

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2025
ROOM 325
9:30 AM

HOUSE BILL NO. 968
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 968 that requires the Department of Agriculture (Department) to establish a healthy soils program. There is an appropriation of \$500,000 for FY 25-26 and the same amount for FY26-27 to establish the program and the required financial incentives. The Department appreciates the intent of this measure, has concerns, and offers a recommendation.

The fully developed Healthy Soils Program (Program) is expected to implement and manage a system of awards, financial incentives, and educational and technical assistance to farmers to implement selected farm management practices that will achieve improving soil health and building carbon stocks by small farmers, ranchers, and landowners. Notwithstanding the appropriations contained in this measure, the Department does not possess the elements of a science-based soil management and education program and neither the expertise nor other resources to establish what is needed to operate a responsible, transparent, and effective statewide program envisioned in this measure.

This bill does not provide guidance on what public and private collaboration is needed to collect and analyze data and information to establish the necessary baselines and reasonable metrics of achievement that is necessary for the Department to establish standards on which to base preferred farm management practices and educate farmers and landowners who undertake them with awards and financial incentives from the Program.



The Green House Gas Sequestration Task Force (GHGS Task Force) (Section 225P-4) has been in existence since 2018 and is charged with addressing numerous objectives including building healthy soils, sequestering carbon, increasing water-holding capacity, and increasing crop yields. This bill significantly duplicates the outcomes expected from the GHGS Task Force with respect to:

- Identifying agricultural practices to provide greenhouse gas benefits, identifying short-term and long-term benchmarks to indicate how effective these identified agricultural practices have been in reaching the goal;
- Identify criteria to be used in a certification program to measure baseline levels and increases in carbon sequestration, improvements in soil health, and so forth; and
- Identify what incentives, grants, research, and assistance are needed to promote identified agricultural practices.

Conceptually, the Healthy Soils Program as proposed in HB968 makes sense as part of the State's overall effort to increase greenhouse gas sequestration which includes carbon and increase soil health. The Department recommends that consideration be given to improving the capacity of existing coordinating programs such as the Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force to undertake their comprehensive responsibilities which includes soil health and sequestering carbon.

Further, HB968 appears to be duplicative of SB419 that funded the three-year Hawaii Carbon Smart Land Management Assistant Pilot Program (Act 185, SLH 2022) established in the Department of Land and Natural Resources that has among its responsibilities, the sequestering of greenhouse gases and improving soil health by use of incentive contracts based on to-be established compensation rates.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.

Josh Green
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



Co-Chairs:
Chair, DLNR
Director, OPSD

Commissioners:
Chair, Senate AEN
Chair, Senate WTL
Chair, House EEP
Chair, House WAL
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Director, C+C DPP
Director, Maui DP
Director, Hawai'i DP
Director, Kaua'i DP
The Adjutant General
Manager, CZM

**STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION
COMMISSION
POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809**

**Testimony of
LEAH LARAMEE
Climate Change Coordinator on behalf of
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission Co-Chair Mary Alice Evans and
Co-Chair Dawn N.S. Chang**

**Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

**Friday, February 7, 2025
9:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 968
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

House Bill 968 requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program and requires an annual report to the Legislature. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this measure.**

The Commission consists of a multi-jurisdictional effort between 20 different departments, committees and counties with the purpose of promoting ambitious, climate-neutral, culturally responsive strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation. Soil health is closely tied to ecosystem health and climate change resilience. Climate-smart land management practices that focus on building soil health, combined with stable land tenure, can provide ecological and economic resilience for agricultural communities throughout the islands and increase food system resilience.

The Commission has been supporting similar efforts through the Department of Land and Natural Resources Climate Smart Land Manager Assistance Pilot Program which provides incentives to land managers to implement climate smart practices on their lands. These programs are complimentary in that they both build resilience in our agricultural and natural lands through regenerative actions. The Climate Smart Land Manager Assistance Pilot Program has been very well received and land managers are hungry for additional support in these areas.

