

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



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

SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2025
10:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

SENATE BILL NO. 693, S.D. 1
RELATING TO THE FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 693, S.D. 1. This bill aims to appropriate funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub. Pilot Program. The Department of Agriculture (Department) fully supports this initiative.

The Department recognizes that food hubs are a vital link in the supply chain, facilitating the distribution of locally grown food to consumers and institutions of the State. Food hubs allow farmers to scale up and consider new crops that the hubs find are in demand and in short supply. Food hubs also serve as "back-up" infrastructure for the food system with middle-of-the-supply chain equipment at their facilities. Equipment for washing, refrigeration, packaging, and delivery are services the food hubs provide that is basic to the farm to consumer supply chain. This bill provides funding that will address the challenges the food hubs have to implement plans to expand their operations. The bill is a vehicle for food hubs to be able to connect with larger buyers of safe, minimally processed, and locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables.

Under Act 313, the Department received 27 submissions and following a competitive Request for Proposal process that concluded in May 2023, awarded funding for six projects, totaling \$1.35 million, of which \$672,000 has been invoiced and paid. The food hubs supported by Act 313 funding:

- Adaptations, Inc., Hawai'i Island - \$242,515.20;
- Alternative Structures International, Oahu - \$201,104.00;
- Elepaio Social Services, Oahu - \$250,000.00;
- Hawaii Institute of Pacific Agriculture, Hawai'i Island (Kohala Food Hub) - \$203,213.46;
- Papa'aloa Country Store and Café Food Hub, Hawai'i Island - \$203,213.46; and
- Sustainable Molokai, Molokai - \$249,953.88.



A project to purchase two delivery vehicles and add a delivery driver for cold-storage transportation realized net results of adding 15 new farmers to the hub, increasing sales to a local hospital by over 50%, and reports total annual sales from the food hub operations as \$2.5 million.

Another takeaway from Act 313 is that there are 21 proposals from food hubs across the state that are seeking resources for their operations to support farmers across the state. This bill would provide the needed resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
HUI HO'OU LU AINA MAHIAI

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS
March 07, 2025
10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

SENATE BILL NO. 693 SD1
RELATING TO THE FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM

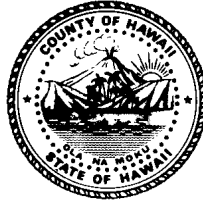
Chairperson Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 693 SD1, which appropriates funds to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program.

The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) supports this bill because it focuses on creating new jobs and increasing access to fresh healthy foods. In addition, Food Hubs will establish another marketing option for producers who do not have time to participate in a farmers' market or other direct marketing venues.

We support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor



Benson Medina
Director

Dennis Lin
Deputy Director

County of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
25 Aupuni Street, Room 1301 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-4252
(808) 961-8366 • Fax (808) 935-1205
E-mail: chresdev@co.hawaii.hi.us

March 5, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

FRIDAY, March 7, 2025
10:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

TESTIMONY ON SB 693 SD1
Relating to the Food Hub Pilot Program

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

I am Benson Medina, Director of the Department of Research and Development, County of Hawai'i. One of the agricultural objectives of this department is to "support collaboration, innovation, resource development, and programmatic sustainability throughout the food system to reduce food waste, improve producer viability and resilience, develop workforce development pathways, or increase access to locally produced food among low-income residents."

The County of Hawai'i provides written testimony in **SUPPORT of SB693 SD1**, to appropriate funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program.

The State of Hawai'i aims to at least double local food production, with a goal of 20-30% of food consumed is grown locally ([Aloha+ Challenge](#)). However, gaps in production, aggregation, and processing of agricultural products limit the productivity and growth of Hawai'i agriculture ([Office of Planning](#), 2012; [Hāmākua Institute](#), 2021).

Data from the previous Food Hub Pilot Program shows the ability of community organizations to utilize funding to meet middle of the supply chain agricultural needs. 27 proposals were received in 2023, requesting a total of \$6,218,019. Six proposals were accepted and funded with a total of \$1,350,000 dispersed, leaving a remaining need of approximately \$4.9M ([HDOA 2023 Annual Report](#)).

