

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 COMMITTEES ON TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE AND
FOOD SYSTEMS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2026
8:45 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 423

HOUSE BILL NO. 2585
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Chairs Tam and Chun, Vice Chairs Templo and Kusch and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2585 that establishes statewide, uniform standards to promote agricultural tourism activities in the State for all counties that have adopted an agricultural tourism ordinance. The bill requires agricultural tourism activities to be registered by the county planning department, agricultural tourism activities are to coexist with an agricultural activity on a farming operation, and termination of the agricultural tourism activities is required upon cessation of the agricultural activity, except under certain circumstances. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) supports this measure proposes amendments.

To expedite review of our comments and recommended amendments, the Department provides them in chronological order.

(Page 4, lines 3-5)

“Agricultural tourism activities” shall be “accessory and secondary to the principal agricultural use;”

DAB notices that the term “principal agricultural use” is not defined in Section 205-2 or Section 205-4.5.

(Page 4, lines 6-7)

Agricultural tourism activities shall:

“Co-exist with an agricultural activity conducted on a farm operation; and”

DAB recommends the following amendment to use the proposed term “productive agricultural use” in place of multiple terms describing agricultural use or activity.

Amending Page 4, lines 4-7 as follows:

- “(1) Be accessory and secondary to [the principal agricultural use];
- “(2) ~~Coexist with an agricultural activity~~ a productive agricultural use conducted on a farming operation; and
- “(3) (2) Not interfere with surrounding farm operations.”

(Page 4, lines 9-14)

“Agricultural tourism shall only be allowed on land on which productive agricultural use is occurring.”

DAB staff notices the term “productive agricultural use” is defined as “...the working farm, or farmland operation as defined in section 165-2, is taxed as agricultural and is currently on its real property tax obligations.”

DAB staff understand that agricultural land can be taxed as agricultural, however the landowner may choose not to undertake agricultural activity and will pay the property tax rate on the fair market value of the property). The landowner will be in compliance with this part of the proposed statutory definition of “productive agricultural use”, however there will be no agricultural activity.

(Page 5, lines 8-9)

Federal and state tax returns verifying farm income from the “principal farming operation.”

DAB recommends the following amendment to Page 5, lines 8-9 as follows:

- “(5) Federal and state tax returns verifying farm income from the [principal] farming operation;”

This proposed amendment is to be consistent with the amendments on the terms found on Page 4, lines 4-7.

(Page 9, lines 3-13 and page 17, lines 4-14)

DAB agrees with deleting the existing language allowing overnight accommodations of 21 days or less for any one stay

(Page 9, lines 19 to page 10, line 11)

DAB does not support the proposed amendments to the existing statutory language governing roadside stands.

(Editing error on page 16?)

Page 16, is the Ramseyer text done incorrectly, from line 12 (a hanging left bracket?) to line 20?

(Page 25, line 13 to page 26, line 18)

DAB defers to the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development and the Land Use Commission on the proposed amendment to Section 205-5(b) (Zoning), particularly the amendment to the first sentence of subsection (b):

"(b) ~~[Within agricultural districts, uses compatible to the activities described in section 205-2 as determined by the commission shall be permitted; provided that accessory]~~
Accessory agricultural uses and services described in sections 205-2 and 205-4.5 may be further defined by each county by zoning ordinance."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our testimony.



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWA'I OFFICE OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Statement of **MARY ALICE EVANS, Director**

before the

HOUSE COMMITTEES ON TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Thursday, February 5, 2026

8:45 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 423

in consideration of

HB 2585

RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM.

Chairs Tam and Chun, Vice Chairs Templo and Kusch, and Members of the House Committees on Tourism and Agriculture and Food Systems.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** HB 2585, which establishes uniform agricultural tourism activity requirements applicable to all Counties to promote agricultural tourism as a supplemental revenue stream to farm operations.

