

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 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026

2:00 PM

CONFERENCE ROOM 308 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2548, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2548, House Draft 1 that establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity and appropriates funds. The Department supports this bill.

A sustainable food system begins with supporting the farmers and ranchers that produce the food. Food producers face challenges with extreme weather events, persistent drought conditions and rising temperatures affecting growing conditions, pest and disease issues. This bill creates a grant program to assist producers in adapting to changing weather conditions and becoming more resilient to these climate effects.

Department support of this measure considers feedback from producers about the high cost of equipment as a major barrier to expanding operations. The Department administered the USDA Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure program (RFSI) that provided \$2.6 million in funding for middle-of-supply-chain infrastructure. The Department received 104 applications, 17 of which were funded, leaving 87 proposals unfunded. The USDA will not be offering the RFSI for a second round and these unfunded projects could be considered along with new applications.

The climate resilient food systems grant program would allow producers to utilize new, innovative technologies and growing systems to create efficient more resilient agricultural operations. For example, precision agriculture systems utilizing drones, satellite systems and soil moisture monitoring stations make efficient use of irrigation

Testimony of Sharon Hurd

March 3, 2026

Page 2

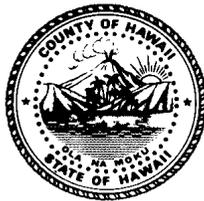
water and fertilizers delivering it only where it is needed and in the amount that is needed reducing waste of valuable resources.

Farming is a very capital-intensive endeavor and many small farms in Hawaii lack the resources and capital to invest in these types of technology, having access to grants will allow the to adopt technologies that will allow them to be sustainable and provides the groundwork for increased production.

Your support of this bill is greatly appreciated and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

C. Kimo Alameda, Ph.D.
Mayor

William V. Brilhante, Jr.
Managing Director



Benson Medina
Director

Dennis Lin
Deputy Director

County of Hawai'i

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

25 Aupuni Street, Room 1301 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-4252

(808) 961-8366 • Fax (808) 935-1205

E-mail: chresdev@co.hawaii.hi.us

March 2, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TUESDAY, March 3, 2026

2:00 PM

CONFERENCE ROOM 308

TESTIMONY ON HB 2548 HD1
Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee,

I am Benson Medina, Director of the Department of Research and Development, County of Hawai'i. One of the agricultural objectives of this department is to support research, development, control, and education that improves agricultural production, quality, resilience, and producer viability. The County of Hawai'i provides written testimony in **SUPPORT of HB2548 HD1**, to establish the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity and appropriate funds.

Producers are motivated to overcome challenges to meet statewide goals to at least double local food production yet require assistance in the form of grants and infrastructure. In fact, 2 out of 3 (66.9%) of producers in Hawai'i with at least \$50,000 in estimated gross production expressed interest in expanding operations within 6-9 months, and more advanced farm equipment was the most needed technology cited by these farms to increase productivity (NASS, 2021). Additionally, in 2024, the County of Hawai'i supported Hawai'i Department of Agriculture in launching a statewide survey on economic viability, in which equipment costs were identified as the third highest-ranking issue impacting producer economic viability statewide. The proposed Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program supports producers in expanding operations and building climate resiliency to increase food production.

Thank you for championing agriculture in Hawai'i and for the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB2548.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Benson Medina".

Benson Medina
Director

**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 2:00PM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference**

RE: HB2548 HD1 Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

Aloha e Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

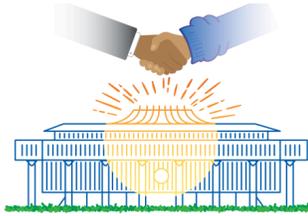
My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports House Bill 2548 House Draft 1 (HB2548 HD1), which establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

HB2548 HD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for 21st Century Agriculture. By investing in infrastructure, climate considerate technologies, and food system resilience, this bill directly furthers the Blueprint's agenda to strengthen economic viability for farmers, expand production capacity, and increase local food self-sufficiency. These food systems improvements deliver measurable benefits in the way of workforce development and scaling production with environmental consideration.

This legislation supports the state's priorities surrounding climate-friendliness and economic viability. By supporting the purchase of special-purpose equipment and technology, farms are empowered to innovate in the way of systems improvement that drive efficiency and higher return on investment for both farmers and the state. Further, special-purpose infrastructure would enable diversified agricultural production and value-added production. These benefits improve the profitability of Hawaii's farms, increase their economic competitiveness, and helps lower their costs. This allows farms to more easily retain their labor, lower prices for consumers at the grocery store, and increase their participation in the export market. This legislation contributes to positively to Hawaii's overall economic resilience, farm labor market viability, and cost of living.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass House Bill 2548 House Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



CLIMATE FUTURE FORUM

To: Representative Todd, Chair
Representative Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance (FIN).

