

**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  
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY**  
**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**FEBRUARY 13, 2026**  
**3:10 PM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2704**  
**RELATING TO SUBSISTENCE GARDENING**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2704. This bill establishes within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) a temporary Subsistence-Plus Gardening Pilot Program. Requires a report to the Legislature and appropriates funds. The Department supports the intent and offers comments.

Community gardens are an excellent way to alleviate food insecurity, provide healthy outdoor activity, create a connection with agriculture and strengthen communities. These gardens also contribute to Hawaii's food self-sufficiency.

The Department has concerns about the size, tenure and acquisition of the lands if this is to be a three-year pilot program and the intent for the community food production hubs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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February 13, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2704**  
RELATING TO SUBSISTENCE GARDENING

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference  
3:10 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 2704**, which establishes a three-year Subsistence-Plus Gardening pilot program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

HFB believes that increasing community participation in food production strengthens Hawai'i's overall food resilience. Small-scale gardening initiatives, particularly those focused on priority and cultural crops, can help reconnect residents with agriculture, improve food awareness, and encourage local food production at the household and community level.

Programs that activate underutilized lands and support community-based food production complement commercial agriculture and contribute to broader food security goals. Efforts to grow and maintain Hawaiian canoe crops and other locally important food crops also support cultural knowledge and agricultural education.

SB 2704 represents a pilot approach that allows the State to explore practical pathways to strengthen grassroots food production while evaluating its long-term viability and impact.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



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Maui

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Vincent Kimura  
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Natalie Urminska  
Kauai

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

The Hawaii 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 the intent of SB2704.**

SB2704 proposes establishing a three-year subsistence-plus gardening pilot program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to utilize small plots of underutilized land for community gardening purposes. While the intention of improving food security and sovereignty is commendable, there are several aspects that need consideration and potential amendment to ensure the program effectively supports local farmers and community gardening initiatives.

The identification and allocation of small plots of land might be more efficiently handled at the county level, where there is a better understanding of local land use and availability. Counties have more direct land use oversight and could facilitate faster allocation and zoning of such plots.

The bill should clearly define "small community-based farm clubs" to prevent ambiguity. Concerningly, this pilot program could exacerbate demand for agricultural park lands unless well designed. Finally, additional resources and staffing may be needed to manage this program without impacting current departmental operations.

HFU supports subsistence-based community initiatives, but believes the potential challenges posed by implementation at the state level need to be addressed.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawaii Farmers Union



Date of Hearing: February 13, 2026

To: Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Herbert M. Richards, III, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Subject: **SB 2704**, Relating to Agriculture

Aloha,

I am writing in **strong support of SB 2704**. This measure will create a 3-year subsistence-plus gardening pilot program within the Hawaii Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity. This program will identify underused plots of land (up to 2 acres) that are suitable for gardening, then offer these plots to small community-based farm clubs. Additionally, this bill will support community food production hubs, which will increase access to fresh food for many people.

Currently, our islands are almost entirely dependent on imports. About 90% of our food is imported, and when disaster strikes, the state only has about 5 days' worth of food supply to sustain residents and visitors<sup>1</sup>. This dependency not only makes Hawai'i vulnerable in times of crisis; it drives up the daily cost of living. This bill is a start to a community-led food system, where our plates come from our 'āina, not imports.

Previous disasters, such as the COVID-19 crisis, have taught us just how vulnerable our current important-dependency makes us. Supporting local farming is supporting our future. Therefore, I **urge this committee to pass SB 2704**.

Mahalo,  
Brandon Kinard and The Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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[1] McGregor, L. W. (2018). *How food secure are we if natural disaster strikes?* Hawai'i Sea Grant, University of Hawai'i. <https://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/how-food-secure-are-we-if-natural-disaster-strikes/>

**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



Testimony Before The  
House Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)  
**IN SUPPORT OF SB2704**  
February 13, 2026, 3:10 p.m. Room 224 & via Videoconference

We are Olan Leimomi Fisher and Kevin Chang, Kua'āina Advocate and Executive Director, respectively, testifying on behalf of [Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo \(or KUA\)](#). "Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo" stands for "grassroots growing through shared responsibility," and our acronym "KUA" means "backbone." **Our mission is to connect and empower communities to improve their quality of life through the collective care for their biocultural (natural and cultural) heritage, serving as a "backbone organization" that supports creative and community-driven solutions to problems stemming from environmental degradation.** Hawai'i's biocultural resources continue to be negatively impacted by political, economic, and social changes, and the increasing dangers of climate change make fostering and empowering resilient communities acutely critical.