OPSD strongly supports agricultural tourism as an additional source of revenue for bona fide farming operations, as defined in Hawai'i Revised Statute (HRS) § 165-2 and we support amendments clarifying that agricultural tourism activities that are secondary and accessory to a principal farming operation may be allowed in every County. We also support County adoption of ordinances regulating agricultural tourism activities and a registration process that improves the Counties' ability to review whether these activities are indeed being operated by a bona fide farming operation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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



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TESTIMONY OF
CAROLINE ANDERSON
Interim President & CEO
Hawai'i Tourism Authority

before the
**HOUSE COMMITTEES ON TOURISM AND
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

Thursday, February 5, 2026
8:45 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 423

In consideration of
HB 2585
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Aloha Chairs Tam and Chun, Vice Chairs Templo and Kusch and Members of the Committees:

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) offers comments on HB 2585, which establishes statewide, uniform standards to promote agricultural tourism activities in Hawai'i, requires registration with county planning departments, and ensures agricultural tourism remains secondary to and coexists with ongoing agricultural activity.

HTA recognizes the importance of supporting Hawai'i's agricultural sector. Agricultural tourism can provide supplemental revenue for farms and ranches while offering visitors educational experiences connected to Hawai'i's working lands and local products. Coordinating the development of new agricultural tourism products is part of HTA's statutory mandate in HRS §201B-3(a)(19).

HB 2585 also includes important guardrails that help keep agricultural tourism tied to real farming activity. The bill requires agricultural tourism to be accessory and secondary to agriculture, not interfere with surrounding farm operations, and be conducted only on land where productive agricultural use is occurring. HTA supports these safeguards because they help encourage responsible growth and reduce the risk that agricultural tourism becomes a substitute for agriculture.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide these comments on HB 2585.

HB-2585

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:04:03 PM
Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Bateman	Heavenly Hawaiian Farms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Tam and Chun and TOU/AGR Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in **strong support** of HB2585.

As many on these Committees know, farming of every kind is a very challenging venture at best. It requires extensive labor, initial capital investment and regular infusion of cash to make ends meet. And, at the end of the day, there is no guarantee of success or profitability. Farmers, therefore, need to find other means to supplement their crop sales. Agricultural tourism is one of the most significant avenues to generate that supplemental cash flow. It allows the farmer to sell more of the farm crop at retail to visitors to the farm. Enhanced sales are generated through the visitor's experience on the farm, education learning how the product is developed from raw crop, and experiencing first hand what a farmer must do to succeed to bring product to market. On-farm sales will generate many times online retail revenue or revenue from farmers market sales or wholesale to retail stores. Agricultural tourism is truly a "lifeline" for farmers trying to improve their cash flow,

However, the current process to get planning approval for an agricultural tourism permit from county planning is extremely cumbersome, costly and time consuming. It simply doesn't work for the average farmer. I know of fellow farmers who have incurred over \$75,000, in site improvements expenses, hiring experts, attorneys and advisors just to apply for a permit for a walking path, some small open pavilions and restrooms. Applying for a permit with all the associated costs of experts, attorneys, planners, etc., to present a package to the county is unnecessarily complex and prohibitive. This does not work for the farming community. Therefore, many farmers simply opt out. HB 2585 fixes the problem by allowing a farmer to register their agricultural tourism activities with a simple registration filing. Stores and restaurants on farms are currently allowed with the registration process. The logical is why can't the mere effort of getting tourists onto the farm also be handled with a similar registration process?

I **strongly support** HB2585 and urge these Committees to jointly approve it and pass it out of the joint Committees.

Mahalo nui,

David Bateman, Executive Chairman

Heavenly Hawaiian Farms

Holualoa HI



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February 5, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 2585
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Conference Room 423 & Videoconference
8:45 AM

Aloha Chairs Tam and Chun, Vice-Chairs Templo and 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 the intent of HB 2585, which establishes uniform statewide standards to promote agricultural tourism in the state. This bill sets clear requirements for agricultural tourism that apply to counties that have adopted an agricultural tourism ordinance. It also requires agricultural tourism activities to be registered with the county planning commission and ensures that they remain secondary to active agricultural operations, terminating upon cessation of farming activity, except under certain circumstances.