Hearing: 03/02/2026, 2:00pm

From: Climate Future Forum

Re: **STRONG SUPPORT for HB2548 HD1**

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the House Committee on Finance,

The Hawai'i Climate Future Forum is a youth-led organization that equips young people across Hawai'i to engage directly in climate policy through research, testimony, and community-based solutions. My name is Vivienne Hill, and I am a student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. On behalf of the Climate Future Forum's Regenerative Food Systems working group, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HB2548**.

This bill creates a Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity. It provides competitive grants to farmers and food hubs for special-purpose equipment and workforce support that expand local production, processing, storage, and distribution capacity.

Hawai'i imports a significant portion of its food and faces escalating climate pressures that affect production and distribution. Strengthening local infrastructure increases stability and supports long-term cost control. Investments in equipment and workforce capacity help producers expand operations and provide a more reliable supply to local markets.

From a financial standpoint, this measure represents a long-term investment. Expanding local production and infrastructure reduces the risks of shipping and disaster-related supply disruptions

that drive up costs for families and the state. Strengthening local capacity also supports small and mid-sized agricultural businesses and creates local jobs.

HB 2548 invests directly in Hawai'i's economic resilience and climate adaptation goals. By funding this program, the Legislature equips farmers with the infrastructure and workforce support necessary to meet growing demand and withstand climate risks. We urge the Committee to pass and fund HB 2548 to strengthen Hawai'i's food system for the long term.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Vivienne Hill

**Student | Youth Policy Leader, Regenerative Food Systems
Hawai'i Climate Future Forum**



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Chris Todd, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

HB2548 SD1
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 2:00 PM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB2548 SD1** which establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

We support this measure to support climate adaptation, resiliency, and food system infrastructure through funding to agricultural producers. This concept is similar to the Partnerships for Climate Smart Commodities, a USDA grant that was cancelled in 2025 - the second year of a 5 year contract. While we were not able to finish the program to fully realize the potential of this funding, what we learned is that there is a demonstrated need for this funding to assist producers in purchasing equipment, obtaining technical assistance, and funding practices that help food production and land stewardship.

In our experience, both established ranchers as well as new and small ranchers could benefit from this support. A program like this is strategically proactive, providing the tools needed for our agricultural producers to continue their work for the community and future generations, improving with better practices.

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





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

March 3, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 2548, HD1
RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, 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 2548, HD1, which establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity. This program will provide essential resources to help Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers adapt to the increasing challenges posed by climate change while strengthening local food production and food security.

Hawai'i's agricultural sector faces growing threats from climate-related factors, including extreme weather events, prolonged droughts, rising temperatures, and shifting pest and disease patterns. These challenges threaten both short-term crop yields and long-term farm viability. A climate-resilient food systems grant program will allow farmers and ranchers to implement innovative practices and infrastructure improvements that mitigate these risks and ensure the stability of Hawai'i's local food supply.

The intent of the program is to provide grants to agricultural producers for the acquisition of special-purpose equipment and technology, as well as ancillary costs. These funds will help farmers invest in tools and infrastructure that directly improve their ability to respond to climate-related challenges. Special-purpose equipment, such as advanced irrigation systems, soil-monitoring technology, pest- and disease-management tools, and renewable energy systems, can enhance farm efficiency and sustainability.

Agriculture, like all businesses, requires capital investment. The cost of operating a farm or ranch in Hawai'i can be significant. Many of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are struggling to secure the financial support necessary to build capacity and invest in

climate-resilient infrastructure. A climate-resilient food systems grant program can provide critical support, helping agricultural operations remain viable amid increasing environmental pressures. By ensuring that farmers and ranchers have access to grants for climate-smart investments, the state can support local agriculture while also addressing the broader goal of increasing food security and self-sufficiency.

To maximize the success of this program, we encourage the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to work closely with local farmers, ranchers, agricultural researchers, and industry stakeholders to develop the grant criteria and funding ranges. This collaboration will ensure that funding is accessible and targeted toward practical solutions that address the real challenges faced by food producers in Hawai'i.

We urge the committee to pass HB 2548, HD1 to establish this climate-resilient food systems grant program, which will help protect and strengthen Hawai'i's agricultural industry in the face of climate change.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



House Committee on Finance

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HB2548 HD1

Tuesday, March 3rd, 2026 2:00 p.m. Conference Room 308

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee,

Please support HB2548 HD1, which seeks to establish a Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018¹ can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business.