A survey of 14 food hubs across Hawai'i in 2024 found that fundraising was the top challenge ([Hawai'i Food Hub Hui](#), 2024). The highest construction priorities for food hubs across Hawai'i are expanded cold chain abilities, updated facilities, new commercial kitchen capacity and renewable energy systems ([Hawai'i Food Hub Hui](#), 2024). The continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program provides strategic capital access throughout the agricultural value chain, enabling agricultural businesses to leverage private and federal funding avenues to amplify impact and address agriculture and food systems bottlenecks.

Thank you for championing agriculture in Hawai'i and for the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT of SB693 SD1**.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benson Medina".

Benson Medina
Director, Research and Development
County of Hawai'i



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 7, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON SB 693, SD1
RELATING TO THE FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
10:30 AM

Aloha Chair Kahaloa, Vice-Chair Kusch, 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 SB 693, SD1, which appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program.

Small farmers typically lack access to facilities and infrastructure to aggregate, process, and distribute products to local consumers. The challenge for small growers is also complicated by stringent regulations of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), which jeopardize the ongoing viability of many small growers due to the costs of compliance.

In Hawai'i, additional challenges to small farmers include high land, labor, and energy costs and limited water supply for irrigation. Food hubs are an essential subset of food value chains. Many farmers and ranchers, especially small-sized operations, often lack the capacity to access retail, institutional, and commercial food service markets on their own and consequently miss out on the fastest-growing segment of the local food market. By offering a combination of aggregation, distribution, food safety, and marketing services at an affordable price, food hubs make it possible for many producers to gain entry into new larger-volume markets that boost their income and provide them with opportunities for scaling up production.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this measure.



Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Anabella Bruch
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Kona, Hawai'i

Fawn Helekahi-Burns
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy
Moloka'i

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

India Clark
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimānalo, O'ahu

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 SB693.**

The Food Hub Pilot Program strengthens Hawaii's food security by helping local farmers connect their produce to markets through food hubs. Food Hubs provide essential services for small and medium-sized farms, including storage, processing, and distribution of local produce.

Hawaii's hubs have been particularly effective in expanding food access for low-income families. Their SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks sales reached \$1.6 million in 2023, ensuring fresh local foods reach families who need them most. Food hubs also respond quickly to community needs, as demonstrated by their vital role in providing emergency food aid during the Maui fires.

Food hubs often face financial challenges when expanding their operations, making continued funding through SB693 essential. The program does more than just improve market access - it builds a stronger local food system. Supporting food hubs helps reduce Hawaii's dependence on imported food while promoting environmental sustainability and growing the agricultural economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 2:02:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Rosenberg	eden farms hawaii, inc.	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

We live in a unique moment in history. The same tools which give us the capacity to create global community, have driven the final nail in the coffin, separating us as individuals on the local level. All of the institutions which traditionally gave us the opportunity to come together and work together and talk together and think together at the local level has been eroded, as many of us sit alone in our homes, staring at screens, wondering why we feel depressed and alone. This afford us the opportunity to be reborn together and to come together in new forms of community that we will have to invent. It begins by breaking bread together by looking one another in the eye by having conversations about what's happening in our neighborhoods things that trouble us things that bring us joy issues that concern us hopes and dreams for the future. The church, the YMCA, the bowling alley, the barbershop, the pub all of these were institutions in the past that brought us together that seem to have faded off overtime. It will take a concerted effort to invent an introduced new institutions to replace these, it should be our job to provide a leadership to have the foresight to see around the corner or over the mountain and to point our people in the direction which benefits them and our posterity. Breaking bread is the fundamental act of community by growing food locally and having a place to come together and sit at the table where we can break Bread together, and be thankful and have conversations we can begin the process of re-creating community there's no better way of spending our money or directing our efforts to assist local people in the process of reimagining themselves as a community at the local level. By empowering people by giving them physical place a nucleus hub around which to come together, the government can fulfill its rightful function of empowering people to be part of our collective future by adding value and participating at the local level .



**Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
Friday, March 7, 2025; 10:30 a.m.
State Capital, Conference Room 325
Via Videoconference**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0693, SENATE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO THE FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM.

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

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 693, Senate Draft 1, RELATING TO THE FOOD HUB PILOT PROGRAM.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines to over 150,000 patients each year who live in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The measure, as received by your Committee, would appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal year 2025-2026, and the same amount for fiscal year 2026-2027, for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program established pursuant to Act 313, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022. In addition, this measure would allow the awarding of grant moneys to qualifying food hubs.

The bill would take effect on July 1, 2050.

During the Regular Session of 2021, the HPCA appeared before this Committee to urge favorable consideration of the Food Hub Pilot Program. [See, Testimony from the Hawaii Primary Care Association to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment on Senate Bill No. 0338, dated February 5, 2021.].

In our remarks, we stated:

". . . The COVID-19 pandemic has severely threatened the health and welfare of our citizens, especially Hawaii's underprivileged and rural communities. With so many people unemployed, entire families are struggling to put food on the table on a consistent basis. All one needs to do is visit one of our member FQHCs food distribution events and see the line of cars stretch for miles and people wait for hours to receive some surplus food. It is shocking yet uplifting to see that people do care for their fellow citizens. . ."

While COVID-19 no longer is the threat it was back then, the need continues to exist because of the rising cost of food, inflation, and stagnant wages. Citizens continue to wait in line for surplus food and look for ways of stretching limited resources to put food on the table.

This bill would provide the Food Hub Pilot Program with the necessary resources to continue to feed our citizens. It would also provide the Program with the necessary flexibility to utilize resources in the most efficient and effective ways possible.

For these reasons, the HPCA respectfully requests your favorable consideration of this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or eabe@hawaiiipca.net.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 4:23:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai‘i Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors **STRONGLY SUPPORT** SB693 SD1 and urge the Committee to pass it!

Continued funding of this pilot program will help Hawai‘i farmers get their products to market and improve food security. More local food can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Friday, March 7, 2025; 10:30 AM
Conference Room 325 & Video Conference

House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

To: Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Chair
Representative Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

From: Michael Robinson
Vice President, Government Relations & Community Affairs

**Re: SB 693, SD1 – Testimony In Support
Relating to the Food Hub Program**

My name is Michael Robinson, and I am the Vice President of Government Relations & Community Affairs at Hawai'i Pacific Health. Hawai'i Pacific Health is a not-for-profit health care system comprised of its four medical centers – Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox and over 70 locations statewide with a mission of creating a healthier Hawai'i.

I am writing in SUPPORT of SB 693, SD1 which appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub pilot program, including grant moneys to qualifying food hubs.

The State's food security may be strengthened by growing more food locally and increasing access to local food. Establishing food hubs, which are centrally located facilities having a business management structure that facilitates aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and marketing of locally produced food products may be a means by which to foster interest in locally grown foods and make them more available to consumers. The majority of the farms in Hawai'i are small operations that struggle to bring their products to market. Food hubs provide wider access to institutional and retail markets for small to mid-sized producers, and increase consumers' access to fresh healthy food, including those consumers in underserved areas.

HPH has a goal of sourcing 50% of its food purchases of protein and agriculture at each of its facilities from local suppliers in an effort to support local food systems. Food Hubs are a vital component of the success of an initiative of this scale. Food hubs have the potential provide an alternative method to assure quality and assist purchasing with local agricultural producers. Providing greater access to local foods improves food security and strengthens our agricultural industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 8:48:28 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colehour Bondera	Kanalani Ohana Farm	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members:

Please accept this as support for the establishment and required support of local food hubs around the state.

Hawaii needs to support local producers.

While it is left to the discretion of the implementors, I further ask that it be noted that food hubs should not be taking the crop value from the producers to instead pay employees. That is the reason that it is impossible for small-scale farms to provide to food hubs if they are only paid at low or wholesale rates.

