

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 SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
AND PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2025
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

SENATE BILL NO. 762
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Chairs Gabbard and Elefante, Vice Chairs Richards and Wakai and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 762 that establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council, expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council, authorizes the Council to withdraw and deposit moneys, revenues, and fines into and out of the Animal Industry Special Fund and appropriates funds. The Department of Agriculture (Department) supports this bill and offers comments.

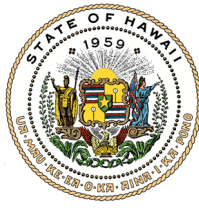
The Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council, established within the Department, will align the work of the council to support the Agricultural Enforcement Program established within Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) to address and resolve the shared challenges of resource limitations and enforcement capabilities, data collection, identification and mitigation of criminality, providing of education and awareness and restoration of public trust in law enforcement to adequately prosecute agricultural crimes.

The Department respectfully requests consideration for one special fund for the withdrawal and deposit of moneys, revenues and fines from the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and the Agricultural Enforcement Program, established by SB763 to be the agricultural enforcement special fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT
DIRECTOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR
KE KE'ENA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai
715 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 762
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL CRIMES**

**Before the Senate Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

Friday, February 7, 2025, 1:00 PM

State Capitol Conference Room 224, & Videoconference

Testifiers: Mike Lambert

Chairs Gabbard, Elefante, Vice Chairs Richards III, Wakai, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) strongly supports Senate Bill 762, which establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to address agricultural crimes in Hawaii.

The creation of a dedicated Agricultural Crimes Council represents a significant step forward in addressing the pressing issue of agricultural crimes that impact our farming communities and food security. This bill provides essential framework and resources for a coordinated, statewide approach to preventing and investigating agricultural crimes.

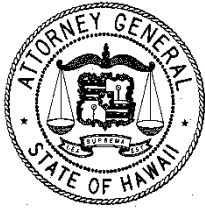
The DLE particularly supports the bill's provisions for developing centralized crime reporting systems and databases, which will enhance law enforcement's ability to track patterns, investigate cases, and allocate resources effectively. The appointment of dedicated investigators focusing on agricultural crimes will strengthen our capacity to

respond to and prevent these offenses.

Our department has previously engaged with agricultural stakeholders and the Department of Agriculture on similar initiatives, and we believe this Council will formalize and strengthen these collaborative efforts. The structure proposed in SB762, including regular council meetings and annual reporting requirements, will ensure sustained attention to this critical issue.

The appropriation of funds and the authority to utilize the Animal Industry Special Fund will provide the necessary resources to implement comprehensive crime prevention strategies and maintain dedicated law enforcement personnel for agricultural crime investigations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this bill.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 762, RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL CRIMES.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT AND ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

DATE: Friday, February 7, 2025

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 224

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or Kelcie K. Nagata
or Christopher J.I. Leong, Deputy Attorneys General

Chairs Gabbard and Elefante and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to establish the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council within the Department of Agriculture. The Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council will be responsible for developing agricultural crime prevention, problem solving, and crime control recommendations and programs.

We note that the proposed section -2(b)(1) to (5) (page 5, lines 10 to 16) lists enumerated ex officio members that will serve on the council but does not expressly allow designees to represent those positions. For example, while the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture and the Attorney General are named as members, their designated deputies or representatives are not permitted to serve in their place. To provide for greater flexibility, we recommend that page 5, lines 10-16, be amended as follows:

"(b) The council shall be placed within the department for administrative purposes only and shall comprise:

- (1) The chairperson of the board of agriculture[;] or the chairperson's designee;
- (2) The attorney general[;] or the attorney general's designee;

- (3) The prosecuting attorney of each county[;] or each prosecuting attorney's designee;
- (4) The director of law enforcement[;] or the director's designee;
- (5) The chief of police of each county[;] or each chief's designee."