Hawai'i is also experiencing more intense periods of drought, followed by more intense periods of rain. This cycle dries out the soil, which then runs off into coastal waters miles below.² These patterns deplete healthy soil while also damaging nearshore reefs and marine environments.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawai'i. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB2548 HD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', is positioned below the text 'Mahalo for your consideration,'.

Anne Frederick,
Executive Director

¹ <https://www.hawaiimagazine.com/farmers-on-kauai-recuperate-from-april-2018-flooding/>

² <https://www.civilbeat.org/2025/12/hawaii-farmers-look-back-to-the-future-to-deal-with-climate-change/>

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 1:30:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party of Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as Co Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i , and on behalf of our members,we write today in support of HB2548 HD1. As a farm worker myself , I personally see the issues of climate change on our crops year after year.

With margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii, they are under stress each and every day. . To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Green Party of Hawai'i urges that you Pass HB 2548 HD1.

Mahalo,

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:11:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai Climate Action Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farmers are very much effected by extreme weather along with new invasive species that come with climate change. Prioritize local food security and support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security. Strong support for HB2548



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

March 2, 2026

Aloha e Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

Re: Testimony in Support of HB2548 HD1 – Relating to Sustainable Food Systems

On behalf of Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i, we support **HB2548 HD1** which establishes a Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Through our direct work assisting producers, ranchers, and food hubs across Hawai'i, we regularly help applicants navigate federal opportunities such as the USDA's U.S. Department of Agriculture Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI) program. This technical assistance gives us clear insight into the operational and climate-related challenges these programs are designed to address. We consistently see urgent needs for:

- Cold storage, aggregation, and processing infrastructure
- Special-purpose equipment to improve efficiency and reduce losses
- Workforce support and training
- Investments that help farms adapt to drought, flooding, and extreme weather.

A state-level Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program would be transformative because it can provide flexible, Hawai'i-specific support; bridge gaps between federal funding cycles; and reach smaller producers who need modest but strategic investments to stabilize and expand production. To support evaluation and continuous improvement, we **strongly support an amendment** to include an annual report detailing grants awarded, project outcomes, and lessons learned to help assess and evaluate program impact and refine the program to better meet producer needs.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

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

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

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 12:45:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tamra Hayden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

If we were to have an emergency with shipping for prolonged time we need to be able to feed ourselves, the schools are becoming more dependent on our local farmers and products.

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Tamra Hayden, Waianae

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 12:50:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

What Does This Bill Do?

Establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Why Is This Important? Sample Testimony:

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau'i

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 2:01:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 1:45:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Coppings	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee members,

Food security in our islands should be a top priority. Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Amber Coppings, Honolulu

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 6:59:47 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!!!

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 2:01:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John C Wert III	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Climate change is upon us, in spite of our current GOP "Leadership's" denials, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Mahalo for your consideration,

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 2:02:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this legislation.

David Ball

Waiialae-Kahala

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 2:26:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dita Škalic	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 3:31:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kathy Shimata & I live in Honolulu.

Our island home is dependent on our farmers. This bill establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Mahalo,

Kathy Shimata

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 4:13:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and droughts are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event, such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018, can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events, which have cost not only our farmers but also our neighbours' resources, as flash floods ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security, we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and, in turn, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Jen Lum, 'Ewa Beach

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 4:44:07 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1. Mahalo

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 8:03:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to support HB 2548 HD1.

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Thank you

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 11:13:50 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of HB2548 because it will help our local farmers and protect our food security in a time of climate change. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 11:41:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jackie Keefe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Jackie Keefe, and I am **in strong support of HB2548 HD1**, which establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawai'i. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Jackie Keefe, Lahaina

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:43:19 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support** of HB2548, which establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program. This bill is a vital investment in the very foundation of our local food security: the farmers and food producers who are on the front lines of a changing climate.

Climate change is not a distant threat; it is here, and it is already devastating our local agriculture. Our farmers are struggling to adapt, but the costs are often insurmountable. We have all witnessed the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events—the "rain bombs" that dump months of rain in hours, followed by prolonged drought. These events don't just damage crops; they destroy livelihoods.

We need only look to the historic flooding on Kaua‘i in 2018 to understand the stakes. In a single event, entire harvests were wiped out, essential equipment was destroyed, and critical infrastructure was washed away. Many food producers were pushed to the brink of going out of business.

Just recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flash floods across the state. For farmers operating on already thin margins, losing a generator, a small machine, or having tools and infrastructure swept away by floodwaters is not a setback—it can be a death sentence for their operation.