We need food hubs which recognize the need to pay to producers similar rates for direct sales options, in my experience, since otherwise a significant amount of produce goes unharvested and not included in the system.

Thanks again for your support for this important piece of legislation.

Colehour Bondera

KANALANI OHANA FARM

colemel2@gmail.com



House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB693 SD1

Friday, March 7, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee,

HAPA supports SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawaii. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”.

Please support SB693 SD1 to grow markets for our local food producers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is written above the printed name.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director



3/6/2025

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 693, SD1 Food Hub Pilot Program

Aloha Chair Kahaloe and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Food Hub Hui (HFHH) strongly supports SB 693, SD1, which appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program, with two proposed amendments:

- 1. Increase funding from \$1.5 million to \$3 million** to adequately address the current federal funding uncertainty and expand the program's impact across all islands.
- 2. Recognize intermediaries such as the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui** as done in the bill language to facilitate grant program delivery, similar to the success by a recent RFP by Hawaii Department of Education in the recent local food purchasing agreement, which is a statewide food box delivery program taken on by the Food Hub Hui and managed by the Good Food Alliance.

About the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui

The Hawai'i Food Hub Hui is a collaboration dedicated to supporting local food hubs and promoting the consumption of locally grown, culturally preferred foods. Established in 2017, our network now encompasses 15 food hubs across the state, supporting over 1,700 producers that serve approximately 17,354 customers annually, generating an economic impact exceeding \$20 million in 2024.

The HFHH's efforts ensure that small- and medium-sized farms have access to the resources they need to thrive, as well as providing access to fresh, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods to local residents.

Need for Increased Funding

The proposed increase from \$1.5 million to \$3 million is critical due to:

1. Federal Funding Uncertainty: Current federal programs that have historically supported food hub infrastructure and operations face significant uncertainty, creating potential gaps in the food system including the USDA Regional Food Division programs such as RFBC, RFSP, LFPA, LFPP, and FMPP which when combined amount to more than \$20 million for Hawaii agriculture in 2025.

2. Demonstrated ROI: Our network has effectively managed over \$4 million in grants during 2023, delivering transformative impacts including:

- Expanded cold storage and distribution infrastructure
- New commercial kitchen facilities enabling value-added production
- Mobile markets reaching underserved communities
- Enhanced capacity to support local farmers
- Increased food access programs for vulnerable populations

Our data demonstrates sustained growth and impact:

- Local Food Sales: 21% annual growth, reaching \$18.7 million in 2023
- Producers Supported: 16% growth, now serving 1,663 farmers and value-added producers
- SNAP & Da BUX Programs: 23% annual growth, with \$1.6 million in sales in 2023
- Minority Producers: 49% growth in support for Native Hawaiian and BIPOC producers

3. Rising Costs: Construction, equipment, and operational expenses have increased significantly, requiring greater investment to achieve meaningful infrastructure improvements.

The Food Hub Pilot Program represents a crucial investment in Hawai'i's food security and agricultural future. By increasing funding to \$3 million and recognizing the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui as an intermediary, this legislation will maximize impact, ensure equitable distribution, and strengthen our local food systems when federal support is uncertain.

We respectfully request your support for SB 693, SD1 with these two amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



Saleh Azizi Fardkhales, Ph.D.

Director

Hawai'i Food Hub Hui

(808) 383-5224 | info@foodhubhui.com

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 12:44:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tane Datta	Adaptations Food Hub Big Island	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our food hub works with over 200 farmers and distributes to all island and segments of society. We are actively developing a local food system that can help sustain a local economy. As food stamps and medicaid get attacked and disrupted at the federal level, the need for a local food system will be stronger. We already exist but are still a growing business working with other food hubs around the state. Supporting this bill supports creating a local resilient safety net for the large number of people in Hawaii who will need it. Local food is often healthier for you so health is supported as well.