Additionally, the proposed section -2(c) requires the council members to serve for four-year terms. This may cause confusion for ex officio members of the council. To clarify this, the first sentence on page 6, line 8, may be amended as follows:

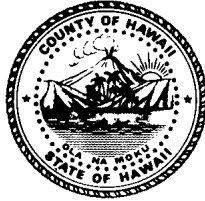
"(c) [~~The members~~] Members appointed by the governor pursuant to paragraphs (6), (7), and (8) shall serve four-year terms."

In the proposed section -4, beginning at page 10, line 6, the bill requires the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council to "appoint and commission one or more investigators to investigate agricultural crimes." Page 10, lines 7-8. However, the bill does not explicitly require or authorize the council to investigate and enforce violations of "agricultural crimes." To clarify the council's responsibilities and ensure it has the necessary authority, we recommend adding a provision explicitly authorizing the council to investigate and enforce such violations. Additionally, the bill does not define the term "agricultural crimes," leaving ambiguity regarding the scope of enforcement. Clearly outlining the investigator's authority is essential for ensuring effective law enforcement.

Furthermore, section -4 lacks procedural guidelines for how an investigator would enforce applicable laws. For instance, section 142-29, Hawaii Revised Statutes, authorizes law enforcement officers and Department of Agriculture employees to enforce chapter 142 through citation and summons. Similarly, section 199-4(b) allows enforcement officers of the Department of Land and Natural Resources' Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement to "immediately take the person arrested to a police station or before a district judge . . . [or] issue the person a summons or citation."

Given these gaps, if the legislature's intent is to create an attached agency similar to the Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement, then it may be effective to conform the bill to wording similar to chapter 199, HRS. We would be happy to assist in the drafting of appropriate provisions. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

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

February 6, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025

1:00 PM

CONFERENCE ROOM 224

TESTIMONY ON SB 762 RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL CRIMES

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, 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 research, development, control, and education that improves agricultural production, quality, resilience, and producer viability or reduces the impact of pests or disease on agricultural crops, livestock, forests, or the community."

The County of Hawai'i **supports SB 762**, relating to agricultural crimes.

Hawai'i County is committed to expanding its production of local produce to feed our residents and tourists. The recent pandemic revealed that our food supply is susceptible to disruptions and puts all of us at risk.

One of the major challenges for our producers to expand production and for new producers to establish their farm is mitigating the risk of agricultural theft. Producers are often threatened by trespassers and thieves, and they do not receive enough support from the local authorities. This threat to life and income has caused potential and established producers to leave the industry.

A strong state-wide plan to address the issue of agricultural crimes is needed to strengthen the enforcement of trespass and agricultural theft incidents. A state-wide council to share methodologies and strategies will help local and state enforcement agencies to implement programs to reduce criminal activities.

Funding investigators dedicated to combating agricultural crimes to partner with federal, state and the local community police force will send a strong message to the criminals and local producers that trespassing on agricultural lands and agricultural theft will not be tolerated.

A strong enforcement program will help the producers to continue their livelihood with the confidence that the incidents of trespass/theft will be reduced over time. This will encourage other potential producers to enter the agricultural industry and for established producers to consider expanding their operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our input on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benson Medina". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

Benson Medina
Director



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Mason Scharer
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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 Chairs Gabbard & Elefante, Vice Chairs Richards & Wakai, and Committee Members,

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 SB762.**

Establishing the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council will create a dedicated body to coordinate efforts to combat theft and vandalism targeting agricultural operations. This collaborative approach underlines the importance of a concerted effort among various stakeholders, including the Department of Agriculture, to ensure the safety and sustainability of Hawaii's agricultural lands.

The financial provisions outlined in SB762 are essential for the effective operation of the Council. By authorizing the Council to manage moneys, revenues, and fines through the Animal Industry Special Fund, the bill ensures that there are dedicated resources available to tackle these crimes effectively. Appropriating funds for this initiative is a proactive measure that will provide the necessary support for enforcement activities, public awareness campaigns, and other critical functions of the Council. This legislation is vital for preserving the productivity and economic viability of local farms, which are integral to the state's food security and overall community well-being.

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
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON SB 762
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL CRIMES

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Elefante, Vice-Chairs Elefante and Wakai, 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 762, which establishes the Hawai'i Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council.

