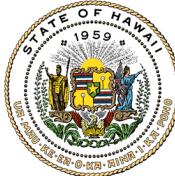


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

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
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9560 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**JANUARY 28, 2026
3:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2154
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2154. The bill provides funds for the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to conduct a study of agricultural markets for Hawai'i farmers and establishes positions to conduct and collect relevant agricultural data. The bill includes an appropriation.

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity strongly supports this measure. Knowledge of agricultural markets both locally and abroad will help Hawai'i farmers make strategic decisions for their operations and increase the likelihood of success. Modern agriculture is a highly competitive business and is especially challenging in Hawai'i with high land and input costs, lack of timely production and market information and data makes strategic planning and production adjustments difficult. In addition, having staff that are experienced and knowledgeable about Hawaiian agriculture is key to interpreting and understanding data that is collected.

If the state is going to reach its goal of doubling local food production and increase its food self-sufficiency greater support will need to be provided to Hawai'i farmers and ranchers. This bill is a great step forward in that direction by providing key data and information that allows producers to make informed and timely decisions for their operations. The department will be able to hire additional permanent staffing that will be able to assist the industry over the long term.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure,



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

January 28, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2154
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
3:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, 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 SB 2154, which requires the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to conduct a study of agricultural markets for Hawai'i farmers, appropriates funds for a one-year agricultural markets study, and establishes and funds two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) positions to collect agricultural data and conduct data analysis for public consumption.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers face unique challenges, including high production costs, limited market access, and competition from imported goods. A comprehensive study of agricultural markets will provide valuable insights into consumer demand, market opportunities, and supply chain inefficiencies, helping farmers and ranchers make informed business decisions.

Identifying viable markets for Hawai'i-grown products is critical to strengthening local agriculture, promoting food security, and reducing reliance on imported food. Market research will empower farmers to diversify crops, target new markets, and better align production with consumer preferences. By strengthening agricultural markets, this study supports Hawai'i's broader goals of sustainability, self-sufficiency, and rural economic development.

Accurate and timely agricultural data is essential for effective decision-making by farmers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders. The lack of localized, accessible agricultural data continues to create barriers to understanding industry trends and making evidence-based policy and business decisions.

SB 2154 represents a strategic investment in the future of Hawai'i's agricultural industry. By supporting an agricultural markets study, funding dedicated positions for data collection and analysis, and requiring reporting to the Legislature, this measure will provide essential tools to help farmers succeed in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau urges the committee to pass SB 2154 and stands ready to collaborate on its implementation for the benefit of Hawai'i's farmers and agricultural community.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Christian Zuckerman
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Kelii Gannet
Kohala, Hawai'i

East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Ka'ū, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawai'i

Gina Lind
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy
Moloka'i

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

India Clark
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Rachel LaDrig
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i



Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports SB2154.**

By requiring the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to conduct a detailed examination and produce a report, SB2154 will provide much-needed data that can drive informed policy-making and strategic planning. This will not only illuminate current market conditions but also identify avenues for improving market access and competitiveness for Hawaii's farmers.

Access to detailed and regularly updated market insights will empower farmers with the information necessary to make decisions that enhance productivity, innovation, and sustainability. The investment in human resources dedicated to this task reflects a commitment to building a robust agricultural information infrastructure, ensuring Hawai'i's farmers can respond effectively to market changes and challenges.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heaivilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

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

SB2154

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, January 28, 2026, 3:00 PM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB2154** which requires the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to conduct a study of agricultural markets for Hawai'i farmers. It appropriates funds for a one-year study of agricultural markets for Hawaii farmers and establishes two full-time equivalent positions.

Concrete data allows us to understand trends and identify where opportunities for markets are. However, the state has very little data on agriculture. This bill places an emphasis on the value of collecting this data and allowing it to be shared publicly for producers to strategize their operations for optimization. Investing in high-quality data and establishing access to this data can lead to growing the agricultural sector as a whole, while minimizing risk for producers.