Currently KUA supports three major networks of: (1) over 40 mālama 'āina (caring for our 'āina or "that which feeds") community groups collectively referred to as E Alu Pū (moving forward together); (2) over 60 loko i'a (fishpond aquaculture systems unique to Hawai'i) and wai 'ōpae (anchialine pool systems) sites in varying stages of restoration and development, with numerous caretakers, stakeholders, and volunteers known as the Hui Mālama Loko I'a ("caretakers of fishponds"); and (3) the Limu Hui made up of over 50 loea (traditional experts) and practitioners in all things "limu" or locally-grown "seaweed." **Our shared vision is to once again experience what our kūpuna (ancestors) referred to as 'ĀINA MOMONA – abundant and healthy ecological systems that sustain our community resilience and well-being.**

**KUA strongly supports SB2704 as an incremental step towards 'āina momona.**

This bill would establish within the Department of Agriculture & Biosecurity a three-year subsistence-plus gardening pilot program. The purpose of this program would be to identify underutilized small plots of land, not more than two acres, suitable for gardening, and make these available to participating small community-based farm clubs. It would also provide support for community food production hubs, and invite small community-based farm clubs that have demonstrated participation and momentum in their respective communities to participate in the program for planting, growing, and harvesting priority crops including Hawaiian canoe crops to improve food security and food sovereignty in Hawai'i.

**The state has an affirmative duty to mālama'āina as articulated in our Hawai'i State Constitution, Articles XII, Section 7, and XI, Section 1, and confirmed through case law in *Ching v. Case*, 145 Hawai'i 148 (2019).** Several of our E Alu Pū network members are both subsistence mahi'ai (farmers) and lawai'a (fishers). They rely on stewarding the 'āina (both mauka and makai) to not only survive and thrive, but to perpetuate their traditional and cultural heritage and pass this 'ike (knowledge) down to their keiki. We therefore strongly support this measure to put

underutilized 'āina in the care of small community-based mahi'ai that have demonstrated their commitment to mālama'āina in their respective communities.

The communities we work with are committed to ensuring the long-term health of our biocultural resources that they have cared for and depended on for generations since time immemorial. **We believe protecting our environment, the foundation of our very existence, is about sustained and long-term commitments toward achieving 'āina momona abundance once again.** To get there requires genuine investments in collaborative mālama 'āina efforts, including through this bill. Our decisions today will continue to shape the future that our keiki's keiki's keiki will one day inherit – we hope for a future of shared and harmonious abundance, and hope you do, too.

Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity to submit testimony. Please **PASS** SB2704.

**Aloha 'Āina Momona no nā kau ā kau.**

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 11:02:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>          | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Maya Villard        | Testifying for Taro Stewards | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha !

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2704 as a recent volunteer of the Taro Stewards Community. Through this program I have learned so much about the cultural, historical, agricultural, and nutritional significance of taro/kalo. Mason and Uncle Danny made an important point that there is not enough legislation in support of subsistence farming in comparison to industrial agricultural models. Subsistence farming is important in that it empowers the community by bringing them together to share food, talkstory, and pave a way for future generations to self sustain without relying on imported food. It is important to not push a perspective of food being only for profit. Food is not only a nutritional necessity but where the most important moments are shared. Knowing that the food you and your loved ones "break bread over" is from Hawai'i soil and nurtured by your own hands makes it so much more special. Being an island that relies mostly on imported goods and essentials it is important to support alternatives that reduces fossil fuels , pesticide use , and rising taxation. Please listen to the community and those who have personally spent time in the lo'i when considering passing this bill.

I appreciate the time and consideration

Mahalo.

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 11:12:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Mason               | Individual          | Support                   | In Person      |

Comments:

I am in support of the Subsistence Gardening program to increase available lands for community food production. This program fully addresses the need for available lands for community food systems. Aligned with UNESCO Goal #2, as part of the UN's 2030 Agenda (SDG 2), is to "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture"

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 4:05:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| penny levin         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

In strong support. The Subsistence Plus concept is a great idea to get behind for all our communities! Please fund this program with enough substance to be successful. An ag water meter costs a minimum of \$30,000 to install. A mini excavator that could be shared by participants costs \$45-60,000. \$50,000 per acre should be the minimum level of support for implementing this program.

mahalo.

Penny

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 5:00:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Keoni Shizuma       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I am testifying in support of SB2704.

With the high costs of living in Hawaii, and the ever increasing costs of goods in Hawaii, having access to land in which to farm for subsistence living will be very helpful to a very large number of people, myself included.