Agritourism can play an important role in supporting the economic viability of farms and ranches while educating residents and visitors about agriculture in Hawai'i. We appreciate the Legislature's effort to bring greater clarity and consistency to agritourism standards, particularly in response to differing county approaches and enforcement challenges.

We support the principle that agricultural tourism activities must remain accessory and secondary to a bona fide agricultural operation. Agriculture should always be the primary use of agricultural lands, and agritourism should complement, not replace, active farming or ranching. Maintaining this distinction is essential to protecting agricultural lands and preventing misuse of agritourism as a substitute for non-agricultural commercial or residential development.

HFB has consistently opposed short-term vacation rental activity on agricultural lands, particularly stays of twenty days or less that function as transient accommodations rather than agricultural experiences. At the same time, we recognize that legitimate agritourism may, in limited circumstances, include overnight components that are directly tied to agricultural education, immersion, or hands-on farm experiences. The key distinction has always been that lodging must remain clearly subordinate to, and supportive of, active agricultural production.

As HB 2585 moves forward, we encourage careful consideration of how statewide standards are implemented to avoid unintended impacts on bona fide agricultural operations. Registration and documentation requirements should be administered in a manner that provides clarity and accountability without creating unnecessary administrative burdens, particularly for small and family-run farms.

We also emphasize the importance of flexibility in agriculture. Farming is inherently subject to weather events, pests, disease, and market disruptions. Temporary interruptions in production should not automatically disqualify an operation from engaging in agritourism activities that are otherwise consistent with the intent of the law.

HFB appreciates the opportunity to continue working with the Legislature, counties, and stakeholders to ensure that agritourism policies support farmers and ranchers, protect agricultural lands, and provide clear, enforceable, and reasonable standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAI'I
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
HUI HO'OULU AINA MAHIAI

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM
AND THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

February 5, 2026
8:45 a.m.
Conference Room 423 & Videoconference

HOUSE BILL NO. 2585
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Chairpersons Tam and Chun, Vice Chairs Templo and Kusch, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **with comments on SB2585.**

We support the intent of SB2585 to expand and clarify the role of agricultural tourism as a legitimate component of Hawai'i's agricultural economy. When properly structured, agricultural tourism can provide farmers and ranchers with diversified revenue streams that help stabilize operations, offset infrastructure and compliance costs, educate the public, and create pathways for export-oriented agricultural products.

I. Agricultural Tourism as a Revenue Diversification Tool

Agricultural tourism can serve as an important supplemental income source for agricultural operations. Revenue generated through farm tours, educational experiences, and direct-to-consumer activities can:

- Help offset high infrastructure costs such as irrigation systems, fencing, roads, and processing facilities.
- Support reinvestment into agricultural production; and
- Improve long-term financial sustainability for farmers and ranchers facing volatile input and commodity markets.

For many operations, agricultural tourism is not a replacement for farming, it is a tool that allows farming to continue.

II. Export and Market Development Opportunities

Agricultural tourism also supports Hawai'i's export potential by:

- Introducing visitors to Hawai'i-grown products and local brands.
- Creating demand for value-added agricultural goods; and
- Strengthening linkages between on-farm production, processing, and off-island markets.

These activities help grow Hawai'i's agricultural reputation beyond raw commodities and into branded, value-added exports.

III. Education and Public Awareness

Agricultural tourism plays a key role in educating residents and visitors about:

- Where food comes from.
- The realities of farming and ranching in Hawai'i; and
- The importance of preserving agricultural lands and water systems.

These experiences build public support for agriculture while strengthening the connection between consumers and producers.

IV. Need for Farmer and Rancher Input

We strongly encourage that implementation of SB2585 include meaningful input from farmers and ranchers. Those operating agricultural enterprises are best positioned to advise on:

- What activities are feasible on working farms.