Mahalo for considering this bill

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 12:45:25 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Emmons	Ho`ola Veteran Services d.b.a. Ho`ola Farms / Hilo Food Hub	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa and Members of the Committee:

Ho`ōla Farms strongly supports SB 693, SD1, which appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program, with two proposed amendments: 1. Increase funding from \$1.5 million to \$3 million to adequately address the current federal funding uncertainty and expand the program's impact across all islands. 2. Recognize intermediaries such as the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui as done in the bill language to facilitate grant program delivery, similar to the success by a recent RFP by Hawaii Department of Education in the recent local food purchasing agreement, which is a statewide food box delivery program taken on by the Food Hub Hui and managed by the Good Food Alliance.

The Food Hub Pilot Program represents a crucial investment in Hawai'i's food security and agricultural future. By increasing funding to \$3 million and recognizing the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui as an intermediary, this legislation will maximize impact, ensure equitable distribution, and strengthen our local food systems when federal support is uncertain. We respectfully request your support for SB 693, SD1 with these two amendments.

With Gratitude,

Emily Emmons
Executive Director
Ho`ōla Farms

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 1:35:26 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Fox	Malama Kaua'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Food hubs are an incredibly impactful use of funding that clearly benefits strengthened food security, support for small farmers and ranchers, and help to feed our communities' food access. Investing infrastructure funds into Hawai'i's food hubs are sound investments into our food system that benefits all residents.

Mahalo for your consideration of this important investment.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 1:57:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Shapiro	Hawaii Ulu Cooperative	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai‘i Ulu Cooperative strongly supports SB 693, SD1, which appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program, with two proposed amendments:

1. Increase funding from \$1.5 million to \$3 million to adequately address the current federal funding uncertainty and expand the program's impact across all islands.
2. Recognize intermediaries such as the Hawai‘i Food Hub Hui as done in the bill language to facilitate grant program delivery, similar to the success by a recent RFP by Hawaii Department of Education in the recent local food purchasing agreement, which is a statewide food box delivery program taken on by the Food Hub Hui and managed by the Good Food Alliance.

The Hawai‘i Food Hub Hui is a collaboration dedicated to supporting local food hubs and promoting the consumption of locally grown, culturally preferred foods. Established in 2017, our network now encompasses 15 food hubs across the state, supporting over 1,700 producers that serve approximately 17,354 customers annually, generating an economic impact exceeding \$20 million in 2024.

The HFHH’s efforts ensure that small- and medium-sized farms have access to the resources they need to thrive, as well as providing access to fresh, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods to local residents. Need for Increased Funding

The proposed increase from \$1.5 million to \$3 million is critical due to:

1. Federal Funding Uncertainty: Current federal programs that have historically supported food hub infrastructure and operations face significant uncertainty, creating potential gaps in the food system including the USDA Regional Food Division programs such as RFBC, RFSP, LFPA, LFPP, and FMPP which when combined amount to more than \$20 million for Hawaii agriculture in 2025.

2. Demonstrated ROI: Our network has effectively managed over \$4 million in grants during 2023, delivering transformative impacts including:

- Expanded cold storage and distribution infrastructure
- New commercial kitchen facilities enabling value-added production
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Our data demonstrates sustained growth and impact:

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3. Rising Costs: Construction, equipment, and operational expenses have increased significantly, requiring greater investment to achieve meaningful infrastructure improvements.

The Food Hub Pilot Program represents a crucial investment in Hawai'i's food security and agricultural future. By increasing funding to \$3 million and recognizing the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui as an intermediary, this legislation will maximize impact, ensure equitable distribution, and strengthen our local food systems when federal support is uncertain.

We respectfully request your support for SB 693, SD1 with these two amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Representative Kirstin Kahaloe, Chair
Representative Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair**

**Friday, March 7, 2025, at 10:30AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference**

RE: SB693 SD1 Relating to the Food Hub Pilot Program

Aloha e Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 693 Senate Draft 1 (SB693 SD1), which establishes within the Department of Agriculture the Hawaii Agricultural Transportation Assistance Program, to consist of a reimbursement program and grant program, to assist certain farmers and livestock producers with transportation costs for agricultural products, inputs, supplies, and production and distribution of agricultural commodities.

