

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
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT,
AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

**MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2023
ROOM 224
1:00 P.M.**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 313, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairpersons Gabbard and Kim and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 313, House Draft 1 that seeks to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program at a community college selected by the University of Hawaii. This pilot program is to identify and purchase foreign agricultural technology, including small equipment tractors, and retrofit engines to comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's emission standards for small engines. There is an appropriation to the University of Hawaii and a report is to be submitted to the 2024 Legislature. The Department supports this measure and comments that the small farm equipment from Japan and India also be considered for the pilot program.

Hawaii agricultural operations and farmers will benefit from access to and use of foreign agricultural technology. The Department of Agriculture defers to the University of Hawaii about the establishment of the proposed pilot program.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.





UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Monday, March 20, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

By
Della Teraoka
Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

HB 313 HD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairs Kim and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Kidani and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 313 HD1, however, the scope of the bill goes beyond the mission of the university, which is to educate a workforce to meet the needs of the state. As written, HB 313 HD1 proposes to identify and purchase foreign agricultural technology, including small equipment tractors, and retrofit engines to comply with the EPA's emission standards for small engines rather than developing a curriculum and establishing a learning center to teach students how to retrofit small equipment.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 313 HD1, on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 313 HD1.



March 16, 2023

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. “Tim” Richards, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Testimony in Support of HB 313, H.D. 1, Relating to Agriculture (Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program; requires a report to the legislature; effective 7/1/3000.)

**Monday, March 20, 2023; 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference**

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 HB 313, H.D. 1** 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.

HB 313, H.D. 1. This bill proposes to appropriate funds to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program to identify and purchase foreign agricultural technology, including small equipment tractors and retrofit engines to comply with the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s emission standards for small engines. This measure 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 immensely helpful, if not critical to the conduct of their operations and to help sustain their local 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 HB 313, H.D. 1, 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 need to assist the local agriculture industry and the significance of implementing 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.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 20, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON HB 313, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chairs Kim and Gabbard, Vice-Chairs Kidani and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

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 HB 313, HD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

As the demand for agricultural 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 Hawai'i. Many small farmers also require smaller harvesting and field prep equipment that is not readily available in Hawai'i. 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 Hawai'i's diverse agriculture systems.

Countries such as Japan have small equipment that is suitable for Hawai'i'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 find solutions that would allow Hawai'i farmers to import foreign equipment that complies with EPA standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEES ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT
Monday, March 20, 2023 — 1:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 313 HD1, Relating to Agriculture.

Dear Chair Kim, Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

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 HB 313 HD1, which appropriates to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

According to the 2017 USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Census of Agriculture, 66% of Hawai'i's 7,328 farms statewide, or 4,868 farms, are between 1–9 acres. In addition, 78%, or 5,701 farms, produce less than \$25,000 in sales. Since the average farmer in Hawai'i is a small farmer with limited land, it is critical for local growers to have access to farming equipment suitable for Hawai'i. Right-sized equipment can better help smaller farms develop into future medium- and large-sized farms that can grow more local food for our island communities.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become increasingly complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



MAUI COUNTY FARM BUREAU

PO Box 148, Kula, HI 96790
mauicountyfarmbureau.org

TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
AND ENVIRONMENT

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER
EDUCATION

March 20, 2023

1:00 PM
Conference Room 224

HB 313 HD1

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Richards and Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

Maui County Farm Bureau (MCFB) appreciates this opportunity to testify on this important issue. MCFB is a general agriculture advocacy organization representing farm and ranch families and organizations on the island of Maui.

MCFB strongly supports HB313 HD1 seeking to appropriate funds to UH-CTAHR to explore small equipment from foreign countries to increase mechanization on farm and ranch operations.

Mechanization is a major impediment to expansion of farming in Hawaii. Currently much of crop production work depends on manual labor. This results in a negative perception of farming as an occupation. Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, China all have small scale equipment designed for farms that are similar in size to those in Hawaii. Hawaii farmers have faced an additional challenge with the lack of access to technology due to the lack of focus on agricultural engineering at the University of Hawaii. The decline of the major agricultural crops sugarcane and pineapple had the unintended consequence of the loss of engineering capacity that assisted with equipment modification while meeting the larger equipment needs of those industries.