HOUSE BILL NO. 2585
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM
Page 3 of 4

- What compliance requirements are practical; and
- How agricultural tourism can be integrated without disrupting production.

This bill will be most effective if shaped in partnership with the agricultural community.

V. Clarifying Eligible Agricultural Operations

To avoid confusion and inconsistent interpretation, SB2585 should clearly define what constitutes an **eligible agricultural operation**. The bill should focus on:

- Operations that are actively engaged in agricultural production; and
- Activities that are accessory and supportive to that production.

Agricultural tourism should be tied to real agricultural activity and not used to justify unrelated development on agricultural lands.

VI. Avoiding Administrative Burdens

It is critical that SB2585 not create new administrative burdens that adversely affect farmers and ranchers. Requirements should be:

- Clear and predictable.
- Scaled appropriately to farm size and activity; and
- Designed to support, rather than discourage, participation.

Overly complex permitting or reporting requirements risk making agricultural tourism inaccessible to small and mid-scale producers who would benefit the most.

VII. Defining Agricultural Operations

For clarity and consistency, the bill should provide a workable definition of an agricultural operation, such as:

“Agricultural operation” means the cultivation of crops, the raising of livestock or aquaculture species, or the processing of agricultural

HOUSE BILL NO. 2585
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM
Page 4 of 4

products, conducted as an ongoing agricultural activity rather than primarily for recreation or unrelated commercial use.

This ensures that agricultural tourism remains grounded in genuine agricultural activity while allowing flexibility across different types and scales of farms and ranches.

SB2585 presents an important opportunity to strengthen Hawai'i's agricultural sector by recognizing agricultural tourism as a supportive activity of agriculture. With clear definitions, farmer input, and reasonable implementation, this measure can:

- Help farms diversify revenue.
- Offset infrastructure and operating costs.
- Promote Hawai'i products locally and abroad; and
- Educate the public about agriculture's role in our islands' future.

For these reasons, we support SB2585 with the comments noted above. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Feb. 5, 2026, 8:45 a.m.

Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 423 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Tourism

Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Chair
Rep. Shirley Ann Templo, Vice Chair

House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Rep. Cory Chun, Chair
Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

Re: COMMENTS ON HB2585 — RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Aloha chair, vice chair and other members of the committees,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii offers **comments on** — and **amendments to** — [HB2585](#), which would reform statewide rules for agricultural tourism in the state's agriculture district.

Specifically, this bill would require that agricultural tourism be permitted as an accessory use to a farming operation in counties that have adopted ordinances that regulate agricultural tourism.

In these countries, agricultural tourism operations would have to register with the county planning department and provide information such as what visitor activities will be offered and documentation that the property is enrolled in the county's agricultural property tax dedication program.

The bill would also add food trucks to the definition of an "agricultural-based commercial operation" and delete overnight accommodations of 21 days or less as a permitted use in counties with at least three islands.

Agricultural tourism activities can support the state's goal of having more local food production by offering farmers and ranchers the opportunity to diversify their sources of income.

A 2023 report from the Swette Center for Sustainable Food Systems at Arizona State University noted that agritourism “is a way to capitalize on the state’s robust tourism sector while providing producers with additional income to complement their baseline agricultural activities. … Such activities include farm tours, value-added product sales, event hosting, farm-to-table experiences, volunteer opportunities, and others.”¹

However, Grassroot urges the committee to amend this legislation to protect the existing property rights of Hawaii farmers and ranchers.

Hawaii Revised Statutes 205-2(12) and 205-4.5(14) allow overnight accommodations of 21 days or less in counties with at least three islands that have adopted ordinances governing agricultural tourism.²

Many farmers and ranchers throughout Maui County rely on this language to run short-term rentals and bed and breakfasts to help supplement income from their farming operations.

At the same time, some counties might be hesitant to legalize agricultural tourism activities because they do not want to encourage additional short-term rental units.