Agricultural crime is a persistent problem facing agriculture. Weather, drought, pests, weeds, disease, unstable markets, transportation, labor issues, and a changing climate all contribute to uncertainty for farmers and ranchers. Few businesses face such challenges, yet we are charged with producing food, feed, fiber, fuel, and flowers for the 99% of non-farmers. Add in the constant threat and impacts of trespass, theft, and vandalism, and it's a wonder farms and ranches remain viable.

Sadly, agricultural crime is a growing trend in Hawai'i. Farmers and ranchers are often victims of those looking for easy targets. Despite our efforts to install cameras, form community ag watch groups, and patrol our farms, these criminals know that being caught and prosecuted is unlikely. Our police departments are trying to help but don't have the staffing and resources to be everywhere at all times.

In recent years, not only crops and livestock have been stolen, but also tractors, trucks, farm equipment, and tools. Too often, a farmer or rancher has sweated, worried, and worked to the bone to produce a crop or raise livestock, only to wake up one morning to find that an opportunistic criminal has helped themselves to the harvest. Farmers and ranchers are fed up with this activity and deserve better. We understand that law enforcement resources are often prioritized for public health and safety. Is a farmer's and his family's health, safety, and livelihood any less important? We think not.

HFB believes a Hawai'i Agricultural Crimes Council would create a formal platform for collaboration between the Department of Agriculture, law enforcement agencies, and agricultural stakeholders. The Council can facilitate the sharing of information, strategies, and resources to improve the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of agricultural crimes.

SB 762 represents a critical investment in protecting Hawai'i's agricultural community from the increasing threats of agricultural crimes. By creating the Hawai'i Agricultural Crimes Council and expanding the role of the Department of Agriculture, this measure fosters collaboration, strengthens enforcement, and enhances the safety and security of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers.

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



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

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

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

SB762

RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL CRIMES

Friday, February 7, 2025, 1:00PM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Chairs Gabbard and Elefante, Vice Chairs Richards and Wakai, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB762** which establishes the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council and expands the duties of the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with and support the Council, authorizes the Council to withdraw and deposit moneys, revenues, and fines into and out of the Animal Industry Special Fund, and appropriates funds.

Agricultural crimes is a not a new issue – but it is getting more pervasive and more dangerous. So dangerous that we lost a young rancher to illegal trespassing and poaching in 2024. This incident was an incredibly unfortunate incident that we need to keep from happening again. Without the threat of a penalty, ag crimes will continue to flourish, to the detriment of our food producers. There needs to be a clear way for ranchers and farmers to report crimes, and an effective way to prosecute the crime.

Currently, agricultural crimes is not getting the dedicated attention it needs. Reporting of crimes is low, successful prosecution is limited, and criminals have no reason to be deterred from committing the crimes. Creating the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council will bring together the expert stakeholders who can bring practical solutions to deterring crimes. This dedicated council is needed to help protect the safety of our farmers and ranchers who are so important to producing local food.

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



SB-762

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 11:26:04 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronald Weidenbach	Testifying for Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association (HAAA) supports the intent of SB762 and hopes that passage of this measure will lead to future actions that will help reduce the nightly threat and risk that Hawaii's farmers and ranchers face from trespassers and agricultural theives.

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:03:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chelle C Pahinui	Testifying for Nahenahe Farm	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I would like to submit this testimony in favor of SB 762 Relating ot Agriculture Crimes. I cannot tell you how discouraging it is to check your long cared for and long awaited pineapples or avacados to find them gone. With that said, this year I experienced a whole new situation that was heart breaking.

I had someone refered from an ad who requested to do some work for me. I hesitated but thought it would be a good deed and can also use the assistance on the farm. The person did complete a day of work and then returned later that night to steal all of my tools including several high cost power tools. Because I did not have a camera on the storage area, the police deemed it circumstantial and there was nothing I could do. I spent \$600 on cameras and am now putting in a \$15,000 solar gate and fence. It really adds to the cost of production.

It is terrible that we have such people living in our community. Mahalo for all the help we can get on this problem.