This program will also assist the state to meet our state commitment to achieving net-negative carbon emissions by 2045 by actively investing in reducing our emissions and mitigate greenhouse gases. Regenerative agriculture, forests, wetlands, and our nearshore waters and reefs serve as the State's only carbon sinks, removing carbon from the atmosphere. Increasing carbon sequestration

and improving healthy soils will assist the state in meeting food security and carbon emission goals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



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North Shore, O'ahu

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Ted Radovich
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Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports HB968.**

HB968 presents a promising opportunity to enhance soil health across Hawaii, which is integral to sustainable agriculture and environmental stewardship. By mandating the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program, this bill strategically prioritizes the assessment and improvement of soil health statewide. Providing education and technical assistance further empowers local farmers to adopt sustainable farm management practices, ultimately leading to healthier soils that support diverse ecosystems, increased agricultural productivity, and climate resilience.

An amendment is requested to bring existing initiatives like the Compost Reimbursement Program (HRS 141-16) and Cover Crop Pilot Program under the umbrella of the Healthy Soils Program would streamline and bolster current efforts. These programs are complementary to the overarching goals of the proposed Healthy Soils Program and can be more effectively managed under a unified strategy aimed at improving soil health. Such integration would allow for better allocation of resources, more consistent policy implementation, and enhanced outcomes for Hawaii's agricultural sector. By aligning these programs, the Department of Agriculture can more effectively issue comprehensive awards and financial incentives, ensuring that efforts to promote healthy soils are both cost-effective and impactful.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union



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

February 7, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 968
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice-Chair Kusch, 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 968, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program and to submit an Annual Report to the Legislature detailing the status and progress of the program.

HFB strongly supports the concept of building soil structure and nutrient capacity. Caring for the soil is a cornerstone to having multigenerational farms that continue to provide for the people of Hawai'i. Many of our farms add compost made off-site as well as utilize short-term fallow between crop cycles to increase organic content in their soils. HFB recognizes and supports diverting discarded food and other useful wastes away from landfills. The benefits of this and composting are well-known.

Farming is a tough business. High production costs are a major driver of narrow profit margins for Hawai'i's farmers. Land, water, labor, taxes, transportation, utilities, inputs, invasive species, and food safety regulations are all costs of doing business that often result in our farmers just being able to break even. HFB supports this initiative that could reduce the cost of production for local farmers. This is another mechanism that can help locally produced goods compete with imported products, strengthening our local economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject.



To: The House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems (AGR)
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org
Date: Friday, February 7, 2025, 9:30am

In strong support of HB968

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and AGR Committee members;

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org **strongly supports HB968** that would require the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program. This bill would incentivize farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils, land management practices that sequester carbon, as well as educating farmers and providing technical assistance to achieve these goals.

Supporting carbon sequestration efforts such as those delineated in this Healthy Soils Program is a win-win for the climate and local food production. To address the climate crisis, we need to move forward on efforts such as those described in HB968, and we need to do them in earnest.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this important legislation.

Sherry Pollack
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 7:01:36 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai Climate Action Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good climate practices can one of Hawaii’s most beneficial ways to sequester carbon with the immensely rewarding benefit of improving the quality and abundance of produce available for our local population. This legislative action is the farmer, the community and the environment. Strong support.

**Citizens' Climate Lobby
Hawaii**

hi.ccl.lobby@gmail.com



February 6, 2025

SUPPORT FOR HB 968 (RELATING AGRICULTURE)

Dear Chair Kahaloa, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the AGR Committee,

On behalf of the Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL)¹ Hawai'i, I'm testifying in **Support of HB968**, which if enacted, would provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils..

This bill provides both environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs. Better soil management is critical to Hawai'i meeting its 2030 and 2045 emission goals.

In recent decades we have learned a great deal about the importance of microbial life, soil biodiversity and the potential for our soil to capture carbon, aiding in mitigating climate change. Heavy industrial practices have depleted our local soil health for over a century. We must move away from the outdated practices of sterilizing lands with pesticides and herbicides and killing the soil microbes and life, and instead support the biodiversity of insects and microbes that are beneficial to soil health. Healthy soils support more pest and climate change resistant crops.

HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local and global environment.