Thus, the committee should keep 205-2(12) and 205-4.5(14) and add the following underlined language to those sections:

“Agricultural tourism activities, including overnight accommodations of twenty-one days or less, for any one stay within a county; provided that this paragraph shall apply only to a county that includes at least three islands and has adopted ordinances prior to the effective date of this law regulating agricultural tourism activities pursuant to section 205-5; provided further that the agricultural tourism activities coexist with a bona fide agricultural activity.”

Adding this amendment would strike the right balance between protecting property rights and allowing farmers and ranchers to participate in tourism — the state’s largest economic engine.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ John Gifford, Abigail Martone-Richards and Jason Pena et al., “[Hawai‘i Agritourism: Examining how Agritourism can be Responsibly Implemented to Support Small Farmers and Ecological and Cultural Preservation in the Hawaiian Islands](#),” April 2023, p. 11.

² [205-2 Districting and classification of lands](#). and [205-4.5 Permissible uses within the agricultural districts](#)., Hawaii Revised Statutes, accessed Jan. 29, 2026.

HB-2585

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:29:32 PM
Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 8:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

In theory, I think this is an amazing idea. However, until our entire island is using organic methods of farming, we'd be open to lawsuits of pesticide exposure and non compliance of the Americans with Disabilities Act for equal access. Even farms that already use organic methods are subject to pesticide drift from others. Until our island population understands the health effects of these toxic chemicals we will never be free of them. And, our health will be continually compromised. Mahalo for your time.

HB-2585

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:31:30 PM
Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather Korotie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Heather Korotie, and I am a small farmer and resident of Hawai‘i County. I write in strong support of HB2585 and respectfully ask that the bill clearly include carefully regulated overnight accommodations as part of agricultural tourism.

My family operates a 1.7-acre orchard farm. Because our production is highly seasonal, crop sales alone are not enough to cover the basic costs of staying in agriculture—water, inputs, tree care, insurance, labor, and compliance. Like many small farms, we need modest, farm-based agritourism income—such as a couple hosted guest accommodations on the farm—to keep the land in production, maintain our orchards and irrigation, and avoid pressure to sell, subdivide, or let the trees decline.

Agritourism has already been recognized in Hawai‘i as tourism that lets people experience and appreciate agricultural products, settings, and lifestyles, and as a way for small farms to diversify income while educating visitors about farming and conservation. State law also already recognizes agricultural tourism, including overnight stays of up to 21 days, in certain counties when those stays coexist with bona fide agricultural operations. HB2585 is a logical next step. It creates uniform statewide standards so that all counties can support farm-first agritourism under clear, enforceable rules. For the House Tourism committee, this means aligning visitor experiences with responsible destination stewardship—directing a small share of visitors to authentic farm settings rather than expanding resort areas. From the Agriculture committee’s perspective, it means giving real farmers a narrow, well-regulated tool to keep land in agriculture instead of leaving farming, selling their land, or converting fields to non-ag uses, which directly supports long-term food security and the preservation of productive farmland.

I also want to directly acknowledge the recent Rosehill decision. The Hawai‘i Supreme Court made it clear that speculative, non-farm-related short-term vacation rentals do not belong in the State Agricultural District, because they undermine the agricultural purpose of the land. I agree with that distinction and do not support turning ag land into vacation rental enclaves. What I am asking you to support through HB2585 is something very different: owner-occupied, small-scale farm stays and bed-and-breakfasts that are physically and economically tied to real agricultural production, with strict limits, yearly demonstration of agricultural production/activity and clear enforcement. This kind of agritourism implements the intent of Chapter 205 by helping farmers remain on the land and keep it in active production, rather than converting it to pure visitor use.

I support clear statutory guardrails so the line is bright and enforceable. For example, the bill can require: proof of a bona fide farming operation and a farm plan; a minimum percentage of land kept in active agricultural use; a cap on the number of guest accommodations; on-site owner occupancy or a resident operator; and automatic termination of the overnight use if agricultural use ceases. The law can also explicitly prohibit unhosted or non-farm “vacation rental” use on agricultural lands, so that Rosehill’s concern about speculative STVRs is fully respected while still allowing carefully defined agritourism. These conditions will ensure that overnight accommodations remain an accessory, agriculture-supporting use—not a new pathway to resort development on ag land.

