

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
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SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

**TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026
10:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 423**

**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 188 AND
HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 178
REQUESTING THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH AN
AGRICULTURAL TOURISM WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE EXISTING LAWS AND
ORDINANCES RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM AND PROVIDE
RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENCOURAGE THE GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL
TOURISM IN HAWAII.**

Chair Tam, Vice Chair Templo and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Concurrent Resolution No. 188 and House Resolution No. 178 that requests the Hawaii Tourism Authority to convene an Agricultural Tourism Working Group to examine existing laws and ordinances relating to agricultural tourism and provide recommendations to encourage the growth of agricultural tourism. The Working Group is requested to submit a report of its finding and recommendations to the 2027 Legislature. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) offers comments.

The Department supports agricultural tourism activities on farms, provided that these activities are unambiguously accessory and secondary to the principal agricultural uses found on these farms. We also recommend that the Working Group consider the concepts and definitions expressed in past and current legislation addressing

Testimony of Sharon Hurd
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agricultural tourism. The Department looks forward to serving on the Agricultural Tourism Working Group.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony on this measure.



TESTIMONY OF
Caroline Anderson
Interim President & CEO
Hawai'i Tourism Authority
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

Tuesday, March 31, 2026
10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 423 and Videoconference

In consideration of
HCR 188 / HR 178

REQUESTING THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH AN AGRICULTURAL TOURISM WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE EXISTING LAWS AND ORDINANCES RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENCOURAGE THE GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL TOURISM IN HAWAII.

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

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) offers comments on HCR 188 / HR 178, which requests HTA to establish an Agricultural Tourism Working Group to examine laws and ordinances and provide recommendations to support agricultural tourism.

HTA recognizes the value of agricultural tourism in diversifying visitor experiences, supporting local agriculture, and connecting visitors to Hawai'i's working lands, and HTA's statutory role includes coordinating tourism-related activities and working with state and county partners on product development, including agriculture and nature-based tourism (HRS §201B-3, §201B-7).

HTA is currently undertaking work closely aligned with the intent of this resolution through our Hawai'i Agritourism Study and the development of a Hawai'i Agritourism Plan, scheduled for completion in May 2027. These efforts will:

- Assess the current agritourism landscape statewide.
- Identify opportunities and challenges faced by farmers and businesses engaged in or pursuing agritourism.
- Review state and county land-use laws and policies related to agritourism.
- Provide recommendations to promote, facilitate, and support agritourism in Hawai'i.

In addition, HTA will soon be standing up an agritourism working group that will include representatives from agritourism businesses, state and county agencies, and agricultural organizations such as farm bureaus and associations. This working group will help guide our planning efforts and ensure broad stakeholder input.

The results of this study will inform a comprehensive statewide approach to developing and promoting agritourism, with a focus on preserving Hawai'i's agricultural and rural character while supporting increased local food production.

HTA appreciates the intent of the resolution and looks forward to continuing efforts that support agriculture, strengthen rural communities, and advance regenerative tourism across the state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our comments.



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March 31, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

TESTIMONY ON HCR 188 & HR 178

REQUESTING THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH AN
AGRICULTURAL TOURISM WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE EXISTING LAWS AND
ORDINANCES RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM AND PROVIDE
RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENCOURAGE THE GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL
TOURISM IN HAWAII

Conference Room 423 & Videoconference
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Tam, Vice-Chair Templo, 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 HCR 188 and HR 178, which requests the Hawai'i Tourism Authority to convene an agricultural tourism working group to examine existing laws and ordinances and provide recommendations to support the growth of agricultural tourism in Hawai'i.

Agricultural tourism plays an important role in supporting the economic viability of farms and ranches. Diversified revenue streams can help keep agricultural lands in production while providing educational and community benefits. As noted in the resolution, the current patchwork of county-level rules and interpretations has created inconsistency and uncertainty for farmers seeking to engage in agricultural tourism.

HFB appreciates the collaborative approach outlined in this measure and the inclusion of agricultural stakeholders in the working group. Bringing together State, county, and industry representatives will help ensure that recommendations are practical and reflective of on-the-ground realities.

As this effort moves forward, HFB encourages the working group to prioritize clarity and consistency while maintaining the principle that agricultural tourism activities remain

accessory and secondary to bona fide agricultural operations. This is essential to protect the integrity of agricultural lands and prevent misuse.

We also encourage that the working group recognize the importance of county-level implementation, as conditions and priorities vary across islands. A balanced approach that provides statewide clarity while allowing for reasonable flexibility will be critical.

HFB respectfully requests that the working group also include a representative from the Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council. Ranching operations play a significant role in agricultural tourism across the State, and their inclusion would help ensure that the perspectives of livestock producers are represented in the development of recommendations.

HFB looks forward to participating in the working group and contributing to solutions that support both agricultural viability and responsible growth in agricultural tourism.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

March 30, 2026

Re: Testimony for

HCR 188/HR178/

HCR51/HR47/

HCR50/HR 46

HCR 49

HCR 48

TO: COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Chair – Rep Shirley Ann Templo, Vice Chair
Rep. Ikaika Hussey, Reb. Kyle T. Yamashita, Rep. Greggor Hagan, Rep Joe Gedeon

The listed Agenda for March 31st, 2026, at 10:00 am for the Committee on Tourism is a priority for the State of Hawai`i. Each of these bills is favorable for tourism and facilitates sustainable development. I personally agree that tourism is our breadbasket for our people, their families, and their businesses. The employment that tourism supports is equal to our most important economic assets.

Please pass in Committee today for each hearing on this agenda. Hawai`i Tourism Authority is a respected State of Hawaii frontrunner that has delivered expert development and sustainable progress. They have created marketing for Hawai`i as the eighth most desirable destination. in the world. It may be the eighth or tenth in the world, and it matters for all of us.

Mahalo for your consideration. The time for support of TOURISM IS NOW.

Aloha

Marie Agular

P.O. Box 1874, Kailua Kona, Hawai`i 96745

Tourism writer and community events enthusiast

