

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 WATER AND LAND
February 3, 2026
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 411 & Videoconference

HOUSE BILL NO. 1703
RELATING TO LAND USE

Chairperson Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee:

We are writing in support of allowing rodeos and related rodeo activities to be conducted on lands zoned for agricultural use. Rodeos are fundamentally connected to livestock production, ranching operations, and agricultural skills, and when properly managed, they represent a compatible and beneficial use of agricultural lands.

Rodeos are not merely recreational events; they are an extension of working ranch practices that showcase horsemanship, livestock handling, and land stewardship. These activities are deeply rooted in Hawai'i's paniolo tradition, which represents one of the oldest ranching cultures in the United States. Supporting rodeos on agricultural lands helps preserve this cultural legacy while reinforcing the continued relevance of ranching and livestock operations in Hawai'i today.

Rodeos and related agricultural events also create meaningful business development and revenue-generating opportunities for agricultural landowners and rural communities. These events support local ranchers, farmers, trainers, veterinarians, feed suppliers, farriers, equipment vendors, and small businesses.

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RELATING TO LAND USE
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They also create opportunities for value-added activities such as agricultural education events, local food sales, agritourism, and community gatherings that strengthen rural economies.

Allowing rodeos on agricultural lands provides land managers with a flexible tool to generate supplemental revenue that can be reinvested into land stewardship, infrastructure maintenance, and ongoing agricultural operations. This diversification supports the long-term financial sustainability of agricultural lands while keeping them in active agricultural use.

Rodeos play an important role in engaging youth and introducing the next generation to livestock, horsemanship, and agricultural careers. Rodeo activities provide hands-on learning experiences that build responsibility, work ethic, and practical skills associated with animal care and land management. These experiences can spark early interest in ranching, veterinary science, agricultural trades, and other careers critical to Hawai‘i’s food system.

Creating spaces where young people can safely and appropriately interact with livestock helps ensure the continuity of agricultural knowledge and skills. Rodeos offer an accessible entry point for youth who may not otherwise have exposure to working lands or livestock-based agriculture.

When conducted with appropriate safeguards, rodeos and rodeo-related activities are compatible with agricultural zoning and support the intent of keeping lands productive, economically viable, and culturally relevant. Clear operating standards, coordination with land managers, and respect for surrounding agricultural activities can ensure that rodeos enhance—rather than detract from—the primary agricultural purpose of these lands.

In summary, allowing rodeos and rodeo activities on agricultural lands supports ranching operations, preserves Hawai‘i’s paniolo heritage, generates economic activity, and creates meaningful pathways for youth engagement in agriculture. We respectfully encourage continued support for rodeos as a legitimate and valuable agricultural use that contributes to the vitality of Hawai‘i’s rural communities and food system.

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Thank you for your consideration and ongoing commitment to Hawai'i's agricultural future. We would be pleased to discuss this further or provide additional information as needed.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026
9:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 411**

**HOUSE BILL NO.1703
RELATING TO LAND USE**

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1703 that amends Section 205-4.5(a) to authorize rodeos and rodeo activities on lands within the State Agricultural District, agricultural lands controlled by the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) or the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), and lands encumbered by the Department and DLNR. The bill defines the term "rodeo and rodeo activities." The Department offers comments.

The Department is concerned that enacting the language amending Section 205-4.5 would open the door to other uses and activities seeking equal treatment. We recommend that approval of rodeos and associated uses and activities follow the long-established special permit process described in Section 205-6.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-1703

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 6:31:18 PM
Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Goeggel	Animal Rights Hawai'i	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

We ask that HB1703 be tabled. There is indeed, a long history of Hawaiian cowboys, and the lore that acccompanys such romanticizing of cruelty to animals. There is also history of the removal of forests to accommodate cattle ranching. The recent droughts throughout the islands could have been mitigated by keeping valuable trees which capture moisture from rain clouds. There is no reason to continue an event in which animals are abused and sometimes killed, just for entertainment. The cowboy saga is history -pau. Please do not pass HB1703.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

HB1703

RELATING TO LAND USE

Tuesday, January 3, 2026, 9:00 AM
Conference Room 411 & Videoconference

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **strongly supports HB1703** which authorizes rodeos and rodeo activities on lands that are zoned for agricultural use and defines the term "rodeo and rodeo activities".

Rodeo values and skills are closely intertwined with paniolo cattle production. The skills learned in rodeo develop horse and livestock handling skills which is paramount to workforce development for the cattle industry.

These community events bring together all ages and teach the participants responsibility and love of the land, while providing spectators with a way to connect more closely to the hard work that goes into producing the food on their plate. These rodeos also often serve as fundraising events for the community. Especially when paired with educational, cultural, and ceremonial activities, rodeos are integral to maintaining support for agricultural production in Hawaii. It is a way to reach those who do not normally have a connection to agriculture, allowing them to appreciate and learn the paniolo culture and values.

