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March 16, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

TESTIMONY ON HB 1952, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Kidani, 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, HD1, 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Many of the Kaua'i CARES existing facilities are outdated and no longer adequately support current programs, safety requirements, or accessibility standards.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, HD1 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.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Education
Monday, March 16, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

By

Parwinder Grewal, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience
and
Vassilis Syrmos, PhD
Interim Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1952 HD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 1952 HD1. 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, and address food and nutritional insecurity challenges.

CTAHR is currently recruiting a new livestock and 4-H agent, and seeking a new community coordinator to help build the CARES center as a hub for collaborative innovation and community prosperity. The appropriation for capital improvements in HB 1952 HD1 will support statewide community assets.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Christian Zuckerman
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
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Kohala, Hawai'i

East Hawai'i

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Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy
Moloka'i

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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 Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Senate Education 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 HB1952.**

HB1952 is an investment in the future of agriculture in Hawaii, focusing on strengthening research and extension services that are crucial for the sustainability and resilience of our agricultural sector. By authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds for capital improvements to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience's Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kauai, the bill will enhance the infrastructure needed to support cutting-edge agricultural research and community outreach. In a time where agriculture faces unprecedented challenges ranging from climate change to pest outbreaks, such enhancements are essential for providing our farmers with the tools and knowledge they need to adapt and thrive.

This bill will not only improve the physical facilities but also create opportunities for innovative research that can lead to advancements in sustainable farming practices, pest management, and crop diversification. The extension services supported by this funding are integral for translating research findings into practical applications that benefit local farmers directly. Enhancing these capabilities will empower our agricultural community by offering educational programs, workshops, and support systems tailored to meet the unique needs of Hawaii's farmers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union



Kalepa Koalition

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

March 13, 2019

TO: **Committee on Education**
Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Sen. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

RE: **Testimony on HB1952, HD 1, Relating to Kauai Agricultural Research and Extension Station**
Monday, March 1, 2026, Conference Room 229, 1:00 PM

Chairperson Kim and Members of the Committee:

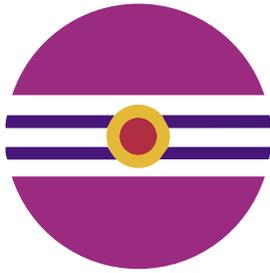
We **strongly support HB769, HD1**, authorizing capital improvements at the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kauai. The Kalepa Koalition is a Hawaii agricultural cooperative of the farmers and ranchers who hold long-term 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 "Leslie P. Milnes".

Leslie P. Milnes, President
Kalepa Koalition



Saiva Siddhanta Church

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

March 13, 2026

Committee on Education

Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Sen. Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Testimony on HB1952, HD 1, Relating to Kauai Agricultural Research and Extension Station

Monday, March 1, 2026, Conference Room 229, 1:00 PM

Chairperson Kim and Members of the Committee:

We **strongly support HB769, HD1**, 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 recently 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 Arumuganathan Swami



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

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair**

**Monday, March 16, 2026 1:00 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street**

RE: HB1952HD1 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 1952HD1** 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. The experiment station is where all the innovative and technology research gets down. We need 21st century facilities for 21st century research and can't use 20th century facilities to keep agriculture being competitive in Hawaii.

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

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 3:00:59 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jerry Nishek	Testifying for Kauai Nursery & Landscaping Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear House Members,

Please support funding for HB 1952 HD1. The Island of Kauai is in dire need of support by the UH Ag extension system to work with ag producers and nurseries to support agriculture and the control of invasive pests that are devastating the flora on Kauai.

Sincerely

Jerry Nishek

Kauai Nursery & Landscaping Inc.

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 12:59:12 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Blazak	Testifying for Hilo County Farm Bureau	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

Hilo County Farm Bureau strongly supports HB1952 HD1. Kaua'i has a strong and diverse agricultural sector that is vital to our state's economy and food security. Repairs and improvements at the Cooperative Extension Experiment Station on Kaua'i 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.

