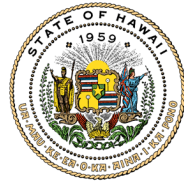


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

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**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026
3:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 225 AND VIDEOCONFERENCE**

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 144, HD2

**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY TO
COLLABORATE WITH STATE AND COUNTY AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY-BASED
ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE FOOD
SECURITY STRATEGY.**

Chairs McKelvey and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Richards and Members of the Committees:

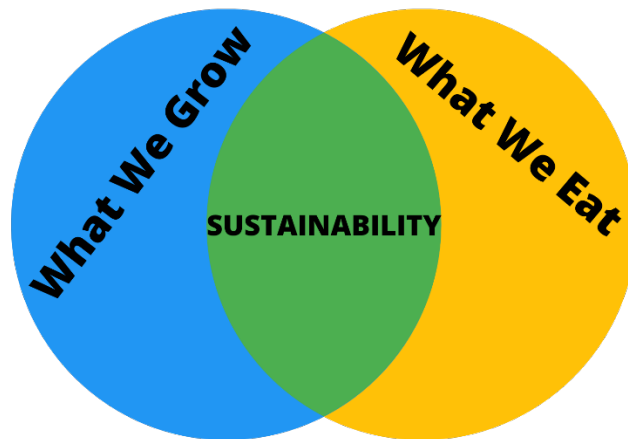
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HCR 144 HD2 that requests the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to collaborate with state and county agencies and community-based organizations to develop a comprehensive statewide food security strategy that includes addressing barriers to access among individuals with disabilities and households with access and functional needs, align strategies with existing programs that serve these populations, and support community-driven solutions.

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) supports this resolution with comments to address the amendment to the measure requesting the Department serve as lead to develop the comprehensive statewide food security strategy.

Carefully considering this leadership role and its significance, the Department will begin with the science-based process of proposing a hypothesis for the collaborators – Will focusing attention on Hawaii's commercial farmers as the primary agents to achieve the State's numeric goals for food self-sufficiency, while acknowledging the role of

informal and subsistence farmers in producing food for the families and communities so engaged achieve food security for Hawaii?

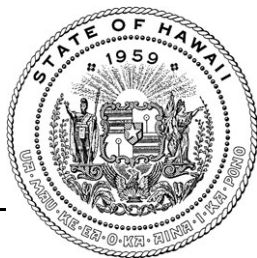
Asking the question and adding the Venn diagram identifying sustainability as eating what we grow, and growing what we eat will be considered as potential starting points for the collaborators.



The resulting comprehensive food security strategy should include milestones and a timeline to meet the four data-driven, equity-focused items listed in HCR 144 HD2 to be the work of the agencies, organizations, leaders, coalitions, and stakeholders as they develop a comprehensive statewide food security strategy.

This resolution represents another step to move Hawaii towards food security.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKĀ'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

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DIRECTOR

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Statement of
James Kunane Tokioka
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Thursday, April 16, 2026
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 225

In consideration of
HCR144, HD2

**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY TO
COLLABORATE WITH STATE AND COUNTY AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY-
BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE FOOD
SECURITY STRATEGY.**

Chairs McKelvey and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Richards, III, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) offers **comments** on HCR144, HD2 to strengthen the statewide food security strategy.

Hawai'i's food security challenge is not only a social issue, but fundamentally an economic development issue. As noted in HCR144, HD2, approximately thirty-two percent of households experience food insecurity, with disproportionate impacts on vulnerable communities. Addressing this challenge requires a shift from isolated programmatic responses to a systems-based economic strategy.

DBEDT's strategic framework, Redesigning Hawai'i's Economy for Resilience, recognizes food security as a core pillar of economic diversification. The State's ability to increase local food production, stabilize costs, and build resilience is directly tied to its ability to develop, acquire, and invest in enabling infrastructure, facilities, and land. A comprehensive statewide food security strategy should explicitly recognize that:

1. Infrastructure, facilities, and land are foundational economic inputs

- a. Food production cannot scale without irrigation systems, aggregation hubs, processing facilities, cold storage, and access to agricultural lands. These are public goods that require coordinated state investment and, where appropriate, acquisition to ensure long-term control and resilience.

