



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Parwinder Grewal, Ph.D.

Dean

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience
and

Vassilis Syrmos, Ph.D.

Interim Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1952 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 1952. This measure authorizes the issuance of GO bonds and appropriates funds for capital improvements for the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience's (CTAHR) Agricultural Research and Extension Station (CARES) on Kaua'i.

The Kaua'i CARES center develops research-based solutions to pest, disease, and climate adaptation challenges in the production of coffee, cacao, orchids, vegetables, forages, and goats, and is the primary location of invasive species research and coordination, seed production, Native Hawaiian kalo collection, and delivery of multi-language training in pest and disease management, soil fertility, pesticide education, and food safety on the island.

However, many of the station's facilities are too old and do not comply with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and environmental safety requirements. It is critical to meet ADA and environmental compliance, construct new laboratory and field facilities to support existing projects, fencing, farm manager cottages, and expand new research on sheep and goat production. The urgent need for a certified kitchen will support nutritional education, culturally-relevant recipe innovation, new product development, address food and nutritional insecurity challenges.

CTAHR is currently recruiting a new livestock and 4-H agent, and a community coordinator to help build the CARES center as a hub for collaborative innovation and community prosperity. HB 1952 will support statewide community assets.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



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 4, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

TESTIMONY ON HB 1952
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Garrett, Vice-Chair Amato, 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 1952, which authorizes the issuance of GO bonds and appropriates funds for capital improvements for the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience's Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kaua'i.

The CTAHR Agricultural Research and Extension Station (CARES) on Kaua'i provides essential support to farmers, ranchers, and agricultural communities on the island through applied research, education, and extension services. These services address a wide range of needs, including pest and disease management, invasive species response, soil health, climate adaptation, and food safety.

Many of the Kaua'i CARES existing facilities are outdated and no longer adequately support current programs, safety requirements, or accessibility standards. HB 1952 addresses these deficiencies by authorizing capital improvements that will modernize laboratories and research spaces, correct environmental and ADA compliance issues, and provide appropriate facilities to support education and outreach activities.

These improvements will allow CTAHR faculty and extension staff to better serve producers, expand training opportunities, and support research that is directly relevant to Kaua'i and Hawai'i's agricultural sector. Modern, functional facilities are necessary to maintain effective extension services and ensure that research and education programs remain responsive to on-the-ground agricultural needs.

Investing in the Kaua'i Agricultural Research and Extension Station strengthens local agricultural capacity, supports farmers and ranchers, and helps ensure that CTAHR can continue to provide timely, practical assistance to the agricultural community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



February 03, 2026

To: Chair Andrew Takuya Garrett, Vice Chair Terez Amato and the House Committee on Higher Education

Subject: **HB 1952**, Relating to agriculture

Aloha,

We are writing **in support of HB1952**, which authorizes the issuance of General Obligation bonds and appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience's Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kauai for capital improvements.

The Kaua'i Agricultural Research Center, located in the Wailua Homesteads and spanning over 260 acres, has facilities for conducting field and laboratory research. Its core of buildings includes a laboratory, a field laboratory, an office, a storage building, two cottages, a vehicle garage, a shop, a chemical and fertilizer storage area, two greenhouses, a shade house, and a potting shed¹. These buildings serve as the key research location for invasive species research and coordination; seed production; Native Hawaiian kalo collection; and delivery of multi-language training in pest and disease management, soil fertility, pesticide education, and food safety on Kaua'i.

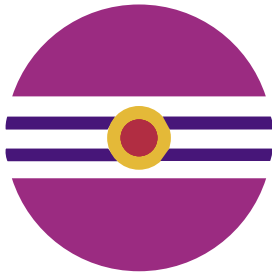
These efforts protect not only the land but also the health, culture, language, and food sovereignty of the community and future generations. We **urge this committee to pass HB1952** to authorize the issuance of General Obligation bonds and appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience's Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kauai for capital improvements.

Mahalo,
Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

¹ Reference cited: Kaua'i Agricultural Research Center, Kauai County. (2026). CTAHAR. <https://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/site/locationdetails.aspx?id=ER-KKAUA>

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 2026, 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.



Saiva Siddhanta Church

Kauai's Hindu Monastery
107 Kaholalele Road
Kapaa, Hawaii 96746-9304•USA
Phone: (808) 822-3012

February 3, 2026

Committee on Agriculture

Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, Chair
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair

Testimony on HB1952, Relating to Kauai Agricultural Research and Extension Station Wednesday, February 4, 2026, Video Conference, Room 309

Chairperson Garrett and Members of the Committee:

We **strongly support HB769** authorizing capital improvements at the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kauai.

We have been the immediate neighbors of the Ag Station since 1970 and observed the slow decrease in activity over the decades. What was once a bustling education and research station is operating at a lower level today. It is very important to the island of Kauai that this prime location for the University of Hawaii's mission to protect and develop local agriculture return to its glory days.