Sincerely, Chelle Pahinui



February 6, 2025

To: Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair Glenn Wakai and the members of the committees Agriculture and Environment and Public Safety and Military Affairs

Subject: **SB762**, Relating to Agricultural Crimes

Aloha,

I am writing this testimony in **support** of SB762, which will create the Agricultural Crimes Council, allow said council to work alongside the Department of Agriculture, and provide it the funding it needs to operate.

The Agricultural Crimes Council will provide many invaluable services to local farmers. These include more security, a greater capacity to reobtain stolen goods, and education on avoiding being victims of agricultural crime. Additionally, it will give legislators and law enforcement agencies more data about these crimes that will enable them to more effectively accomplish their duties.

I also believe this council will play a factor in reducing the shortage of local farmers entering into the market. According to the 2022 census from the US Department of agriculture, the median age for Hawaiian farmers is 60.8, 14% are over 75, and only 6% are younger than 35. This means that the younger generation has extremely little interest in taking up the mantle of current farmers, who are already reaching retirement age. It is reasonable to assume that a part of this problem stems from a lack of security. Why buy expensive equipment or spend months growing food if there is little being done to stop wrongdoers from taking it?

It is for this reason, alongside the others listed previously, that I strongly support the passing of SB786. I thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of this bill.

Mahalo,
Lea Iaea & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:32:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Austin Salcedo	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Austin Salcedo and Kalei Salcedo,

In Support of SB 762 Relating To Ag Crime's.

Unable to register Kalei Salcedo for testimony, due to Ciber hick'up. Will be In-person to testify.

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:21:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Testifying for Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Subject: Support for S.B. No. 762 - A Step Forward for Agricultural Security in Hawaii

Dear Esteemed Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I write to express my strong support for Senate Bill No. 762, which proposes the establishment of the Hawaii Agricultural Crimes Council (HACC). This initiative marks a pivotal moment in our legislative history, aiming to safeguard one of the foundational pillars of our state's economy and culture - our agriculture.

Why S.B. No. 762 Matters:

- **Targeted Focus:** The HACC represents a dedicated effort to address crimes unique to our agricultural landscape, which have historically been underrepresented in crime statistics and enforcement activities.
- **Holistic Strategy:** By encompassing enforcement, prevention, education, and data management, the bill adopts a comprehensive strategy that promises not only immediate relief but also long-term resilience against agricultural crime.
- **Leveraging Existing Structures:** The integration with the Department of Agriculture and collaboration with various stakeholders leverages existing resources, ensuring efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Sustainable Funding:** The use of the Animal Industry Special Fund provides a dedicated financial stream, crucial for the sustainability of the council's operations.

Enhancing the Bill for Maximum Impact:

While S.B. No. 762 stands as a solid foundation, there are opportunities to fortify its structure for even greater impact:

- **Operational Clarity:** We should enhance the bill with specific provisions on data privacy and clear delineations of council member roles to streamline operations.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Introducing performance metrics and regular audits will ensure the council's activities remain transparent and accountable to the public it serves.
- **Community Involvement:** Expanding community engagement, Utilizing Neighborhood boards & engaging particularly with rural and diverse linguistic communities, will make the council's initiatives more inclusive and effective.
- **Legal Precision:** Identifying priority areas for legislative review will sharpen our legal tools against agricultural crimes.

Proposed Amendments for the Future:

- **Funding Oversight:** I recommend setting a cap or percentage limit on the use of the Animal Industry Special Fund to ensure other essential programs are not underfunded.
- **Technological Advancement:** The bill should explicitly endorse the adoption of technologies like AI, drones, and GIS for predictive and responsive crime management in agriculture.
- **Interstate and Federal Synergy:** Provisions for cooperation beyond our state borders will be key in managing crimes that transcend local jurisdictions.
- **Educational Outreach:** Broadening training to include agricultural workers themselves will foster a grassroots approach to crime prevention.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Linking crime prevention with environmental protection will serve both our agricultural and ecological interests.
- **Cultural Representation:** Ensuring representation from indigenous and traditional farming communities will bring invaluable insights to the council's strategy.