For small farms like ours, the difference between being allowed a few hosted farm-stay accommodations and being entirely barred from overnight agritourism can be the difference between continuing to farm and giving up and pursuing employment off the farm. HB2585, with explicit support for strictly conditioned overnight accommodations as part of agricultural tourism, will help keep working farms viable, preserve agricultural landscapes and rural communities, and provide authentic, educational experiences for visitors that support the state’s broader food security, climate, and land-preservation goals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your consideration of HB2585. I respectfully urge you to pass this bill with clear, strong language affirming overnight agritourism accommodations under strict guardrails as a permitted tool to keep farmers on the land in Hawai‘i County and statewide.



COMMITTEE ON TOURISM
Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Chair
Rep. Shirley Ann Templo, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
Rep. Cory M. Chun, Chair
Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

HB2585
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Thursday, February 5, 2026, 8:45am
Conference Room 423 & Videoconference

Chairs Tam and Chun, Vice Chair Templo and Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB2585** which establishes statewide, uniform standards to promote agricultural tourism activities in the State for all counties that have adopted an agricultural tourism ordinance.

There is a need to ensure that gentleman farms are not unfairly benefiting from ag tourism without producing food, but we also need to make sure we are not restricting bona fide ranchers and farmers from using it as a tool. Agricultural tourism is important to diversify a farm or ranch's revenue stream, provide access for the public to a working farm, and to educate and connect people with where their food comes from. Agriculture is a tough business with small margins. Utilizing agricultural tourism can often be an important factor in being able to stay afloat financially.

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-2585

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:33:59 AM
Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krista Olson	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Krista Olson, and I am an organic produce farmer, food security advocate, and resident of Hawai‘i County. Based on my perspective producing food for my community over the last two decades, I am writing in support of HB2585 and respectfully ask that the bill clearly include thoughtfully regulated overnight accommodations as an essential part of agricultural tourism. Our five acre production farm supplies five local grocery stores and local food hubs throughout the year, yet crop sales alone are not enough to cover the costs of staying in agriculture. Our farming inputs have increased dramatically in the last six years, and are now accelerating as tariffs impact our markets. Like many small farms, we rely on agritourism income—in our case, hosted farm stays—to keep the land in production, support our training for aspiring farmers, and avoid pressure to sell or subdivide.

State law already recognizes agricultural tourism, including overnight stays of up to 21 days, in certain counties when those stays coexist with bona fide agricultural operations. HB2585 is a logical next step: it creates uniform statewide standards so that all counties can support farm-first agritourism under clear rules. The goal is not to create new resort areas on agricultural lands, but to give real farmers a viable, well-regulated tool so they can continue farming instead of leaving agriculture or selling their land. Our experience is that there is a ripple effect from our farm stay rental program, as our visitors spend their tourism dollars in our rural community at small local businesses. We are asked regularly for advice on locally owned restaurants, tour operators, and small businesses that need support. This is the sort of mindful tourism that keeps money here in Hawai‘i, while dollars spent at large resorts too often end up with large private equity firms. Farm stay income also allows us to contribute to our state and county tax base in ways that farming simply does not.

In considering regulated farm stays, I want to directly acknowledge the recent Rosehill decision. The Hawai‘i Supreme Court made it clear that speculative, non-farm-related short-term vacation rentals do not belong in the State Agricultural District, because they undermine the agricultural purpose of the land. I agree with that distinction. What I am asking you to support through HB2585 is something very different: owner-occupied,

small-scale farm stays and bed-and-breakfasts that are physically and economically tied to real agricultural production, with strict limits and clear enforcement. This kind of agritourism implements the intent of Chapter 205 by helping farmers remain on the land and keep it in active production, rather than converting it to pure visitor use.