My only concern with this bill is the identifying that these plots are available to farm clubs. Does this specifically exclude individuals? I think individuals with a history of farming or farming knowledge should be able to farm lands for subsistence living as well. Maybe a certification program is needed to certify an individual to farm, but this program shouldn't exclude individuals from the opportunity to increase food production and reduce dependence on imported products.

Mahalo for your consideration,  
Keoni Shizuma

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 5:11:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Caroline Azelski    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 6:12:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Daniel Bishop       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha All

My name is Daniel Bishop and I am in support of SB 2704.

I am a small farmer and lease agricultural lands in Waiahole and Punaluu Oahu. One of our missions has been to provide space for intrestead community members, young and old, to reenstate our connection to our wellbeing, community, and environment through the interaction of growing highly nutritious foods.

There has been lots of people who have participated in the Aloha Aina movement at our locations as well as at other farms and nonprofits throughout Oahu and on the other Islands. The Subsistence Plus Farmers Prfogram will provide the means for more people to have an intimate relationship to thier enviroment, and healthy food. It will provide a space where participants can meet /feed others within thier communities.

The program will also help provide highly nutrisious foods to participants Families as well as the neighboring communities

The Subsistence Plus Gardening Program will help in moving forward a sustainable answer to our Food Insecurity situation..

I hope that you will support this effort to bring our families together to grow wellbeing and sustainable gardening.

Mahalo

Danny Bishop

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 9:28:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Keoni DeFranco | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2704**

Relating to the Subsistence-Plus Gardening Pilot Program

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Keoni DeFranco, and I reside in Waimānalo. I am testifying in strong support of **SB 2704**, which establishes a three-year subsistence-plus gardening pilot program within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

At **Pu‘uhonua o Waimānalo**, we see firsthand both the urgency and the opportunity around local food production. Families are facing rising food costs, supply chain instability, and limited access to land. At the same time, there is tremendous community momentum. Small, organized farm groups are ready to plant, grow, and steward ‘āina if given access to suitable land and modest structural support.

SB 2704 is a grounded, practical step.

By identifying underutilized parcels of two acres or less and making them available to small community-based farm clubs, this measure recognizes that food security does not require massive acreage. It requires access, coordination, water, soil, and community commitment. When stewarded well, small plots can produce meaningful yields, especially when focused on priority crops and Hawaiian canoe crops that are culturally rooted and climate-adapted.

The inclusion of support for community food production hubs is especially important. Growing food is only one piece of the system. Processing, aggregation, distribution, and shared infrastructure are what transform gardening into lasting food sovereignty. At Pu‘uhonua o Waimānalo, we have seen how collective infrastructure strengthens not just production, but education, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and community resilience.

This bill also builds capacity. It empowers organized, place-based groups that already demonstrate participation and momentum. That approach reflects how our traditional systems functioned: collective stewardship, shared responsibility, and reciprocal relationships with ‘āina.

A three-year pilot allows the State to test, refine, and scale what works. It creates space for measurable outcomes while building long-term resilience.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 2704.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 12:50:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Momi Wheeler        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha ‘Āina,

In support of SB2704, subsistence-plus gardening pilot-program.

‘Āina Aloha,

Momi Wheeler

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 1:20:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By      | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Mealaaloha Bishop | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Thank You for your attention to this matter of

local food production, enhancing continuing sustainability, and willingness to invest in infrastructure for our Agriculture Family in

Hawai'i's 2026 Legislative bills [HB 2572](#) & [SB 2704](#) relating to the subsistence plus pilot program. It is an aggressive move to forward sustainability of food production in Hawaii through initiatives that can nurture inclusive and a more diverse farming community.

The amount of plot usage tentatively allowed and an offering of a three-year subsistence-plus gardening pilot program is

a sufficient amount of time to show a turnover of crops, (kalo would be one or two harvests in that time frame depending on variables.) To establish continuity and commitment.

Here on O'ahu over time discussions I have heard about concerning underutilized land held by different agencies mentioned wahi pana like Whitmore, or parcels held as Surplus State Lands that are already over due on policys to use these lands to establish new agricultural possibilities. Other policies like co-utilize agrivtaics flagged areas, DLNR establishes MOA with Dept. of Agriculture for appropriate land stewardship farming, has Department of Hawaiian Homes been able to address infrastructure for flagged Hawaiian Homes Agricultural Lands.

Many of us understand what infrastructure for small farming encompasses or could accomplish, through a mobile stable of farm machinery to health, safety and invasive species documentation. Thank you for putting a monetary number towards this cause to secure the resources for success, will be in place.