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



SB-2154

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 11:52:04 AM
Testimony for AEN on 1/28/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Austin Martin	Testifying for Libertarian Party of Hawaii	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and committee members. I am Austin Martin, Chair of the Libertarian Party of Hawaii, testifying in opposition to SB 2154 (Agricultural Markets/Studies).

SB 2154 mandates government studies and frameworks for agricultural markets, laying groundwork for future regulatory interventions that would restrict entrepreneurial freedom. The Government here is looking for justifications for the next planned power grab. The folly of this is palpable: every thing the government intended to do for "agriculture" is dooming the industry to socialist political control — and as we all know, socialist parasites cannot survive without a productive host to steal from.

Continuing the current path of using highly conflicted and politicized studies to justify tyrannical political overreach and top-down control of entire industries will kill the host, and then everybody loses, including the parasites.

Farmers and consumers coordinate best through price signals, not state planning aided by academic narcissism. I recommend rejecting this bill and removing existing market barriers instead.

Mahalo for for rejecting utopian folly and the tyranny of central planning.

Austin Martin

Libertarian Party



THE SENATE
KA 'AHA KENEKOA
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

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

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

3:00 PM

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

RE: SB2154 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) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS House Bill 2154** which requires the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to conduct a study of agricultural markets for Hawaii farmers. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds for the one-year study of agricultural markets for Hawaii farmers. Appropriates funds to establish two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) positions to collect agricultural data and conduct data analysis for public consumption.

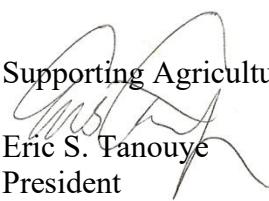
The most important decision a farmer faces is the question “what to grow”. You have to find a crop that is viable to grow on your land, you need to find all the input costs and most importantly you need to know you can sell your product profitably. Being able to know what markets are available and what they need, allows more confidence for our farmers and nurserymen to concentrate on growing and allow them to be knowledgeable of the economic decisions they are making.

We look forward to the support the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity can provide for our industry to remain educated and informed in the Agricultural Markets. That we can understand what is needed and what improvements can be made.

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



PO Box 4, Kunia, Hawaii, 96759 || 808-622-9026 || www.agstewardshiphawaii.org

January 26, 2026

Aloha e Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee,

Re: Testimony in Support of SB2154 Relating to Agriculture, on Agricultural Statistics

On behalf of Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i, we write in support of SB2154, which establishes an agricultural markets study, authorizes positions, and appropriates funds to rebuild critical agricultural statistics capacity.

Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the viability and sustainability of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers through technical assistance, resource coordination, business education, and policy support. In our day-to-day work with producers across the state, **we consistently hear a clear and urgent need for better, more accessible agricultural market data**. Farmers and ranchers need timely, reliable information to understand market conditions, assess risk, plan production, and make informed business decisions.

For many producers, the lack of localized, Hawai'i-specific data is a significant barrier to success. This challenge has grown over time as agricultural data collection capacity declined following the 2008 financial crisis. More recently, federal funding reductions to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) have further eroded the availability of the data our agricultural community relies on. The result is a widening information gap at a time when farmers are facing unprecedented volatility in input costs, climate impacts, and market access.

SB2154 directly responds to this need by investing in the restoration and strengthening of agricultural market analysis and reporting capacity in Hawai'i. **Accurate, consistent agricultural data is foundational infrastructure for a healthy food system.** It supports farmers, informs policymakers, strengthens investment decisions, and ultimately contributes to food security and economic stability across the state. We believe this bill is a practical and necessary step toward supporting Hawai'i's agricultural sector in a changing and uncertain environment.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Shaw".

Dr. Amanda Shaw, PhD, Statewide Food Systems Coordinator
Email: amanda@agstewardshiphawaii.org, Tel: 808 429 5310