SB693 SD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for 21st Century Agriculture. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Hawaii faces critical food security challenges that require increased local food production and improved community access to fresh, nutritious foods. Food hubs—central facilities that aggregate, process, distribute, and market local produce—help small- and mid-sized farmers access broader institutional and retail markets. Expanding these hubs significantly increases consumer availability of healthy foods, particularly in underserved communities.

To address financial barriers facing food hubs, the legislature established a five-year food hub pilot program through bill 313 (2022), providing necessary financial support. This bill appropriates additional funds for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 to continue and expand the pilot program. The appropriations, managed by Hawaii's Department of Agriculture, will provide grants to qualifying food hubs, further strengthening local agriculture and community resilience. The Chamber supports this bill as essential to enhancing Hawaii's food sustainability and economic health.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 693 Senate Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 3:09:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Datta	Adaptations Farm and Food Hub	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Food Hub Hui (HFHH) strongly supports SB 693, SD1, which appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program, with two proposed amendments:

1. Increase funding from \$1.5 million to \$3 million to adequately address the current federal funding uncertainty and expand the program's impact across all islands.
2. Recognize intermediaries such as the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui as done in the bill language to facilitate grant program delivery, similar to the success by a recent RFP by Hawaii Department of Education in the recent local food purchasing agreement, which is a statewide food box delivery program taken on by the Food Hub Hui and managed by the Good Food Alliance.

About the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui

The Hawai'i Food Hub Hui is a collaboration dedicated to supporting local food hubs and promoting the consumption of locally grown, culturally preferred foods. Established in 2017, our network now encompasses 15 food hubs across the state, supporting over 1,700 producers that serve approximately 17,354 customers annually, generating an economic impact exceeding \$20 million in 2024.

The HFHH's efforts ensure that small- and medium-sized farms have access to the resources they need to thrive, as well as providing access to fresh, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods to local residents.

Need for Increased Funding

The proposed increase from \$1.5 million to \$3 million is critical due to:

1. Federal Funding Uncertainty: Current federal programs that have historically supported food hub infrastructure and operations face significant uncertainty, creating potential gaps in the food system including the USDA Regional Food Division programs such as RFBC, RFSP, LFPA, LFPP, and FMPP which when combined amount to more than \$20 million for Hawaii agriculture in 2025.
2. Demonstrated ROI: Our network has effectively managed over \$4 million in grants during 2023, delivering transformative impacts including: - Expanded cold storage and distribution infrastructure - New commercial kitchen facilities enabling value-added production - Mobile markets reaching underserved communities - Enhanced capacity to support local farmers - Increased food access programs for vulnerable populations

Our data demonstrates sustained growth and impact: ● Local Food Sales: 21% annual growth, reaching \$18.7 million in 2023 ● Producers Supported: 16% growth, now serving 1,663 farmers and value-added producers ● SNAP & Da BUX Programs: 23% annual growth, with \$1.6 million in sales in 2023 ● Minority Producers: 49% growth in support for Native Hawaiian and

BIPOC producers

3. Rising Costs: Construction, equipment, and operational expenses have increased significantly, requiring greater investment to achieve meaningful infrastructure improvements.

The Food Hub Pilot Program represents a crucial investment in Hawai'i's food security and agricultural future. By increasing funding to \$3 million and recognizing the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui as an intermediary, this legislation will maximize impact, ensure equitable distribution, and strengthen our local food systems when federal support is uncertain.

We respectfully request your support for SB 693, SD1 with these two amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 3:36:43 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maya Parish	Feed Hawaii DBA Kohala Food Hub	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloa and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai‘i Food Hub Hui (HFHH) strongly supports SB 693, SD1, which appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program, with two proposed amendments:

1. Increase funding from \$1.5 million to \$3 million to adequately address the current federal funding uncertainty and expand the program's impact across all islands.
2. Recognize intermediaries such as the Hawai‘i Food Hub Hui as done in the bill language to facilitate grant program delivery, similar to the success by a recent RFP by Hawaii Department of Education in the recent local food purchasing agreement, which is a statewide food box delivery program taken on by the Food Hub Hui and managed by the Good Food Alliance.

