

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 WAYS AND MEANS

**THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023
ROOM 211
10:05 AM**

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

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 313, HD1, SD1 that seeks to establish a Foreign Agriculture Small Equipment Pilot Program (Program) at a community college selected by the University of Hawaii, but to be administered by the Department of Agriculture (Department) and in collaboration with 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 are appropriations to the Department over two consecutive fiscal years to establish the Program at a community college selected by the University of Hawaii. The Department is to submit a report with findings, recommendations, and proposed legislation to the 2024 Legislature. The Department offers comments.

Hawaii agricultural operations and farmers will benefit from access to and use of foreign agricultural technology. The Department will seek to contract with an entity with the capacity to retrofit EPA-compliant engines to the foreign equipment.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.





March 28, 2023

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony in Support of HB 313, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, Relating to Agriculture (Establishes and appropriates funds for the Foreign Agriculture Small Equipment Pilot Program at a University of Hawaii [UH] community college, to be administered by the Department of Agriculture [DOA] in collaboration with the UH. Appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the Pilot Program. Requires a report to the Legislature. Effective 7/1/3000.)

**Thursday, March 30, 2023; 10:05 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & 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, S.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, S.D. 1. This bill proposes to benefit farmers and ranchers in the State by establishing and appropriating funds for a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program at a UH community college selected by the UH, to be administered by the DOA, in collaboration with the UH, 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, S.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.

March 30, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON HB 313, HD1, SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:05 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

I support HB 313, HD1, which establishes and appropriates funds for the Foreign Agriculture Small Equipment Pilot Program at a University of Hawaii community college, to be administered by the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the University of Hawaii.

As the state pushes for more food self-sufficiency, 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. On behalf of Waimanalo Agricultural Association and small farms like our operation 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.



Waimanalo Agricultural Association



ISLANDFOODSCAPING



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Thursday, March 30, 2023 — 10:05 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 313 HD1 SD1, Relating to Agriculture.

Dear Chair Dela Cruz 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 HB 313 HD1 SD1, which establishes and appropriates funds for the Foreign Agriculture Small Equipment Pilot Program at a University of Hawaii community college, to be administered by the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the University of Hawaii; appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the Pilot Program; and, requires a report to the Legislature.

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 WAYS AND MEANS

March 30, 2023

10:05 AM

Conference Room 211

HB 313 HD1 SD1

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, 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 which establishes and appropriates funds for the Foreign Agriculture Small Equipment Pilot Program at a University of Hawaii community college, to be administered by the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the University of Hawaii.

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.



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 30, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON HB 313, HD1, SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:05 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, 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 HB 313, HD1, which establishes and appropriates funds for the Foreign Agriculture Small Equipment Pilot Program at a University of Hawaii community college, to be administered by the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the University of Hawaii.

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.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

HB313 HD1 SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Thursday, March 30, 2023, 10:05 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

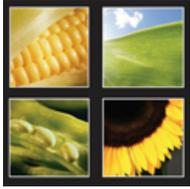
The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of 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 SD1** 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 SD1
Relating to Agriculture

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Date: Thursday, March 30, 2023
Time: 10:05 AM
Place: Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB313 HD1 SD1** which establishes and appropriates funds for the Foreign Agriculture Small Equipment Pilot Program at a University of Hawaii community college, to be administered by the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the University of Hawaii and appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the 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-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 2:35:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Theresa M Thompson | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB313.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

HB-313-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 9:13:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

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

Comments:

Strong support

HB-313-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 10:57:57 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

I support HB 313 HD1 SD1, which establishes and appropriates funds for the Foreign Agriculture Small Equipment Pilot Program at a University of Hawaii community college, to be administered by the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the University of Hawaii.

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

LATE

HB-313-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 10:24:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

Please pass this measure that will greatly help our smaller Hawai'i producers to purchase and use farm equipment that is appropriate in size and function, but is unavailable currently.

Thank you.

LATE

HB-313-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 1:20:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jimmy Gomes | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in full support for bill HB313