Please pass HB968 out of your committee.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Paul Bernstein'.

Paul Bernstein

CCL Hawai'i State Co-Coordinator

¹ CCL Hawai'i has over 960 members in four chapters: Hawaii Island, Honolulu, Kauai, and Maui. CCL National has several hundred chapters throughout the US with tens of thousands of members.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Chair
Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

HB968
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Friday, February 7, 2025, 9:30 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB968 with comments** which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program. Requires an annual report to the Legislature and appropriates funds.

Healthy soils are necessary for ensuring we can continue to grow food on the land. Agriculture can be a beneficial contributor to managing the environment when the appropriate practices are deployed, and well-managed rangelands are a big player in this contribution. Managed, rotational grazing improves soil health through stimulating grass growth, allows rest and regrowth of grass cover and deeper roots, encourages moisture retention in the soil, protects from erosion and runoff, increases water infiltration, and sequesters carbon underground where it is stored stably.

This bill will provide the support to farmers and ranchers to encourage practices that increase soil health, but we **encourage this to be incentive based, which as been a successful approach**. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council is proud to be part of a partnership led by the University of Hawaii at Manoa that will be implementing the Partnerships for Climate Smart Commodities grant to provide support for farmers and ranchers who are implementing climate smart practices. While this is a 5-year grant, efforts from the state will help to reach more producers and encourage more practices to be implemented across the state.

We have concerns about how this impact existing leases which already have provisions in place that the lessee needs to meet.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. 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.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 10:23:15 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
penny levin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 12:12:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge the committee members to pass this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

David Ball, Waialae-Kahala

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:05:01 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kimdonghyeon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

In recent decades we have learned a great deal about the importance of microbial life, soil biodiversity and the potential for our soil to capture carbon, aiding in mitigating climate change. Heavy industrial practices have depleted our local soil health for over a century. We must move away from the outdated practices of sterilizing lands with pesticides and herbicides and killing the soil microbes and life, and instead support the biodiversity of insects and microbes that are beneficial to soil health. Healthy soils support more pest and climate change resistant crops.

HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:16:00 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lory Ono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Mahalo!

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:18:17 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Hennessy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate-impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Mahalo,

Lisa Hennessy, Princeville

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:33:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Chair and Committee members,

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

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Mahalo for your consideration.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:42:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealakai Hammond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Mahalo,

Kealakai Hammond

Honolulu, HI

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:46:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eliel Starbright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs. Eliel, Kapaa

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:49:03 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaiakahinalii Kaopua-Canonigo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the committee,

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Aloha nō,

Kaiakahinali‘i Ka‘ōpua-Canonigo, Mānoa

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 2:07:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Thank you for your consideration,
Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 2:12:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support HB 968 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 2:39:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
maiah iseminger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of bill HB928. I see the benefits of this bill contributing to an overall ghealthier envrionemnt. Soil is the basis for a thriving ecosystem. Through nutritious soil crops will grow better, we will need less pesticides, we will have more structurally sound lands, our produce will be more nutritious, it will help with flooding, it will sequester mor ecarbon, and provide great habitat for many organisms, our oceans and rivers will benefit from less runoff, and our atmosphere will become slightly cooler, regulating climate change.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 2:54:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angelica Melone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

I support HB968, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program. Healthy soils are essential for sustainable food production, and agriculture can play a vital role in managing the environment with the right practices.

While the federal partnership I am involved in, led by the University of Hawaii at Manoa, provides valuable support for climate-smart practices, there are concerns about the long-term persistence of this initiative. State support for these types of programs is more crucial than ever to ensure their continued success and expansion across Hawai‘i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I believe this measure is critical for the health of our land and the future of food production in Hawai‘i.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 3:34:35 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Thank you,

Jennifer Lee, Kamuela

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 3:47:54 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good for Hawaii

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 3:57:28 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pialoha Callahan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please SUPPORT bill HB968 and its efforts to increase awareness and education as well as provide our farmers and ‘Āina with healthy soils. This is one way to ensure that we are growing healthy and ‘ono foods as well as consuming them. Any and all efforts should be made to make sure the ‘ai we are consuming is good for us and the soil it’s being grown in is healthy and thriving. Mahalo for your support to ensure the longevity of our ‘āina. The health of our mahi‘ai and lāhui.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 4:00:28 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Marie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 4:17:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am very much in favor of this bill, as I believe soil health has been widely overlooked as a factor in creating a sustainable infrastructure. Investment to orientate our strategy of making soil holistic and regenerative will help all aspects of our infrastructure, as the healthier the soil is the healthier our crops will be and in turn so will we.