About the Hawai‘i Food Hub Hui

The Hawai‘i Food Hub Hui is a collaboration dedicated to supporting local food hubs and promoting the consumption of locally grown, culturally preferred foods. Established in 2017, our network now encompasses 15 food hubs across the state, supporting over 1,700 producers that serve approximately 17,354 customers annually, generating an economic impact exceeding \$20 million in 2024.

The HFHH’s efforts ensure that small- and medium-sized farms have access to the resources they need to thrive, as well as providing access to fresh, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods to local residents.

Need for Increased Funding

The proposed increase from \$1.5 million to \$3 million is critical due to:

1. Federal Funding Uncertainty: Current federal programs that have historically supported food hub infrastructure and operations face significant uncertainty, creating potential gaps in the food system including the USDA Regional Food Division programs such as RFBC, RFSP, LFPA, LFPP, and FMPP which when combined amount to more than \$20 million for Hawaii agriculture in 2025.

2. Demonstrated ROI: Our network has effectively managed over \$4 million in grants during 2023, delivering transformative impacts including:

- Expanded cold storage and distribution infrastructure
- New commercial kitchen facilities enabling value-added production
- Mobile markets reaching underserved communities
- Enhanced capacity to support local farmers

- Increased food access programs for vulnerable populations

Our data demonstrates sustained growth and impact:

- Local Food Sales: 21% annual growth, reaching \$18.7 million in 2023
- Producers Supported: 16% growth, now serving 1,663 farmers and value-added producers
- SNAP & Da BUX Programs: 23% annual growth, with \$1.6 million in sales in 2023
- Minority Producers: 49% growth in support for Native Hawaiian and BIPOC producers

3. Rising Costs: Construction, equipment, and operational expenses have increased significantly, requiring greater investment to achieve meaningful infrastructure improvements.

The Food Hub Pilot Program represents a crucial investment in Hawai'i's food security and agricultural future. By increasing funding to \$3 million and recognizing the Hawai'i Food Hub Hui as an intermediary, this legislation will maximize impact, ensure equitable distribution, and strengthen our local food systems when federal support is uncertain.

We respectfully request your support for SB 693, SD1 with these two amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify, Maya Parish, Executive Director, Feed Hawaii DBA Kohala Food Hub

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 11:46:06 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support. Thank you.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 6:01:48 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lori Glazebrook	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Local food hubs are crucial for strengthening Hawaii's food security future.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 7:53:30 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Dixon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha as a Maui Resident, I fully support SB 693, SD1 – Food Hub Pilot Program which :
Appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 9:31:17 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary McClung Law	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Representaives;

I am asking you to support this bill because it ppropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program. I have been a witness to the bounty of locally grown food and value added farm products available via the food hubs and have been very impressed. I know people wh shop almost exclusively for produce from the Maui Hub along with Farmer's Markets. It is such a fantastic system of ordering and delivery that it is a marvel to watch! This has brought qulity, fresh produce and locally grown food items to people in remote areas that otherwise could not get out. If you look at the increible and delicious variety of produce and more that is available on the Maui Hub website, I think it will astound you too! And Hawaii has declared it wants to grow more food locally, well, with the Hubs systems, more and more food will continue to be grown locally. It supports local farmers and gets the food right out to people` even in remote areas like Hana!

Thank you for your enthusiastic support for the Hubs by passing this bill.

Aloha, Mary McClung Law

Thank you for your prompt and beneficial action,

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 9:42:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paisley Veilleux	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB693 because the food pilot program increases local food production and distribution. Supporting local food production can decrease the amount of out-of-state food that is imported (currently 90%) and stimulate our local economy by not having to buy from mainland suppliers. Our community deserves access to healthy, nutritious food.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 10:03:09 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victoria Anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 10:09:51 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
dale chappell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Bill **SB 693, SD1**. It appropriates funds for the continued implementation of the Food Hub Pilot Program.

Thank you for your sincere consideration on this important matter!