I support clear statutory guardrails to make this distinction enforceable. For example, the bill can require: proof of a bona fide farming operation and a farm plan; a cap on the number of guest rooms; on-site owner occupancy or resident operator; and automatic termination of the overnight use if agricultural use ceases. The law can also explicitly prohibit unhosted or non-farm “vacation rental” use on agricultural lands, so that Rosehill’s concern about speculative STVRs is fully respected while still allowing carefully defined agritourism. These conditions will ensure that overnight accommodations remain an accessory, agriculture-supporting use—not a new pathway to resort development on ag land.

For our small farm, the difference between being allowed well-regulated hosted short-term farm stays and being entirely barred from overnight agritourism can be the difference between continuing to farm and giving up. HB2585, with explicit support for strictly conditioned overnight accommodations as part of agricultural tourism, will help keep working farms viable, preserve agricultural landscapes, and provide tourism experiences that align with the state’s broader environmental and climate goals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your consideration of HB2585. I respectfully urge you to add strong language affirming overnight agritourism accommodations that align with the larger goal of keeping small farms a viable and productive part of island food security.

HB-2585

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:28:11 AM
Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Kimo Falconer	Hawaii Coffee Growers Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the members of the Tourism and Agriculture and Food Systems Committees, Chairs Tam and Chun, Vice Chairs Temple and Kusch.

Aloha, I am writing in support of this bill as a member of the Coffee sector in Agriculture, but more importantly I wish to stress a new way of thinking regarding where we get our food from in Hawaii. We are no longer a large farm, Big Ag state with political pull. Imagine our State as a quilt-work of many small farms growing anything one can imagine. It is an utopian dream actually and within our reach. We are not short of people who want to farm and have that lifestyle. But we are short on the ways for them to prosper.

This bill will help loosen the difficult bureaucracy we have that will allow someone to operate an Ag Tourism activity at their production operation. It is a critical component in making ends meet. Visitors are also extremely curious regarding agrarian societies, to take home with them products grown here, as well as take home with them that experience that they will savor and want to return to.

Please put this measure forward as a vote to grow our farms and please our visitors. Mahalo.

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

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of **HB 2585**, relating to agricultural tourism.

Agritourism provides important opportunities for Hawai'i farmers to diversify income, educate visitors, and strengthen connections between agriculture and our local economy. For many coffee farms and other agricultural operations, responsible agritourism activities are essential to long-term sustainability.

I appreciate the amendments made to this version of the bill and believe HB 2585 offers a more workable framework that supports farmers while recognizing the realities of operating agricultural businesses in Hawai'i.

Thank you for considering my testimony, and I respectfully ask for your support of HB 2585.

Sincerely,
Donna Woolley

Island Sun Coffee

Big Island

HB-2585

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:10:04 PM
Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Towa Ikawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of **HB 2585**, relating to agricultural tourism as a citizen in Oahu, Hawai'i.

Agritourism provides important opportunities for Hawai'i farmers to diversify income, educate visitors, and strengthen connections between agriculture and our local economy. For many coffee farms and other agricultural operations, responsible agritourism activities are essential to long-term sustainability.

I appreciate the amendments made to this version of the bill and believe HB 2585 offers a more workable framework that supports farmers while recognizing the realities of operating agricultural businesses in Hawai'i.

Thank you for considering my testimony, and I respectfully ask for your support of HB 2585.

Sincerely,
Towa Ikawa

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

HB-2585

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:22:34 PM

Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Greenwell	Greenwell Farms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support hb2585

HB-2585

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:03:08 PM
Testimony for TOU on 2/5/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ROSS ANDERSON	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members

i am in support of HB 2585 relating to Ag tourism.

I feel is is a great opportunity to support our local farm community and will provide a much needed way to diversify our current economy. Visitor tend to connect better with their experience following a visit to a farm. This promotes additional sales and repeat visits.

I encourage you to support this bill.

Mahalo

Ross Anderson

Waioli Kitchen and Bakeshop

Oahu