The Kaua'i research and extension station provides important support to local farmers and ranchers through applied research, education and extension services. These services help address issues such as pests, disease, soil health, and climate impacts. The Church licenses 320 acres of ag land from the Agribusiness Development Corporation where it grows mostly hardwood trees (including large plantings of koa) and 15 acres of noni. The ag station has been helpful with issues in the past.

We just met with Valerie Barko this morning at the station and can confirm that many of the station's facilities are outdated and need improvements to meet current safety, accessibility, and program needs. Investing in modern facilities will help extension staff and researchers better serve the agricultural community and continue providing practical assistance to producers on Kauai.

Saiva Siddhanta Church

Acharya Arumuganathaswami
Saiva Siddhanta Church



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026**

**COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, Chair
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 4, 2026
2:00 PM
Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street**

RE: HB1952 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

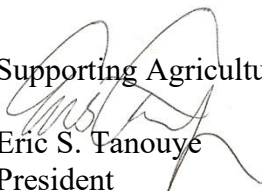
My name is Eric S. Tanouye and I am the President for the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association. HFNA is a statewide umbrella organization with approximately 350 members. Our membership is made up with breeders, hybridizers, propagators, growers, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, educators, and the allied industry, which supports our efforts in agriculture.

The Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association (HFNA) **SUPPORTS Bill 1952** which authorizes the issuance of GO bonds and appropriates funds for capital improvements for the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience's Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kauai.

We support raising capital and funds for support of UH CTAHR extension stations, such as the one on Kauai. CTAHR has a proven history of providing solution and tools to our floriculture nurserymen and women.

We ask that you support our industry and agriculture, so that we may continue to bring the beauty of Hawaii to others through flowers and ornamentals.

If you have any questions at this time, I would be happy to discuss them and can be reached by phone at 808-959-3535 ext 2627, cell 960-1433 and email eric@greenpointnursery.com.


Supporting Agriculture and Hawaii,

Eric S. Tanouye
President
Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association



EAST OAHU COUNTY FARM BUREAU
910 CALIFORNIA AVE., WAHIAWA, HI 96786

February 3, 2026

LATE

Representative Andrew Takuya Garrett, Chair, and Representative Terez Amato, Vice Chair
House Committee on Higher Education
State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee,

The East O'ahu County Farm Bureau, which represents approximately 420 farmers and supporters of agriculture from Waimanalo to Kahuku, **strongly supports HB 1952**, "Relating to Agriculture," which would provide funding for capital improvements at CTAHR's research and extension station on Kaua'i.

CTAHR's research and extension stations provide important support to local farmers and ranchers through applied research, education, and extension services. These services help address issues such as pests, disease, soil health, and climate impacts. Many of the Kaua'i station's facilities are outdated and need improvements to meet current safety, accessibility, and program needs. Investing in modern facilities will help extension staff and researchers better serve the agricultural community and continue providing practical assistance to producers on Kaua'i and throughout the State.

CTAHR's continuing research, education, and extension activities are essential to Hawai'i's agricultural production. We hope you will support Hawai'i's agricultural community by passing HB 1952.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter of great importance to Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frederick M. Mencher".

Frederick M. Mencher
for Grant Hamachi, President
East O'ahu County Farm Bureau



HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

HB1952 – In Support
Relating to Agriculture

LATE

House Committee on Higher Education

Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2026
Time: 2 PM
Place: Conference Room 309

Aloha Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB1952**, which authorizes the issuance of GO bonds and appropriates funds for capital improvements for the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience's Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kauai.

The Kauai Agricultural Research and Extension Station plays a vital role in supporting the island's farmers, ranchers, and communities. It provides research-based solutions to pests, diseases, and climate-related challenges. Yet despite its importance, many of the station's facilities are outdated and deteriorating. These limitations restrict the station's ability to serve the public effectively and equitably, and they hinder the delivery of essential education and research services.

Authorizing general obligation bonds for these capital improvements will support local agriculture, invasive species management, and workforce development, which contributes to the long-term sustainability of Kauai and the State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support.

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration, and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices, and build a healthy economy.



Kalepa Koalition

5868 Kini Place
Kapaa, Hawaii 96746
Phone/Fax: 808-639-0152

LATE

February 7, 2019

TO: **Committee on Agriculture**
Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, Chair
Rep. Terez Amato, Vice Chair

RE: **Testimony on HB1952, Relating to Kauai Agricultural Research and Extension Station, Wednesday, February 4, 2026, Video Conference, Room 309**

Chairperson Garrett and Members of the Committee:

We strongly **support HB1952** authorizing capital improvements at the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kauai. The Kalepa Koalition is a Hawaii agricultural cooperative of the farmers and ranchers who hold long-term licenses on 6,500 acres of State land behind Kalepa Ridge on Kauai and under the administration of ADC. The area is immediately adjacent to the ag station on Wailua Reservoir.

The Kaua'i research and extension station provides important support to local farmers and ranchers through applied research, education and extension services. These services help address issues such as pests, disease, soil health and climate impacts—all of which are of direct concern to our members.