Megan Blazak
Chapter President
Hilo County Farm Bureau

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 1:08:35 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support HB1952. The Kauai Research and Extension Station supports agriculture on Kauai by hosting a number of events such as workshops and Kauai County Farm Bureau community outreach. The station needs to be supported to reach it's potential as a reseach and demonstration venue for agriculture.

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 1:46:02 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Phillipson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members

Kauai has a lot of respected and hard working farmers who produce local food. By supporting this bill they will have a needed on island resource to implement best practices and respond to their needs. Please support and move forward on this bill.

Mark Phillipson

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 2:55:59 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

HB 1952, HD1 – Kaua‘I Agricultural Research and Extension Station Improvements

Position: Support

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

We support HB 1952, HD1, 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, HD1.

Mahalo nui loa,

Rodney & Karol Haraguchi

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 11:18:40 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Dear Committee members,

I am writing in support of HB1952. Kaua'i Ag Research Center has 260 acres of prime ag lands with abundant water resources next to the Wailua reservoir.

The capital improvements with greatly support our Kaua'i farmers and ranchers and continue to serve our community!

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 3:06:54 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jerry Ornellas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 11:00:30 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kyle Caires	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kyle Caires, and I am writing to express strong support of the HB 1952 bill authorizing General Obligation bonds and appropriation funds for capital improvements to the **Agricultural Research and Extension Station on Kaua‘i** operated by the University of Hawai‘i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience.

As a **former University of Hawai‘i faculty member and CTAHR Extension Agent**, I have seen firsthand the critical role that research and extension facilities play in supporting Hawai‘i’s farmers, ranchers, and agricultural businesses. These stations are essential for developing locally adapted solutions for crop production, livestock systems, pest management, soil health, and climate resilience.

I am very familiar with the experiment station on Kauai, and while the site needs work (decommissioning a cesspool, demolition of old buildings, etc.) the proposal to plan construction for new laboratories, outbuildings, greenhouses, field research infrastructure, on-farm housing for farm manager and ag techs as well as a certified kitchen are ‘must haves ‘so extension programs and programming can better address the critical needs of various industries statewide.

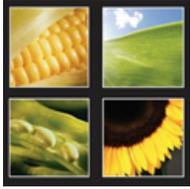
Investing in modern facilities and infrastructure will strengthen the University’s ability to conduct applied research and deliver practical education that directly benefits producers and rural communities across the state. The outcomes of which will ensure that UH will remain a vital partner to Hawai‘i’s agriculturalists and agriculture in general.

I would also like to express my **willingness to serve on a committee or advisory group** to provide guidance and input on the development of this project, should the Legislature or CTAHR Dean find that helpful.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify, and I respectfully urge the Committee to support this investment important for Hawai‘i’s agricultural future.

Thank you.

Kyle Caires
Caires Farms



HAWAII CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

HB1952 HD1 – In Support
Relating to Agriculture

Senate Committee on Education

Date: Monday, March 16, 2026
Time: 1 PM
Place: Conference Room 229

Aloha Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB1952 HD1**, 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.



EAST OAHU COUNTY FARM BUREAU

910 CALIFORNIA AVE., WAHIAWA, HI 96786

March 14, 2026

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair, and Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education
State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Kim, Vice Chair Kidani, 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 HD1**, "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 HD1.

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

Sincerely,

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

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 7:47:21 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Warren Watanabe	Testifying for Maui County Farm Bureau	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Maui County Farm Bureau supports HB1952 HD1 Relating to Agriculture. Extension stations across the state are critical partners for a diverse and viable agriculture industry. This station on Kauai will provide invaluable technology and real farm solutions to issues occurring that impedes the success of our producers. We request your support of HB1952 HD1. Thank you.

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 10:55:39 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Ashman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 1952, HD1.

The UH CTAHR Kaua‘i research and extension station supports local farmers and ranchers through applied research, education, and extension services critical to address pests, disease, soil health, and climate impact issues.

We need to invest in modern facilities to be able to better serve the ag community by providing practical and up-to-date assistance to producers on Kaua‘i.

Thank you.

LATE

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 5:45:54 PM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Testifying in support of this Bill.

LATE

HB-1952-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 5:42:31 AM

Testimony for EDU on 3/16/2026 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Strong support