2. Food security depends on viable market pathways for producers

- a. Farmers and ranchers must have multiple, reliable outlets for their products. This includes:
- i. Value-added manufacturers and processing facilities;
 - ii. Institutional buyers such as the Department of Education, healthcare systems, and correctional facilities; and
 - iii. Private sector markets including retail, hospitality, and export channels.

Without these pathways, increased production will not translate into economic viability or improved food access.

3. The food system must be treated as an integrated ecosystem

- a. Production, processing, distribution, and consumption must be aligned. Investments in one segment without the others will not achieve the desired outcomes of affordability, accessibility, and resilience.

DBEDT further emphasizes that the statewide strategy must be aligned with and advance existing statutory mandates, including:

- Act 151 – Doubling local food production;
- Act 175 – Integration of local foods into school meal systems; and
- Act 176 – Strengthening local procurement and food system resilience.

These mandates collectively establish a clear policy direction, Hawai'i must increase local production while simultaneously building the infrastructure and institutional demand necessary to sustain it. The statewide strategy requested in this resolution should serve as the coordinating framework to operationalize these laws.

Finally, DBEDT recommends that the strategy prioritize:

- Identification of priority infrastructure and facility investments statewide;
- Coordination of land access and irrigation systems to support production;

- Expansion of value-added and processing capacity through networks such as the Food and Product Innovation Network (FPIN);
- Alignment of institutional procurement (e.g., DOE under Act 175) with local supply through commodity mapping; and
- Clear performance metrics tied to production, cost reduction, and food access outcomes.

A successful statewide food security strategy must move beyond planning and into implementation through capital investment, asset acquisition, and coordinated execution across agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

HCR-144-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/13/2026 2:44:22 PM

Testimony for GVO on 4/16/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colehour Bondera	Testifying for Kanalani Ohana Farm	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs & Committee Members:

As a long-time farmer and direct marketer of our production, including via farmers markets and small retail operations, this legislation is critical for the success of our agricultural system.

Farms need to survive and consumers must be able to eat from local supply options. Hawaii can and should be looking out for the local food security of residents and support farms to be able to so provide. Food distribution is one of the primary difficulties which must be addressed/

THank you for your attention to this matter and your support of this legislation.

Colehour Bondera

KANALANI OHANA FARM

colemel2@gmail.com

HCR-144-HD-2

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 2:45:08 PM

Testimony for GVO on 4/16/2026 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Miyamoto	Testifying for Hawaii Farm Bureau	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Farm Strong



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

April 15, 2026

Aloha Chair McKelvey, Chair Gabbard, and members of Government Operations and Agriculture and Environment,

Re: Testimony in Support of HCR 144 HD2 Comprehensive Statewide Food Security Strategy

On behalf of Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i, we submit this testimony **in strong support of** HCR 144/HR136/SCR41, which requests state and county agencies, in coordination with community-based organizations, to develop a comprehensive Statewide Food Security Strategy.

Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i is a non-profit organization committed to improving the viability and sustainability of Hawai'i's agricultural producers and food system through technical assistance, resource coordination, stewardship-based business education, and policy work. Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i leads the [Statewide Food Systems Coordination Initiative](#) (HSFSC), launched in 2024 with philanthropic and gubernatorial support. HSFSC works to align agricultural stakeholders, address infrastructure barriers, secure federal resources, advance institutional procurement of local food, and support policy priorities that strengthen Hawai'i's food system.

There are **currently no statewide goals on addressing food insecurity or hunger in spite of our food insecurity crisis affecting one in three households**. This measure highlights the need for a comprehensive, data- and equity-informed approach to advancing solutions to eliminating hunger and supporting access to nutritious, culturally relevant food. The statewide food security strategy also aligns state efforts with existing county plans for a more coordinated and effective statewide response.

Mahalo nui 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



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Kit Okimoto, Okimoto Corp., *Chair*
Jayson Watts, Mahi Pono, *Vice Chair*
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Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Government Operations and Committee on Agriculture and Environment

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: April 17, 2026

TIME: 3pm

RE: HCR 144 HD1 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY TO COLLABORATE WITH STATE AND COUNTY AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY.

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. The most recent data from the Hawaii Foodbank shows that our state has 30% food insecurity on average, with some parts of the state experiencing food insecurity rates of close to 40%. Assessing food insecurity conditions in the State to get data-driven, actionable information is an important step in fighting food insecurity. HFIA would be happy to lend any expertise and information we have that might assist in these efforts.