Dale Ann Chappell

43 yr resident of maui

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 11:17:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 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 SB 693 SD 1 to continue the Food Hub Pilot Program.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 6:28:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jan K Baldado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I SUPPORT SB 693, SD 1.

Mahalo nui.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 7:17:21 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Virginia Graham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support food hubs in our community

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 8:10:55 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn Lono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB693 SD1 in an effort to strengthen food security, economic diversification and support for farmers throughout our State. Mahalo for your consideration.

Dawn Lono

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 8:10:55 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dawn Lono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB693 SD1 in an effort to strengthen food security, economic diversification and support for farmers throughout our State. Mahalo for your consideration.

Dawn Lono

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 8:46:06 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis F Lokmer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill for agriculture and the people of Hawai‘i.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 11:34:31 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kencho Gurung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Kencho Gurung, Hilo

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 11:38:35 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

kimdonghyeon

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 11:54:27 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of this bill SB693. I believe it's a fantastic idea to create and financially support food hubs. I really would like to see our state's economy create more diverse incentives, and this is one way to encourage our agricultural sector, particularly the small and medium sized farms in our state. I also like how it will help lessen the impacts of those in food deserts, of which there are many in our state, which in a state with a year-round for agriculture is a shame. This is a great idea and I strongly advocate for this, for all of our people. Mahalo.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 12:00:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Thank you.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 12:00:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Thank you.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 12:16:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dita Škalic	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing the local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 12:29:52 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Owens	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Legislation that encourages, supports or enhances local food production and/or distribution benefits the wellbeing of our residents and the strength of our economy.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 12:52:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is not enough for a farmer to know how to grow food. The food also needs to be sold. That is why we need food hubs, to lighten the load for the farmers. Please support SB693!

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 1:04:40 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariana Monasi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”.

Anyone who lives in rural areas like Hawai‘i island, or really throughout the islands knows how expensive food is in general, and that locally grown food in particular is astronomical for most residents. It is imperative to the goal of reducing exported food needs to establish sustainable community rooted food hubs.

Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Mariana monasi, kurtistown, Hi

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 1:07:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Nalani A from Lahaina

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 1:23:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harriet Witt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Without food hubs, we are dangerously dependent on large corporations who are more concerned about their profits than they are about our health. Please support this bill. Mahalo, Harriet Witt, 43 Puu Koa Place, Haiku, HI 96708

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 1:32:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacey Alapai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 1:37:38 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leo Nahe Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawaii. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Leo Nahe Smith, Pearl City

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 2:07:05 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pamela burrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

With the threats of tariffs on our incoming food, it is even more important to support SB693. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. We need a local food economy and there is no reason not to encourage one.

Mahalo,

Pamela Burrell, Kalihiwai, Kaua'i, 96754

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 3:00:48 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert ZUckerman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

VOte for htis bill that supports our local growers and marketers. Keep the money in Hawaii.

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 3:27:33 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marla Tomorug	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch and Members of the Committee,

Please support SB552 SD1. 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. The impacts heavy industrial practices have in depleting 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

SB552 SD1 can help to address a range of important issues we face related to degraded and damaged soils, restore and improve soil biodiversity, while also improving the overall quality of our environment and working to sequester carbon. SB552 SD1 is therefore not just important for our local food production agricultural sector but is good for our local environment.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Marla Tomorug, Lahaina

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 4:01:08 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emelia Briscoe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Emelia Briscoe, Honolulu

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 4:04:19 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Shaver	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Christy
Lahaina

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 4:18:51 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Malia Chun, Kekaha, Kaua‘i

SB-693-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/6/2025 4:25:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/7/2025 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

Please support SB693 SD1. Support for the initial pilot food hubs program has been instrumental in helping emerging food hubs establish business operations in Hawai‘i. Food hubs provide necessary aggregation of produce for small farmers to help bring produce to market. Support for food hubs promotes the production of culturally appropriate, nutritious foods while also growing our local food economy. Further, more food hubs can provide greater food system equity, providing access to healthy food in local “food deserts”. Please support SB693 SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Jennifer Lum, ‘Ewa Beach