MCFB respectfully requests your strong support of HB313 HD1 in the interest of supporting Hawaii's agricultural production. Here is a tomato harvester in Japan specifically designed for small farms. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIXSGqvP-A8>. While production per unit time may be slower than a human, the machines have proven to be reliable resulting in higher productivity over time. However, EPA emission requirements do not exist in these countries and therefore, importing them for use in Hawaii is not possible without adapting them to meet U.S. standards.

This measure is critical to address one of the pinch points for Hawaii agriculture. MCFB respectfully requests your strong support to providing CTAHR with funds to help farmers in this critical area. Collaboration with the School of Engineering will help increase the relevancy of the University to the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this matter. Please contact Warren Watanabe at 8082819718 if there are any questions.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

HB313 HD1

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Monday, March 20, 2023, 1:00 PM

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Richards and Kidani, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB313 HD1** which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

This program will allow ranchers and farmers more options for equipment that is proven useful in other countries, but does not yet comply with Environmental Protection Agency standards. Ranchers are always looking for ways to improve operations, and this option for retrofitted equipment will be beneficial to Hawaii's producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

In Support of HB313, HD1
Relating to Agriculture

Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment and
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Date: Monday, March 20, 2023

Time: 1:00 PM

Place: Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Richards, Vice Chair Kidani, and
Members of the Committees:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB313, HD1** which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

The Hawaii agriculture industry must continue seeking the best technology and mechanization possible to remain viable in a competitive global marketplace. With our high cost of doing business and labor shortages, farmers need to look at innovative ideas to overcome these challenges. Japan, for example, has adapted their equipment to meet the needs of their unique terrain which could potentially be applied here in Hawaii. This pilot program would explore these types of opportunities to retrofit foreign equipment to comply with EPA standard regulations and ultimately support our local farmers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support and we urge you to pass this measure.

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.

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 4:00:43 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this Bill but wonder by it will take so long to implement?

Mahalo,

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 10:38:44 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cards Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cards Pintor

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 11:23:33 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 12:00:07 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Coombs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While this bill is intended to support agriculture in Hawaii, the language of "unskilled labor" speaks to the lack of understanding. Even tasks associated with lower face value have downstream impact. There is no job on any farm anywhere that does not require skill. These skills may be different than white color workers, but they are certainly no less valuable. The use of this type of language perpetuates the negative stereotypes associated with agriculture and undermines the value that farmworkers bring to our society. That being said, I support this bill, but respectfully ask that you rephrase the initial statement.

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 12:12:57 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Cabral	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support

LATE

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2023 8:08:03 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frederick M. Mencher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Kim and Gabbard, Vice-Chairs Kidani and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

I support HB 313, HD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai‘i to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

As the demand for agricultural 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 Hawai‘i. Many small farmers also require smaller harvesting and field prep equipment that is not readily available in Hawai‘i. 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 Hawai‘i’s diverse agriculture systems.

Countries such as Japan have small equipment that is suitable for Hawai‘i’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 find solutions that would allow Hawai‘i farmers to import foreign equipment that complies with EPA standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

Frederick M. Mencher

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2023 10:05:46 AM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jari S.K. Sugano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Kim and Gabbard, Vice-Chairs Kidani and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Jari Sugano and I am the Oahu County Administrator at CTAHR. I served as an Extension Agent for 20 years and have witnessed first hand the effects of plant viruses on our Ornamental ginger industry. My personal testimony is below for your consideration.

I support HB 313, HD1, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai‘i to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

As the demand for agricultural 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 Hawai‘i. Many small farmers also require smaller harvesting and field prep equipment that is not readily available in Hawai‘i. 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 Hawai‘i’s diverse agriculture systems.

Countries such as Japan have small equipment that is suitable for Hawai‘i’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 find solutions that would allow Hawai‘i farmers to import foreign equipment that complies with EPA standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2023 4:31:30 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sandi Kato-Klutke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Requesting your support of HB 313 in regards to small equipment. Our farmers need help to obtain small equipment for their use. It is essential. Large equipment cost to maintain is more than our farmers can afford

HB-313-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/19/2023 12:26:26 PM

Testimony for HRE on 3/20/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Ashman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this measure.

Hawaii's farm equipment needs are very different from those of typical farms on the mainland. Because most of our farms here are small scale, we need smaller, more specialized equipment that other countries have but that need to be adapted to our conditions and our regulatory regimes. This would help make our farming easier and more efficient.

Thank you.