These farmers are not just growing food; they are the backbone of our goal to increase local food security. When they struggle, we all struggle. We become more reliant on imported food, which is vulnerable to its own global supply chain disruptions. If we are serious about prioritizing local food security, we must be serious about supporting the people who make it possible.

HB2548 offers a tangible solution. By establishing a grant program specifically for climate resilience, it provides farmers with the critical resources they need to prepare for, withstand, and recover from these climate shocks. This could mean investing in stronger irrigation systems to combat drought, reinforcing infrastructure to withstand flooding, or adopting new practices that protect their soil and crops from extreme weather. It is a proactive investment that will save far more in the long run—both in dollars and in the preservation of our local farming community.

We cannot expect our farmers to bear the full burden of climate adaptation alone. HB2548 says that Hawai'i will stand with them. It recognizes that bolstering our food producers is the most direct path to bolstering our local food security. For the future of our farmers and the resilience of our food system, I urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:44:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl hendrickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Pesticide exposure can cause significant harm to public health and the environment. In addition to affecting communities, farm workers, pollinators, the environment, and other crops around the application of these pesticides, these pesticides can impact our most vulnerable populations – keiki and kupuna.

It is important to protect these most vulnerable populations. As individuals in elderly health care facilities are restricted in options and the ability to move from such locations, ensuring the regulation and safeguard of these spaces is important to maintain our commitment to the health of the care facility residents.

2019 marked the first year RUP data became publicly available. From this data we can see that our communities around Hawai‘i are being exposed to heavy drift prone pesticides. Imposing a buffer zone around elderly health care facilities is one way to introduce protections to this at-risk population and ensure their health is truly being protected while in these facilities within the buffer zones.

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:48:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly support

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 8:03:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We have faced a series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbors' resources.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security. Please support HB2548.

To: Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

From: Veronica Moore, Individual Citizen

Date: March 1, 2026

RE: House Bill 2548 HD1
Measure Title: RELATING TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS.
Report Title: DAB; Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program; Climate
Adaptation; Agriculture; Appropriation (\$)

To All Concerned,

My name is Veronica Moore and I support House Bill 2548 HD1. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Veronica M. Moore

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 8:48:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello **Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,**

I strongly support HB 2548 HD1, which establishes the Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program within the **Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity**.

Climate change is no longer a future threat—it is already impacting Hawai‘i’s food producers. Farmers and food producers across the state are facing increasing costs to adapt to extreme and unpredictable weather conditions. Events such as intense rainfall, flash flooding, and prolonged droughts are becoming more frequent and severe, placing livelihoods and local food production at risk.

A single extreme weather event can be devastating. The historic flooding on **Kaua‘i** in 2018 wiped out entire harvests, destroyed equipment and infrastructure, and forced some food producers out of business altogether. More recently, additional heavy rainfall and flooding events have caused widespread damage, not only to farms but also to neighboring communities, as flash floods ruined generators, small machinery, tools, and essential infrastructure.

Farmers in Hawai‘i already operate on thin margins. Without targeted support, many simply cannot afford the investments needed to adapt to climate impacts. Establishing a Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program will help producers strengthen their operations, recover more quickly from disasters, and implement practices that protect crops, soil, and water resources.

By supporting our food producers, this bill also strengthens Hawai‘i’s local food security. Investing in climate resilience for agriculture is an investment in the long-term health, stability, and self-sufficiency of our islands.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HB 2548 HD1.

Me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Member

Hawai'i Workers Center Board Member

Clean Elections Hawai'i Member

Honolulu Tenants Union Member

350 Hawai'i Member

Carbon Cashback Hawai'i Member

Hawai'i Tax Fairness Coalition Member

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 9:48:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Keala Fung and I support HB 2548 HD1.

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Mahalo,

Keala Fung, Honolulu HI

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 6:15:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members.

Climate change is upon us, and our food producers are already struggling with the costs of adaptation. Extreme weather events such as rain bombs and drought are already impacting farmers and food producers' livelihoods. One extreme weather event such as the historic flooding of Kaua'i in 2018 can wipe out an entire harvest, destroy equipment and infrastructure, and ultimately put food producers out of business. Recently, we have faced another series of heavy rainfalls and flooding events which have cost not only our farmers but neighbours resources as flash floods occurred and ruined generators, small machines, and swept away tools and infrastructure.

Margins are already thin for farmers in Hawaii. To prioritize local food security we must support programs such as the proposed climate-resilient grant program to bolster our food producers and as a result, our local food security.

Please support HB 2548 HD1.

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

HB-2548-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 10:46:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/3/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leo Nahe Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2548!