A tier system whereas opportunity to apply for one's own lot would be successful as we have piloted our own participants through the years, flagging lease land for others to pursue.

Thank you to those for addressing dwellings on agricultural lots for farmers. Housing for employees that shows a larger scale of agriculture is not for this program. More suited is for a farmer or two sharing a two acre agricultural park lot with sanctified farm dwellings permitted by the specification put forward by the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity would be welcomed. Sensible best practices instilled in agreement would be maika'i. Please let's continue this discussion.

Those supporters of community food production and distribution hubs do provide like minded folk that agree we believe in knowing where our food comes from. Community-based farm clubs have the interest of parties within the wa'a, hula halau and other disciplines who are contemplating this new movement. Every gathering participants take home seasonal fare shared among everyone regardless of effort put in.

We speak to the acceptance of dues as it shows seriousness and willingness to kokua monetarily also. If required by the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity in the form of leases, moa, insurance etc. it would be totally understandable as a contributing factor to the programs success.

In ending I commend those who see the importance of Canoe crops for part of this program because this is one of the concepts of our host culture we need to nurture. If an important people like the Hawaiian people of ancient times found worth in these majestic plants, that makes it all the more important in honoring our host culture which in turn will benefit all Lāhui of Hawaii.  
Pau

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 2:06:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By     | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Dustin K Roberts | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

To: Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee(s) hearing SB2704

From: Dustin Roberts, Waikāne, O‘ahu

Date:Feb 13 2026

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

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

My name is Dustin Roberts, and I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB2704, which establishes a Subsistence-Plus Gardening pilot program to help families and community groups access land and grow food in a responsible, long-term way.

I was raised in Waikāne, and I was raised on the land. My upbringing included taro farming, prawn farming, and growing a wide variety of vegetables and fruits. That way of life taught me that food comes from consistent work, planning, and caring for resources like soil and water. It also taught me that when we grow food locally, we strengthen not only our households, but the whole community.

As a Native Hawaiian, I believe we have a kuleana to mālama ‘āina and to use land in a productive and respectful way—not just to profit from it, but to feed people, build resilience, and pass knowledge forward. SB2704 supports that kuleana by creating a clear pathway for community-based groups to farm smaller plots responsibly, with structure and accountability.

This bill matters because it helps address the real barriers people face:

Access to land that is actually usable for farming, not just available “on paper.”

A program that considers water, soil, and terrain, so the land selected can truly produce food.

A model that supports family and community-scale growing, where harvests can feed households first, then share or sell surplus to strengthen the local food system.

From my experience in Waikāne—where taro, prawns, and diverse crops can thrive when cared for properly—I know that programs like this can create real results. SB2704 helps put underutilized land to work, supports food security and food sovereignty, and encourages stewardship that benefits both present and future generations.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to pass SB2704 and provide full support and funding to ensure this pilot program succeeds.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Me ke aloha,  
Dustin Kiani Roberts  
Waikāne, O‘ahu  
dust88stan@gmail.com

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:08:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| SadieAnn Luiz       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha All,

Subtinance farming on unused land is one of the few ways we could actually cherish the land. Yes, leaving the land alone, letting in bask in it's innocence and untouched beauty is one way of cherishing our 'āina. However, allowing Hawaiians, or people who genuinely want the best for the 'āina, to use said land for ancestral food systems is something our kupuna and ancestors could only hope for us to have. Until now. Until Mason, Unko Danny, and all the other ancestral farming advocates, stepped up to the plate to make a change for us, for our Keiki and the future of the lāhui. Allow them, allow US to use this land to make better lives for ourselves. To become well rounded in all the ways that our ancestors had opportunities to. By having connection to all aspects of our lives. Connecting with our community, our food, the 'āina and tending to her, so she may tend to us with her bountiful gifts of abundant food for us to bring home to our ohana. The only thing stronger than hate, is love. Choose love. Choose a future that our kupuna would be proud of, one that will care for our 'āina and our Keiki.

Me ke aloha <3

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 9:04:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ashlie McGuire      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I am in strong support of this proposed bill and using unused lands for subsistence farming!