By enacting S.B. No. 762 with these strategic enhancements, we are not just addressing current challenges but are also laying down a forward-thinking framework that will benefit generations of Hawaiian farmers and ranchers. This bill, with the proposed amendments, could become a model for agricultural crime prevention nationwide.

I urge you to support this bill and its improvements, ensuring a safer, more prosperous future for Hawaii's agricultural sector. Thank you for your consideration and commitment to our community.

Sincerely,

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire

Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands

Ko Hawai'i Pae Aina

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 11:34:53 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sydney Smith	Testifying for Maui County Ag Working Group	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Sydney Smith and my family owns an avocado and coffee farm near Makawao on the island of Maui. I fully support Bill 762 and 763 as does the Maui County Ag Working Group.

I wanted to ask that you consider adding easement blockades as one of the agriculture crimes listed.

The former president of the Maui Cattlemans Association had his easement to a 75 acre pasture blockaded for 5 years. The police told him it was a civil matter and to hire an attorney. Every attorney he contacted wanted a \$5,000 to \$10,000 retainer. He did not have that so lost his access until the owner sold and moved. The new owner acknowledged the easement. In those 5 years that 75 acres was destroyed by feral deer and the grass was completely gone. This resulted in top soil loss, erosion and him having to reduce his herd.

In my own case 2 years ago a wealthy person bought an adjoining parcel and blocked our easement to our farm, by installing gates and surveillance equipment. We have spent close to a half million on attorneys fees (so far) pursuing this in civil court to unbarricade a recorded easement in our favor.

I know of many other farmers in the same situation. These are agricultural crimes, but somehow, civil matters can only be handled if you have lots of money which most farmers do not have. We didn't have it either but owned our farm free and clear and have had to borrow against it to pay for counsel.

The right to farm act is great. But if a wealthy individual wants to sue a farmer for any number of reasons, it's still a civil matter which ends up in the circuit court - if the farmer or rancher has the money to hire legal representation.

As more and more wealthy individuals buy up our ag lands for private estates this will just keep happening until there are no more local farmers and ranchers left.

Sydney Smith

Ag Working Group, *chair*

808-268-3646 text/call

808-572-0072 farm

Malikoestate@icloud.com

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 11:24:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please support this important bill. Mahalo.

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:06:16 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lu Ann Mahiki Lankford-Faborito	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 11:43:58 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

In strong support! Long overdue.

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:24:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha

Been blessed not to have much trouble so far but support this as ulu coop member, in light of recent tragedies, long standing issues for other farmers and for a safer future I support this bill.

Mahalo

Robert Bence

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:45:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Agricultural crime hurts individuals trying to make an honest living and it negatively impacts our efforts to both diversify the economy and increase food security. Rural residents and agricultural workers deserve to have effective law enforcement to protect them. I urge the Committee to SUPPORT this bill!

SB-762

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 6:27:10 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/7/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stanley Cypriano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB762 - Relating to Agricultural Crimes**Written Testimony****Support**

My name is Stan Cypriano and I am the owner of Nienie Ranch in the Hamakua District on Hawai'i Island testifying in support of HB 498.

I have been a rancher for most of my life and I have personally experienced an uptick in the number of agricultural crimes committed on my property. For example, I've had yard waste illegally dumped and fence lines cut, costing me both time and money to repair. Hunters have broken water lines and erroneously killed livestock. Cattle have mysteriously disappeared. All of these things can be detrimental to ranchers, who are often operating on a tight financial margin.

Trail cameras are not always effective because the remote locations do not support cell service and it's nearly impossible to catch people committing these crimes. If cameras are spotted, they get stolen. Police often have their hands tied when responding to complaints.

One of the most impactful harms is the non-regulation of brand identification in the sale of cattle. As ranchers, we work diligently to identify cattle by brand and ear-tags. When cattle are stolen and sold, buyers are not required to confirm the seller is the registered brand owner, or to provide other documentation proving ownership of the livestock.

We need help with agricultural crime oversight and I believe a dedicated law enforcement unit can help with this regulation. I strongly support the establishment of an Agricultural Crimes Council.