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. Ranchers produce a high-quality protein and are the stewards of almost 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or nearly 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



HB-1703

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:28:07 PM
Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
james earl duffy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jim Duffy. My wife Jeanne and I are the owners of a small livestock company, 4-J Livestock, on Oahu. We strongly support HB1703. Rodeos and related activities are family and community events which not only provide entertainment for Country people and City people alike but also are educational in promoting an understanding of the ranching work and skills which are necessary in the production of food for our Community. We respectfull submit tha lands zoned for agricultural use are perfectly consistent with rodeo and rodeo activities. Jim Duffy, retired Asoociate Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court.

LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.



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February 3, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

TESTIMONY ON HB 1703
RELATING TO LAND USE

Conference Room 411 & Videoconference
9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1703, which authorizes rodeos and rodeo activities on lands that are zoned for agricultural use.

HFB believes that rodeos are a legitimate agricultural activity that is closely connected to livestock management, ranching operations, and Hawai'i's paniolo tradition.

Rodeos are rooted in the practical skills used by ranchers, including horsemanship, roping, and animal handling. These activities reflect real-world agricultural practices and serve as an extension of working ranch operations rather than a departure from them. Rodeos also provide opportunities for agricultural education, skill development, and community engagement centered on livestock and working ranch lands.

Clarifying that rodeos are an agricultural activity provides important land-use certainty for ranchers, agricultural organizations, and communities. This clarity helps avoid inconsistent interpretations that could unintentionally restrict legitimate agricultural uses on agricultural lands, while still allowing appropriate oversight and community considerations.

Recognizing rodeos as an agricultural activity supports the continued viability of ranching operations, preserves Hawai'i's agricultural heritage, and reinforces the primary purpose of agricultural lands as working landscapes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1703

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:04:22 AM
Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Moniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jason Moniz. My family and I have ranched on and managed a sizable State lease for the past 36 years. I have also been affiliated with Hawaii's cattle industry professionally for the past 45 years. I strongly support HB1703.

- Rodeos provide skills important for learning and practicing necessary livestock animal handling techniques
- Keiki and High School Rodeo in particular, have been instrumental in providing for the teaching of skills needed for our next generations of Paniolos
- Rodeos also provides an important way for our communities to connect to their roots and agriculture in general

Re: Strong Support for H.B. No. 1703, Authorizing Rodeos and Rodeo Activities on Agricultural Lands

The Ironworkers Stabilization Fund strongly supports HB1703, a measure that seeks to honor Hawai'i's rich paniolo culture by explicitly authorizing rodeos and related activities on agricultural-zoned lands. This bill represents an opportunity for economic growth, job creation, and enhanced community well-being across the islands.

The authorization of permanent venues and events for rodeo activities serves as a powerful catalyst for **new revenue and the growth of local businesses**. Rodeo events draw crowds and will directly inject money into local economies through tourism, ticket sales, concessions, and retail. This creates a new, stable, and culturally-relevant form of economic activity for our agricultural districts. Furthermore, the establishment, maintenance, and operation of rodeo facilities and events will create demand for a wide array of support services from local businesses—from veterinary and livestock suppliers to food vendors and event organizers. Crucially, the construction and ongoing maintenance of the necessary infrastructure—such as arenas, bleachers, corrals, fencing, and staging areas, as defined in Section 205-4.5(g)—will require the skilled labor of our local ironworkers, providing stable, family-sustaining union jobs.

Furthermore, this measure delivers much-needed **recreational and cultural activity for our people**. By promoting and formalizing the Hawaiian cowboy tradition, we preserve a valuable piece of local heritage. Rodeos offer a wholesome, family-friendly, and engaging recreational outlet for all residents, providing entertainment, competition, and a deep connection to the islands' history of ranching and horsemanship.

For these reasons—economic opportunity, job creation for our members, support for local enterprise, and the preservation of a vital cultural recreation—the Ironworkers Stabilization Fund respectfully urges the Committee to pass H.B. No. 1703.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name and Title Here]

On behalf of the Ironworkers Stabilization Fund

HB-1703

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 4:59:10 PM
Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry my COMMENT is NOT ON SOIL CLASSIFICATION A - C

1703 HB RELATING TO LAND USE.	WAL	411 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE	Feb 3, 2026 9:00 AM
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HB-1703

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:14:38 AM
Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Woody Child	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly Support HB1703.

HB-1703

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 12:10:02 PM
Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Strong support

LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

HB-1703

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:52:23 AM
Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Blazak	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee,

I support House Bill 1703 and urge you to pass the measure. Thank you.

HB-1703

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:35:33 PM
Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Racquel Achiu	Individual	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha my name is Racquel Achiu of the Waialua Moku on the North Shore of O'ahu.

I would like to offer comments regarding HB1703. I am not opposed to Rodeos on Ag Land. However I think this could be easily addressed by requiring this activity to acquire a discretionary permit such as Special Use Permit or Conditional Use Permit (Minor or Major) from the city and county Planning and Permitting department.

Although, I'm not familiar of how other counties address accessory uses or agribusiness, I do think this type of event could be reviewed as necessary by each county to implement the appropriate permit to support appropriate uses of ag land. Rodeo's are directly related to ag land without question as well as a significant part of our culture, history and continued way of life. I don't think we need to make it difficult or unnecessarily challenging to obtain the permit but can ensure the legitimacy & purpose of the event is held with integrity
much mahalo,
Racquel Achiu