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 8:25:17 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Keilah Kanahele     | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

I write in strong support of SB2704. To mālama kalo is to fulfill our kuleana as po‘e Hawai‘i and kama‘āina who understand that the health of our lo‘i reflects the health of our communities, our wai, and our future. By investing in taro stewards, this measure uplifts ‘ike kupuna, strengthens intergenerational learning, restores traditional lo‘i systems that recharge aquifers and protect downstream ecosystems, and advances true food sovereignty rooted in place. Supporting those who continue sacred practices affirms that Hawai‘i will remain guided by mālama ‘āina, aloha ‘āina, and a commitment to ensuring that lāhui will continue to thrive for generations to come; for these reasons, I respectfully urge you to pass SB2704

- Keilah Kanahele, kanaka ‘ōiwi

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 5:12:46 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Kui                 | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I strongly support sb2704

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 1:19:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Sebastian Church    | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha ia oukou,

Thank you for considering this bill to support a Subsistence-Plus pilot program. An extensive body of published scientific knowledge exists enumerating the extent of agricultural lands in Hawai'i that unused, fallow, or otherwise degraded, which could be improved, stewarded and used to grow food. In order to become food secure, Hawai'i needs more access points for people to grow food, through access to land, water, and resource support systems. This program helps to fill those gaps by identifying unused lands while also increasing the feasibility of citizens of Hawai'i to grow their own food by operating in a club, or organized group structure. It is a first step in returning to the sustainable systems of resource management that made this archipelago self-sufficient. This bill and this program will contribute meaningfully to the long-discussed but often poorly enacted intention to make Hawai'i food secure again. I respectfully implore you to support this program.

Mahalo nui,

Sebastian Church

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 2:44:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Elena Arinaga       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support this measure.

Mahalo,

Elena

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 4:09:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| lea          | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha mai Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and the Members of the Senate Agricultural Committee,

I am writing in strong **support** of SB 2704 which seeks to create a three year subsistence gardening plus pilot program and a vital step for food security and sovereignty in Hawai'i.

It is highly respectable to grow, harvest, produce, and purchase, food by and for community. Yet many lack access, lack connection, lack resources, lack skills. Not only that, statistics from [Hawai'i Food Bank](#) and data from ['Imi Pono](#) clearly indicate that our families are hurting in many ways. By making these lands available, then families can be empowered to provide nourishment for their families, neighbors, and for surrounding communities via food hubs. Cultivating hands-on mentorship contributes to a greater redundancy for programs that equip our local food system with sustainability, skill transfer, next generation support ,and fosters resilience. We lessen the unnecessary burdens placed on our health care systems, criminal justice systems, waste systems, social services systems, eco services systems, etc etc.

I urge you to pass this measure and to commit to moving forward to a future that puts collective wellbeing at the center. Let us critically move the "standard living wage of Hawai'i" to be more aligned with creating a shared surplus that strengthens the individual and local economy and supports planet sustenance.

Mahalo for allowing me the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 9:43:31 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Alyce Dodge         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Agriculture and Environment committee members,

I support SB2704 the Subsistence-Plus Gardening Pilot Program, and I would like to see the State support this effort, too.

A Subsistence Farming Program would move us towards food security and reconnecting to the 'aina, which are sensible goals for Hawaii. This is a great time to initiate this program under the capable and proven leadership of community members who know about farming and nurturing 'ohana. And the potential health benefits from this program are plentiful.

Please support SB2704.

Mahalo,

Alyce Dodge

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 7:52:12 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lorraine Waianuhea  | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of this bill because it would offer communities across Hawai'i the opportunity to grow more of their own food. The lack of food security and sovereignty in much of Hawai'i is a huge issue, especially for people who do not own or have access to 'āina. This bill would help to build resilience in Hawai'i communities through greater food security/sovereignty.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony,

Lorraine Waianuhea

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Agriculture and Environment Committee,

I would like to testify in **support** of SB2704 which establishes a Subsistence-plus Gardening Pilot program in the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Although Hawai'i continues to be reliant on imported foods, support for food sustainability and local farming efforts has become increasingly popular among local communities. Despite continued community support for these ideas, community members often face financial, jurisdictional, and systemic issues when trying to grow food locally, and commercial farming in particular is exceedingly difficult.

Establishing the Subsistence-plus Gardening Pilot program will provide valuable insight into the feasibility of alternative farming pathways that foster partnerships and collaboration between community groups and the State. This project would also have secondary benefits for:

- Providing the State legislature with information about viable pathways forward for maximizing the use of farmable lands in alignment with community goals
- Fostering a sense of community among farming groups, the State, and the general public
- Increasing awareness, use, and community familiarity with culturally-significant Hawaiian canoe crops

Thank you for your time and I hope that the pilot program can be taken into consideration.

Mahalo,  
Tehani Malterre

**SB-2704**

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 10:45:21 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Eric Nourie         | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support this bill! As Agriculture Director of Kawaihona charter school. We need support of farm to table possibilities and opportunities!