Creating more holistic practices and investing in them will make us less reliant on pesticides, which can cause health problems for us as well as other life forms. They can cause residual pollution not just to the microbial life in the soil but also to our marine fauna and flora due to runoff into the ocean. Reducing our reliance on pesticides will make us more self-sufficient as regenerative soils can be done utilizing local flora, while pesticides will needed to be shipped in from off-island.

The investment in this agricultural program is one that will reap many dividends in our future. Mahalo.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 4:17:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

In recent decades we have learned a great deal about the importance of microbial life, soil biodiversity and the potential for our soil to capture carbon, aiding in mitigating climate change. Heavy industrial practices have depleted our local soil health for over a century. We must move away from the outdated practices of sterilizing lands with pesticides and herbicides and killing the soil microbes and life, and instead support the biodiversity of insects and microbes that are beneficial to soil health. Healthy soils support more pest and climate change resistant crops.

HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Susan Wong

Kailua, HI

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 5:50:26 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keila Paahana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:17:33 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives!

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

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Mahalo for your consideration!

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 7:35:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Troy Schacht	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 7:57:56 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nalani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Mahalo,

Nalani from Lahaina

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:38:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Val Hertzog	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food prroduction agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:54:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Stayton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Representatives,

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Thank you for your consideration,

Susan, Lawai, Kauai

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 1:14:46 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment. Mahalo.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 5:14:37 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Kahaloa, Vice Chair Representative Kusch and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems.

Please support HB 968 to establish the Healthy Soils Program.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 5:59:20 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl hendrickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:58:26 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
emily gambino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Thank you,

Emily Gambino

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 10:25:55 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Broderick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Emma Broderick

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:35:45 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:00:45 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Chun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:05:08 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isis Usborne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

Please support HB968. Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming practices. Healthy soils provide many environmental and economic benefits, by supporting healthy crops and a productive ag sector, capturing carbon/climate change mitigation, making plants more pest and climate impact resilient and less dependent on costly inputs.

We must provide farmers with education and technical assistance to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils and issue awards and other financial incentives to implement farm management practices that contribute to healthy soils.

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HB968 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Mahalo,

Isis Usborne (96815)

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:07:56 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann V Saffery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB968.

Mahalo,

Ann V Saffery

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:51:25 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keoni DeFranco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Healthy soils are the foundation of regenerative farming—essential for strong crop yields, resilient agriculture, and environmental sustainability. By improving soil health, we can increase productivity for farmers, enhance pest and climate resilience, reduce reliance on expensive inputs, and sequester carbon to combat climate change.

To achieve this, we must provide education, technical assistance, and financial incentives that help farmers adopt soil-friendly management practices. Supporting these efforts will ensure that Hawai‘i’s agricultural sector thrives while improving our island’s long-term environmental health. In recent decades, we’ve gained a deeper understanding of soil biodiversity and microbial life—both critical for carbon capture and climate mitigation.

Unfortunately, over a century of industrial agricultural practices, including heavy pesticide and herbicide use, has degraded local soil health. It’s time to shift away from outdated methods that harm our land and instead foster rich, living soils that support beneficial microbes, insects, and long-term agricultural success.

HB 968 is not just about improving farming—it’s about restoring the health of Hawai‘i’s land. Supporting this bill is an investment in our local agriculture, food security, and environmental future.

Please vote in favor of HB 968.

HB-968

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 3:02:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/7/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Greenleaf	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii Soils and substructure has been over 70 years of chemical agriculture.

Healing the soils is a process. This bill is an important step in transparency. People need to know what they are getting into when they take on building an agriculture project