Many of the station's facilities are outdated and need improvements to meet current safety, accessibility, and program needs. Investing in modern facilities will help extension staff and researchers better serve the agricultural community and continue providing practical assistance to producers on Kauai.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. P. Milnes".

Leslie P. Milnes, President
Kalepa Koalition

HB-1952

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 2:17:33 PM

Testimony for HED on 2/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Honorable Chair Garrett, Vice Chair Amato, and Members of the Committee,

As a constituent of House District 2 in Hilo, I strongly support HB1952. Kauai has a strong agricultural sector that is vital to our State. Repairs and improvements at the Cooperative Extension Experiment Station on Kauai will ensure current and future farmers, ranchers, and community members have access to field-based experimentation, modernized facilities, and technical assistance they need from the Cooperative Extension Service to effectively address agricultural and environmental concerns. Thank you.

HB-1952

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:45:01 AM

Testimony for HED on 2/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Justine Kamelamela | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Stronly Support

HB-1952

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:11:42 AM

Testimony for HED on 2/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| John R. Gordines | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Gabbard and Vice Chair Richards,

my name is Johnny Gordines. We support the issuance GO bonds and appropriate funds for capital improvement at the CTAHR Kauai Agricultural Research Station (KARC) on Kaua'i. I am retired from State employment at KARC after 32 years of employment of which I was the farm manager for my last 10 years. There are 260 acres at the facility and unlimited source of water for research projects! KARC is the only facility on Kaua'i able to service Kaua'i farmers and ranchers with the dedicated assistance of the UH CTAHR extension agents. Capital improvements will further provide needed quality service to Kaua'i farmers and ranchers. Thank you for your continued support!

Johnny Gordines 808 65-9711

HB-1952

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:56:20 AM

Testimony for HED on 2/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Strong support

HB-1952

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:49:40 AM

Testimony for HED on 2/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jill Coombs | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Thank you for taking time to review my testimony.

Although I reside on Molokai, I believe it is important to support these kinds of initiatives on all islands. I strongly support investments in the University of Hawai‘i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience’s Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kaua‘i. This station provides critical research-based solutions to pests, diseases, and climate adaptation challenges affecting key local crops such as coffee, cacao, orchids, vegetables, forages, and livestock. It also serves as the primary hub on Kaua‘i for invasive species research and coordination, seed production, Native Hawaiian kalo collection, and the delivery of multi-language training in pest management, soil fertility, pesticide education, and food safety.

Despite its essential role, many of the station’s facilities are outdated and do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, limiting equitable access to its programs and services. Modernizing these facilities is necessary to ensure inclusivity and continued community benefit.

Additionally, Kaua‘i has an urgent need for a certified kitchen to support value-added food production, food safety training, and small agricultural businesses. Supporting this station and its infrastructure improvements is an investment in local agriculture, food security, cultural preservation, and community resilience. I urge the Legislature to support this measure, and in the future similar efforts on the other neighbor islands.

Thank you,

Jill Coombs

HB-1952

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:10:37 PM

Testimony for HED on 2/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Gary R Ueunten | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am testifying in favor of Bill 1052 as an alumni of the CTAHR Horticulure Department, former student help at the Kauai Research Station and as a farmer on Kauai. The Kauai Station is a valuable resource for agriculture on Kauai and throughout the State. Over the years I have attended many workshops and functions at the facility and have seen many of the buildings age. The facility needs to be reinvigorated for th future of agriculture.

LATE

HB-1952

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:54:53 PM

Testimony for HED on 2/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Rodney & Karol Haraguchi | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

HB 1952 – KAUA‘I AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION STATION
IMPROVEMENTS

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
February 4, 2026

I support HB 1952, which authorizes capital improvements at the University of Hawai‘i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kaua‘i.

The Kaua‘i research and extension station provides important support to local farmers and ranchers through applied research, education, and extension services. These services help address issues such as pests, disease, soil health, and climate impacts.

Many of the station’s facilities are outdated and need improvements to meet current safety, accessibility, and program needs. Investing in modern facilities will help extension staff and researchers better serve the agricultural community and continue providing practical assistance to producers on Kaua‘i.

Please support HB 1952.

LATE

HB-1952

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:49:25 PM

Testimony for HED on 2/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

HB 1952 – KAUA‘I AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION STATION IMPROVEMENTS

HEARING BEFORE THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

February 4, 2026

I support HB 1952, which authorizes capital improvements at the University of Hawai‘i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kaua‘i.

The Kaua‘i research and extension station provides important support to local farmers and ranchers through applied research, education, and extension services. These services help address issues such as pests, disease, soil health, and climate impacts.

Many of the station’s facilities are outdated and need improvements to meet current safety, accessibility, and program needs. Investing in modern facilities will help extension staff and researchers better serve the agricultural community and continue providing practical assistance to producers on Kaua‘i.

Please support HB 1952.