transportation cost reimbursement incentive program would provide a much-needed boost to the state's agriculture industry, helping to ensure that local farmers can transport their products to market more efficiently and cost-effectively.

Finally, HFUU would like to see this bill amended to expand eligibility to any farmer across the state in Section 1. (b):

(1) Be a farmer or rancher in Hawaii ~~[on a neighbor island]~~;

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

SB-792

Submitted on: 2/14/2023 7:55:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/15/2023 1:35:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christian Zuckerman	Testifying for Kuwale Ridge Farms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support bill SB 792. Farming in Hawaii has many challenges and the costs of production are high when compared to mainland counterparts. Having incentives for farmers to help offset these barriers will allow for growth.

Christian Zuckerman



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT
Wednesday, February 15, 2023 — 1:35 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 792, Relating to Agriculture.

Dear Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports SB 792, which establishes a local agriculture transportation cost-reimbursement incentive program to be administered by the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to reimburse eligible producers for a portion of the producer's costs to transport agricultural commodities.

This bill seeks to address an ongoing issue that many local producers face statewide—transportation. As an island state, Hawai'i's producers rely on air freight, water cargo, and parcel services to transport products both within the state and to the U.S. mainland or foreign markets. Transportation remains one of the top expenses for producers, so any support from our state government is welcomed.

This measure provides support to local neighbor island producers to move products within the state. While O'ahu has the strongest market for agricultural products, other islands also receive goods from O'ahu. As such, we recommend that this committee consider the removal of subsection (b)(1) regarding eligibility.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



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February 15, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 792
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:35 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richard, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 792, which establishes a local agriculture transportation cost reimbursement incentive program to be administered by the Department of Agriculture to reimburse eligible producers for a portion of the producer's costs to transport agricultural commodities.

Interisland transportation has been a major issue with neighbor island farmers and ranchers. The majority of agricultural lands are in the neighbor islands yet the population center is on Oahu. Neighbor island farmers and ranchers are disadvantaged when competing with fellow farmers and ranchers on Oahu due to additional transportation costs of bringing in supplies and sending product out. Each increase in interisland shipping rates means increased costs to these farmers and ranchers, costs that usually cannot be passed on to the vendor. This bill seeks to level the playing field by assisting neighbor island farmers and ranchers.

We believe that this program will help to reduce the operating costs for our neighbor island farmers and ranchers and eventually help reduce the cost of purchasing local agriculture products for local consumers.

We respectfully offer the following recommendations.

- Expand the allowable agricultural commodities to include hemp, floriculture, horticulture, feed, fiber, and fuel.
- Provide funding for a transportation cost reimbursement incentive program coordinator.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-792

Submitted on: 2/14/2023 10:07:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/15/2023 1:35:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support